

CHAPTER 172

AN ACT concerning early intervention services for infants and toddlers with autism and amending and supplementing P.L.1993, c.309.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. Section 2 of P.L.1993, c.309 (C.26:1A-36.7) is amended to read as follows:

C.26:1A-36.7 Early intervention services established.

2. The Department of Health and Senior Services, in conjunction with the Departments of Education and Human Services, shall establish a Statewide system of early intervention services for eligible infants and toddlers from birth to age two, inclusive, with physical, cognitive, communication, social or emotional, and adaptive developmental delays or disabilities in accordance with Part H of the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act," Pub.L.91-230 (20 U.S.C. s.1471 et seq.).

C.26:1A-36.7a Activities of Early Intervention Program relative to autism spectrum disorders.

2. The Early Intervention Program in the Department of Health and Senior Services established pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1993, c.309 (C.26:1A-36.7) shall conduct activities to address the specific needs of children with autism spectrum disorders and their families. These activities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. developing, in consultation with autism experts and advocates, including, but not limited to, the Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism, Autism Speaks, The New Jersey Center for Outreach and Services for the Autism Community, The Autism Center of New Jersey Medical School at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, Inc., and the New Jersey chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, guidelines for health care professionals to use in evaluating infants and toddlers living in the State for autism and to ensure the timely referral by health care professionals of infants and toddlers who are identified as having autism or suspected of being on the autism spectrum to the Early Intervention Program in order to provide appropriate services to those infants and toddlers as early as possible;

- b. referring affected children who are identified as having autism or suspected of being on the autism spectrum and their families to schools and agencies, including community, consumer, and parent-based agencies, and organizations and other programs mandated by Part C of the "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (20 U.S.C. s.1431 et seq.), which offer programs specifically designed to meet the unique needs of children with autism;

- c. collecting data on Statewide autism screening, diagnosis, and intervention programs and systems that can be used for applied research, program evaluation, and policy development; and

- d. disseminating information on the medical care of individuals with autism to health care professionals and the general public.

3. The Commissioner of Health and Senior Services shall, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act.

4. This act shall take effect on the 180th day following enactment, but the Commissioner of Health and Senior Services may take such anticipatory administrative action in advance as shall be necessary for implementation of the act.

Approved September 12, 2007.