

CHAPTER 165

AN ACT establishing a Task Force on Campus Sexual Assault.

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

1. a. There is established a Task Force on Campus Sexual Assault. The purpose of the task force is to study and make recommendations concerning sexual assault occurring on the campuses of institutions of higher education in the State.

b. The task force shall consist of the following 12 members:

(1) the Secretary of Higher Education, the Attorney General, and the Director of the Division on Women in the Department of Children and Families, or their designees;

(2) five members appointed by the Governor, including a representative of the State colleges and universities established pursuant to chapter 64 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes, a representative of the public research universities, a representative of the county colleges, a representative of the independent colleges and universities, and a representative of the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault; and

(3) four members of the public with demonstrated expertise or interest in issues related to the work of the task force, including at least one individual who is a campus sexual assault survivor. The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the General Assembly, the Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the General Assembly shall each appoint one of the public members.

c. Appointments to the task force shall be made within 30 days of the effective date of this act. Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments were made. Members of the task force shall serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenditures incurred in the performance of their duties as members of the task force within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task force for its purposes.

2. The task force shall organize as soon as practicable following the appointment of its members, but no later than 60 days after the effective date of this act. The task force shall choose a chairperson from among its members and shall appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the task force.

3. The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education shall provide such stenographic, clerical, and other administrative assistants, and such professional staff as the task force requires to carry out its work. The task force also shall be entitled to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may require and as may be available for its purposes.

4. It shall be the duty of the task force to study and evaluate current policies and practices concerning campus sexual assault, to identify problems and areas for improvement, and to make recommendations concerning campus sexual assault prevention, response, and awareness. The task force shall:

a. gather information from the public institutions of higher education and from a sample of independent institutions of higher education in the State regarding their policies and procedures for addressing campus sexual assault, and review and evaluate those policies and procedures;

b. review current New Jersey and federal laws regarding campus sexual assault;

c. review and evaluate existing research and literature, including any national best practices, professional standards, or guidelines, regarding the prevention of, and response to, incidents of campus sexual assault;

d. consult with, and evaluate testimony from, campus sexual assault survivors and advocates who provide support services to campus sexual assault survivors; and

e. develop and issue recommendations and guidelines concerning campus sexual assault in New Jersey, including recommendations regarding sexual assault prevention and awareness, and recommendations regarding protocols for responding to reports of campus sexual assault and providing victim support services.

5. The task force shall issue a final report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than one year after the task force organizes. The report shall contain the task force's findings and recommendations concerning campus sexual assault.

6. This act shall take effect immediately, and the task force shall expire 30 days after the issuance of its final report.

Approved December 2, 2015.