

CHAPTER 3

AN ACT concerning the abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of persons who are elderly or disabled.

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

1. a. There is established the “New Jersey Task Force on Abuse of Persons who are Elderly or Disabled.” The task force shall: (1) evaluate current policies that are designed to protect older adults and persons with disabilities from instances of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation; (2) identify any existing circumstances that allow for the inadequate protection of older adults and persons with disabilities against instances of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation; and (3) develop recommendations for legislation, policies, and strategies that would provide a more effective and efficient means by which to protect older adults and persons with disabilities from instances of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

b. The task force shall consist of 11 members as follows: the Commissioners of Health and Human Services, the Ombudsman for the Institutionalized Elderly, and the President of the New Jersey State Municipal Prosecutors’ Association, or their designees, who shall serve *ex officio*; the State Director of the AARP; a representative from Adult Protective Services in the Division of Aging Services in the Department of Human Services; and five public members having relevant knowledge of, or experience in, matters related to the abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation of older adults or persons with disabilities. With respect to the task force’s public members, three shall be appointed by the Governor, one shall be appointed by the Senate President, and one shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly. Vacancies in the membership of the task force shall be filled in the same manner provided for the original appointments.

c. The task force shall organize as soon as practicable, but not more than 120 days after the date of enactment of this act. The task force may meet and hold hearings at such places and times as it shall designate.

d. The members of the task force shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for travel and other necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task force for its purposes.

e. The Department of Human Services shall provide professional and clerical staff to the task force as may be necessary for the task force’s purposes. The task force shall also be entitled to call upon the services of any State, county, or municipal department, board, commission, or agency, as may be available to it for its purposes.

f. In executing its duties under this act, the task force shall consult with associations, organizations, and individuals who are knowledgeable about the abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation of older adults and persons with disabilities.

g. The task force may solicit and receive grants and other funds that are made available for the task force’s purposes by any governmental, public, private, not-for-profit, or for-profit agency, including funds that are made available under any federal or State law, regulation, or program.

h. Within 12 months after the task force’s organizational meeting, which is held in accordance with the timeframe specified by subsection c. of this section, the task force shall submit a written report to the Governor, and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature. The report shall contain the task force’s findings, as well as its recommendations for legislative and other action that may be necessary to address and prevent the abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation of older adults and persons with disabilities. The task force shall dissolve 30 days after it submits the report required by this subsection.

2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire on the 30th day after the task force submits its written report pursuant to subsection h. of section 1 of this act.

Approved May 23, 2016.