

## CHAPTER 308

AN ACT concerning the State Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and amending P.L.1985, c.404.

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

1. Section 6 of P.L.1985, c.404 (C.52:4B-44) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:4B-44 Standards for law enforcement agencies to ensure rights of crime victims.

6. a. The Attorney General shall, through the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy in the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety and in consultation with the county prosecutors, promulgate standards for law enforcement agencies to ensure that the rights of crime victims are enforced.

b. The standards shall require that the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy in the Division of Criminal Justice and each county prosecutor's office provide the following services upon request for victims and witnesses involved in the prosecution of a case:

- (1) Orientation information about the criminal justice system and the victim's and witness's role in the criminal justice process;
- (2) Notification of any change in the case status and of final disposition;
- (3) Information on crime prevention and on available responses to witness intimidation;
- (4) Information about available services to meet needs resulting from the crime and referrals to service agencies, where appropriate;
- (5) Advance notice of the date, time and place of the defendant's initial appearance before a judicial officer, submission to the court of any plea agreement, the trial and sentencing;
- (6) Advance notice of when presence in court is not needed;
- (7) Advice about available compensation, restitution and other forms of recovery and assistance in applying for government compensation;
- (8) A waiting or reception area separate from the defendant for use during court proceedings;
- (9) An escort or accompaniment for intimidated victims or witnesses during court appearances;
- (10) Information about directions, parking, courthouse and courtroom locations, transportation services and witness fees, in advance of court appearances;
- (11) Assistance for victims and witnesses in meeting special needs when required to make court appearances, such as transportation and child care arrangements;
- (12) Assistance in making travel and lodging arrangements for out-of-State witnesses;
- (13) Notification to employers of victims and witnesses, if cooperation in the investigation or prosecution causes absence from work;
- (14) Notification of the case disposition, including the trial and sentencing;
- (15) Assistance to victims in submitting a written statement to a representative of the county prosecutor's office about the impact of the crime prior to the prosecutor's final decision concerning whether formal charges will be filed;
- (16) Advice to victims about their right to make a statement about the impact of the crime for inclusion in the presentence report or at time of parole consideration, if applicable;
- (17) Notification to victims of the right to make an in-person statement, prior to sentencing, directly to the sentencing court concerning the impact of the crime;
- (18) Expediting the return of property when no longer needed as evidence;
- (19) Advise and counsel, or refer for advice or counseling, victims of sexual assault, or other criminal acts involving a risk of transmission of disease, concerning available medical

testing and assist such victims, or refer such victims for assistance, in obtaining appropriate testing, counseling and medical care and in making application to the Victims of Crime Compensation Office for compensation for the costs of such testing, counseling and care;

(20) Assistance to victims in submitting a written impact statement to a representative of the county prosecutor's office concerning the impact of the crime which shall be considered prior to the prosecutor's accepting a negotiated plea agreement containing recommendations as to sentence and assistance to victims in securing an explanation of the terms of any such agreement and the reasons for the agreement;

(21) Notification to the victim of the defendant's release from custody which shall include:

(a) notice of the defendant's escape from custody and return to custody following escape;

(b) notice of any other release from custody, including placement in an Intensive Supervision Program or other alternative disposition, and any associated conditions of release;

(c) notice of the filing by an inmate of an application for commutation of sentence pursuant to N.J.S.2A:167-4 and its disposition;

(d) notice of parole consideration pursuant to provisions of P.L.1979, c.441 (C.30:4-123.45 et seq.); and

(e) notice of the pending release of an inmate due to expiration of sentence;

(22) Interpreting services for victims and witnesses when necessary to assist a victim or witness who is hearing impaired or developmentally disabled as defined in section 3 of P.L.1977, c.82 (C.30:6D-3) to understand questions and frame answers; and

(23) Providing any applicable assistance to victims of sexual assault or sexual misconduct who are incarcerated in a State correctional facility that is available to other victims or witnesses.

c. In a case involving a victim of aggravated sexual assault or sexual assault as defined in subsection a. or c. of N.J.S.2C:14-2, the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy or the county prosecutor's office involved in the case shall:

(1) Notify the victim of the victim's right to obtain an approved serological test for acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or any other related virus identified as a probable causative agent of AIDS, and assist the victim, or refer the victim for assistance, in obtaining a test and appropriate counseling and medical care;

(2) Notify the victim of the victim's right to obtain a court order pursuant to subsection a. of section 4 of P.L.1993, c.364 (C.2C:43-2.2) requiring the offender to submit to an approved serological test for acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or any other related virus identified as a probable causative agent of AIDS in the event that the offender is indicted, formally charged, convicted or adjudicated delinquent;

(3) Communicate the request of a victim who agrees to seek an order pursuant to subsection a. of section 4 of P.L.1993, c.364 (C.2C:43-2.2) to the prosecutor handling the case and notify the victim or arrange for the victim to be notified of the test result; and

(4) Assist the victim in applying to the Victims of Crime Compensation Office for compensation for the costs of testing, counseling and medical care.

d. The Attorney General shall, through the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and in consultation with the Commissioner of Health, the Superintendent of State Police and representatives of providers of sexual assault services, to be designated by the Director of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy, coordinate the establishment of standard protocols for

the provision of information and services to victims of sexual assault, and shall make such protocols available to victims upon request, except that the provision of information and services with regard to emergency contraception and sexually transmitted diseases shall be in accordance with P.L.2005, c.50 (C.26:2H-12.6b et al.).

e. In a case involving a victim of human trafficking as defined in section 1 of P.L.2005, c.77 (C.2C:13-8), the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy or the county prosecutor's office involved in the case shall ensure that the victim of human trafficking obtains assistance in receiving any available benefits or services, including assistance in receiving any necessary certifications or endorsements needed to be recognized as having federal T non-immigrant status for the purpose of receiving any federal benefits or services available pursuant to the "Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003," 22 U.S.C. s. 7101 et seq.

f. The Attorney General shall, through the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and in consultation with the Commissioner of Health, the Superintendent of State Police and representatives of providers of services to victims of human trafficking, to be designated by the Director of the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy, coordinate the establishment of standard protocols for the provision of information and services to victims of human trafficking, including coordination of efforts with the appropriate federal authorities pursuant to the "Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2003," 22 U.S.C. s. 7101 et seq. and shall make such protocols available to victims upon request.

g. The Attorney General, shall, through the Office of Victim-Witness Advocacy and in consultation with the Commissioner of Corrections, promulgate standards to ensure that the rights of female crime victims incarcerated in State correctional facilities are enforced. The standards shall include a requirement that unannounced visits be made to the facilities housing female inmates and random surveys be conducted for the purpose of identifying inmates who are the victims of sexual assault or sexual misconduct; an inmate who is determined to be a victim shall be informed of the available services set forth in subsection b. of this section and, upon request, be provided with any of these services. An inmate chosen by inmates in a housing unit as the liaison between the correctional facility administration and the inmate population shall be provided with a copy of this section of law. The liaison also shall be provided with a summary of the assistance and services available pursuant to subsection b. of this section for dissemination to the inmates in the housing unit.

2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month next following enactment, but the Attorney General and the Commissioner of Corrections may take such anticipatory action prior to the effective date as needed to effectuate the provisions of this act.

Approved January 13, 2020.