

CHAPTER 508

AN ACT concerning a Civil Service Commission hotline for State employees to submit reports of workplace discrimination and harassment and supplementing Title 11A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

C.11A:7-15 Toll-free telephone hotline for State employees to report incidents of discrimination, harassment in the workplace.

1. Within 60 days of the effective date of P.L.2019, c.508, the Civil Service Commission shall establish and maintain a toll-free telephone hotline available, at a minimum, weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. through which an employee of any State agency may report confidentially a suspected incident of discrimination or harassment in the workplace. The hotline shall be operated separately from any existing State telephone hotline service. The hotline shall receive such reports and shall respond to each report with general or individualized information regarding the laws, regulations, policies, and procedures relevant to incidents of discrimination or harassment in the workplace. Upon the request of an employee who calls the hotline, the hotline shall provide the employee with appropriate referrals for further assistance and counseling.

To ensure the integrity of the telephone hotline and to encourage employees to utilize it, the commission shall provide for the confidentiality of the names of the employees calling and any individual named or otherwise identified during a call, the information discussed with each employee, and any referrals made for further assistance or counseling. A report may be submitted by an employee anonymously. The commission shall inform the caller of the extent to which confidentiality will be maintained in accordance with law.

The commission shall take appropriate steps to publicize the hotline.

The persons staffing the hotline shall be trained by the Civil Service Commission , in consultation with the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault. To the greatest extent possible, the persons staffing the hotline shall have experience or education on the laws, regulations, policies, and procedures regarding discrimination and harassment in the workplace. The persons staffing the hotline shall be trained to make referrals for further assistance and counseling.

The commission shall prepare an annual report summarizing the volume and nature of calls received and any other information required by the commission, provided that the report shall not contain any personal or identifying information about any caller or individual named or otherwise identified during a call. The commission shall make this report available to the public on the commission's Internet site in an easily accessible location and submit the report to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 21, 2020.