

Office of the Governor

NEWS RELEASE

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Gov. Christie Whitman today signed the following piece of legislation:

A-2321, sponsored by Assembly Members Charlotte Vandervalk (R-Bergen) and David C. Russo (R-Bergen) and Senators Robert W. Singer (R-Burlington/Monmouth/Ocean) and Jack Sinagra (R-Middlesex), establishes requirements and immunity from civil liability for certain persons who use defibrillators. Intended to promote the greater acquisition and use of automated external defibrillators by trained personnel, the bill grants civil immunity to trained operators of defibrillators and to entities that purchase or acquire the devices. In order to receive the immunity a person must hold a current certification from the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, or any other training program recognized by the state Department of Health and Senior Services. In order for an entity to receive the immunity it must maintain and test the device and ensure that the local first aid squad is notified that the entity has the device upon its premises. Prior to purchasing the defibrillator, the entity must also provide the prescribing licensed physician with documentation that it has a protocol in place to comply with the bill's requirements. Licensed physicians who prescribe the use of these devices are also extended immunity under the bill. Acts of gross negligence and willful or wanton misconduct are not granted immunity.