

[Second Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 3016

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman CLINTON CALABRESE

District 36 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblyman MICHAEL VENEZIA

District 34 (Essex)

Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.

District 18 (Middlesex)

Senator JOHN J. BURZICHELLI

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Sampson, Assemblywomen Quijano, Reynolds-Jackson,

Assemblyman Hutchison, Assemblywoman Haider, Assemblymen

Freiman, Rodriguez, Barlas, Assemblywoman Ramirez, Assemblyman

Stanley, Assemblywoman Katz and Senator McKnight

SYNOPSIS

Allows follow-up communication by operators of mental health and suicide crisis resources centers or 9-8-8 crisis hotline centers to minors at risk of death by suicide.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As amended by the Senate on December 18, 2025.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/22/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning ²**[the New Jersey Suicide Hopeline]** mental
2 health and suicide crisis resources and 9-8-8 crisis hotline centers²,
3 amending P.L.1968, c.230, and supplementing Chapter 9A of
4 Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

5
6 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
7 *of New Jersey:*

8
9 ¹1. (New section) The Legislature finds and declares:

10 a. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among
11 adolescents and young adults in New Jersey, and the State faces a
12 growing youth mental health crisis that has been further exacerbated
13 by social, academic, and public health stressors.

14 b. The New Jersey Suicide Hopeline, operated in partnership
15 with Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care and the State
16 Department of Human Services, provides immediate,
17 compassionate, and confidential support to youth in crisis and plays
18 a critical role in preventing suicide across the State.

19 c. Current law allows minors aged 16 years and older to
20 consent to certain behavioral health and substance use disorder
21 services, but does not expressly permit follow-up communication
22 from a suicide prevention hotline, even when the minor has been
23 identified as high risk following an initial call for help.

24 d. Allowing a follow-up call ², text, or chat message² from a
25 trained operator, with the minor's voluntary consent and without
26 requiring parental authorization, is a narrowly tailored response that
27 ensures access to continued support during moments of acute
28 vulnerability.

29 e. A follow-up call ², text, or chat message² conducted
30 pursuant to P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as
31 this bill) shall be understood as brief, supportive communication
32 solely for suicide prevention purposes and is not intended to
33 constitute behavioral health treatment, diagnosis, or clinical care.¹

34
35 ¹**[1] 2.**¹ Section 1 of P.L.1968, c.230 (C.9:17A-4) is amended
36 to read as follows:

37 1. a. (1) The consent to the provision of medical or surgical care
38 or services or a forensic sexual assault examination by a hospital or
39 public clinic, or consent to the performance of medical or surgical
40 care or services or a forensic sexual assault examination by a health
41 care professional, when executed by a minor who is or believes that
42 he or she may have a sexually transmitted infection, or who is at
43 least 13 years of age and is or believes that he or she may be
44 infected with the human immunodeficiency virus or have acquired

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly floor amendments adopted May 22, 2025.

²Senate floor amendments adopted December 18, 2025.

1 immune deficiency syndrome, or by a minor who, in the judgment
2 of the treating health care professional, appears to have been
3 sexually assaulted, shall be valid and binding as if the minor had
4 achieved the age of majority. Any such consent shall not be subject
5 to later disaffirmance by reason of minority. In the case of a minor
6 who appears to have been sexually assaulted, the minor's parents or
7 guardian shall be notified immediately, unless the treating
8 healthcare professional believes that it is in the best interests of the
9 patient not to do so. Inability of the treating health care
10 professional, hospital, or clinic to locate or notify the parents or
11 guardian shall not preclude the provision of any emergency or
12 medical or surgical care to the minor or the performance of a
13 forensic sexual assault examination on the minor.

14 (2) As used in this subsection, "health care professional" means
15 a physician, physician assistant, nurse, or other health care
16 professional whose professional practice is regulated pursuant to
17 Title 45 of the Revised Statutes.

18 b. When a minor believes that he or she is adversely affected
19 by a substance use disorder involving drugs or is a person with a
20 substance use disorder involving drugs as defined in section 2 of
21 P.L.1970, c.226 (C.24:21-2) or is adversely affected by an alcohol
22 use disorder or is a person with an alcohol use disorder as defined
23 in section 2 of P.L.1975, c.305 (C.26:2B-8), the minor's consent to
24 treatment under the supervision of a physician licensed to practice
25 medicine, or an individual licensed or certified to provide treatment
26 for an alcohol use disorder, or in a facility licensed by the State to
27 provide for the treatment of an alcohol use disorder, shall be valid
28 and binding as if the minor had achieved the age of majority.

29 Any such consent shall not be subject to later disaffirmance by
30 reason of minority. Treatment for an alcohol use disorder or a
31 substance use disorder involving drugs that is consented to by a
32 minor shall be considered confidential information between the
33 physician, the treatment provider, or the treatment facility, as
34 appropriate, and the patient, and neither the minor nor the minor's
35 physician, treatment provider, or treatment facility, as appropriate,
36 shall be required to report such treatment when it is the result of
37 voluntary consent, except as may otherwise be required by law.

38 When a minor who is **[sixteen]** 16 years of age or older believes
39 that he or she is in need of behavioral health care services for the
40 treatment of mental illness or emotional disorders, the minor's
41 consent to temporary outpatient treatment, excluding the use or
42 administration of medication, under the supervision of a physician
43 licensed to practice medicine, an advanced practice nurse, or an
44 individual licensed to provide professional counseling under Title
45 45 of the Revised Statutes, including, but not limited to, a
46 psychiatrist, licensed practicing psychologist, certified social
47 worker, licensed clinical social worker, licensed social worker,
48 licensed marriage and family therapist, certified psychoanalyst, or

1 licensed psychologist, or in an outpatient health care facility
2 licensed pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.), shall be
3 valid and binding as if the minor had achieved the age of majority.

4 ¹When a minor who is 16 years of age or older believes that he
5 or she is in need of behavioral health care services for the treatment
6 of mental illness or emotional disorders and places a telephone call
7 to the New Jersey Suicide Hopeline for counseling and support, that
8 minor shall be allowed to consent to receive a follow-up call from
9 the operator of the hopeline who received and responded to the
10 minor's original call without parental consent or authorization in
11 accordance with the provisions of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
12 before the Legislature as this bill), and that consent shall be valid
13 and binding as if the minor had achieved the age of majority.]¹

14 Any such consent shall not be subject to later disaffirmance by
15 reason of minority. Treatment for behavioral health care services
16 for mental illness or emotional disorders ¹or receiving a follow-up
17 telephone call from an operator of the New Jersey Suicide Hopeline
18 pursuant to the provisions of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
19 the Legislature as this bill)]¹ that is consented to by a minor shall
20 be considered confidential information between the physician, the
21 individual licensed to provide professional counseling, the
22 advanced practice nurse, [or]¹or¹ the health care facility ¹[, or the
23 operator of the New Jersey Suicide Hopeline that places a follow-up
24 call]¹, as appropriate, and the [patient] minor, and neither the
25 minor nor the minor's physician, professional counselor, nurse, [or]
26 ¹or¹ outpatient health care facility¹[, or the operator of the New
27 Jersey Suicide Hopeline]¹, as appropriate, shall be required to
28 report such treatment ¹or telephone call]¹ when it is the result of
29 voluntary consent.

30 ¹When a minor who reports being 16 years of age or older
31 believes that ²[he] the minor² is in need of behavioral health care
32 services for the treatment of mental illness or emotional disorders
33 and places a telephone call ²or other communication² to, or when a
34 call ²or other communication² from another hotline placed by the
35 minor is routed to or received by, ²[the New Jersey Suicide
36 Hopeline] operators of a mental health and suicide crisis resources
37 center, as determined by the Commissioner of Human Services, or a
38 9-8-8 crisis hotline center² for counseling and support, that minor
39 shall be allowed to receive a follow-up call ², text,² or chat message²
40 from an operator of the ²[hopeline] mental health and suicide crisis
41 resources or 9-8-8 crisis hotline center² in response to the minor's
42 original call ²or other communication² without parental consent or
43 authorization in accordance with the provisions of
44 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).¹

45 The consent of no other person or persons, including but not
46 limited to, a spouse, parent, custodian, or guardian, shall be

1 necessary in order to authorize a minor to receive such hospital
2 services, facility, or clinical care or services, medical or surgical
3 care or services, or counseling services from a physician licensed to
4 practice medicine, an individual licensed or certified to provide
5 treatment for an alcohol use disorder, an advanced practice nurse, or
6 an individual licensed to provide professional counseling under
7 Title 45 of the Revised Statutes, or for the minor to receive a
8 follow-up telephone call², text, or chat message² from an operator
9 of the² [New Jersey Suicide Hopeline] mental health and suicide
10 crisis resources or 9-8-8 crisis hotline center² pursuant to P.L. , c.
11 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), as appropriate,
12 except that behavioral health care services for the treatment of
13 mental illness or emotional disorders shall be limited to temporary
14 outpatient services only.
15 (cf: P.L.2017, c.131, s.7)

16
17 ¹[2] 3.¹ (New section) An operator of ²[the New Jersey
18 Suicide Hopeline] a mental health and suicide crisis resources
19 center, as determined by the Commissioner of Human Services, or a
20 9-8-8 crisis hotline center² who receives and responds to a
21 telephone call² or other communication² from a minor who is 16
22 years of age or older for counseling and support and¹ whom¹ the
23 operator identifies as¹ being¹ at a high risk of² [committing] death
24 by² suicide shall¹ be permitted to¹ place follow-up calls², texts, or
25 chat messages² to the minor, as appropriate, without the necessity
26 of obtaining parental consent or authorization pursuant to
27 subsection b. of section 1 of P.L.1968, c.238 (C.9:17A-4).¹ A
28 follow-up call², text, or chat message² authorized pursuant to this
29 section shall not constitute behavioral health treatment, diagnosis,
30 or clinical care. The call², text, or chat message² shall be
31 considered brief supportive communication solely for suicide
32 prevention purposes.¹

33
34 ¹[3.] 4.¹ This act shall take effect immediately.