
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 17

AN ACT CONCERNING PROCEDURES RELATED TO COLLECTING AND PROCESSING SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE COLLECTION KITS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (DESPP) to implement an electronic tracking system for sexual assault evidence collection kits.

The bill also requires the Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations to recommend that the Chief State's Attorney adopt regulations that require a health care facility that collects sexual assault evidence to contact a sexual assault counselor when someone identifies him or herself as a victim and consents to such contact. The commission must also advise the Chief State's Attorney on establishing a mandatory training program for health care facility staff on the kit-tracking software.

The bill increases the commission's membership, from 14 to 15, by adding a representative from Disability Rights Connecticut, Inc. appointed by its board of directors.

The bill also makes a minor and several technical changes, including replacing "police department" with "law enforcement agency," which includes the State Police or any municipal police department.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2018

ELECTRONIC SEXUAL ASSAULT EVIDENCE COLLECTION KIT-TRACKING

The bill requires DESPP, by October 1, 2018, to (1) implement an electronic tracking system for sexual assault evidence collection kits and (2) notify health care facilities that perform evidence collection

exams about the kit-tracking system.

The bill also requires the commission, by October 1, 2018, to develop guidelines for:

1. a health care facility's use of kit-tracking software to record (a) when a collection kit is used and (b) when and to which law enforcement agency the kit is transferred;
2. DESPP's Division of Scientific Services use of the software to record the receipt of each kit a law enforcement agency submits; and
3. training health care facility and division employees who are subject to the guidelines, including how to use the kit-tracking software.

By the same date, the commission must develop policies and procedures to ensure each victim has access to information about his or her kit. This must include information on:

1. when the kit was tested and
2. whether DNA obtained from the kit was entered into the state, federal, or another state's DNA data bank, and if it was, whether it satisfactorily matches a profile in any such DNA data bank.

BACKGROUND

Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations

By law, the Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations must design a sexual assault evidence collection kit, which must include instructions on proper use, standardized reporting forms, standardized tests to be performed if the victim consents, and standardized receptacles for collecting and preserving evidence. The commission must provide the kits at no cost to all health care facilities in the state that perform evidence collection examinations (CGS § 19a-112a(c)).

Related Bill

HB 5222, reported favorably by the Public Safety and Security Committee, requires the Commission on the Standardization of the Collection of Evidence in Sexual Assault Investigations to examine ways to ensure each sexual assault victim has access to information about his or her sexual assault evidence collection kit.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Safety and Security Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 24 Nay 0 (03/16/2018)