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Act No. 9 (H.259). An act relating to preventing workplace violence in hospitals

Subjects: Health; hospitals; workplace violence prevention; security plan

This act requires licensed hospitals to develop and implement a workplace violence security plan based on the results of an assessment addressing all high-risk areas of the hospital. The act specifies that a security plan development team must be composed of hospital employees providing direct patient care, representatives from the designated agency in the region where the hospital is located, and representatives of relevant law enforcement agencies. Elements of the security plan must include options for employee name tags to omit employees' last name; ensuring a hospital employee trained in de-escalation strategies be present in the emergency department and other patient care areas at all times; and requiring a hospital employee trained in trauma-informed care and victim support to serve as a liaison to law enforcement and victims. The security plan must further include training for appropriate hospital employees on a variety of topics, such as response to the presence of weapons and de-escalation techniques. It also specifies that the security plan contain guidelines describing when a law enforcement officer should remain with a patient demonstrating violence. This act requires that each licensed hospital review its security plan annually; revise the plan when necessary; and distribute it to all hospital employees, volunteers, board of directors, relevant law enforcement agencies, and any other identified partners.

This act requires each licensed hospital to establish and utilize a workplace violence incident reporting system to track and analyze incidents of workplace violence at the hospital, including data on the number of reported incidents and the number of incidents reported to law enforcement. It prohibits discrimination or retaliation for reporting workplace violence or participating or failing to participate in an investigation of workplace violence. This act also requires hospitals to post a notice indicating that hospital employees do not tolerate an unsafe work environment. It specifies that the provisions in the act do not require a hospital to make capital investments to implement its security plan.

This act excludes from certificate of need requirements expenditures necessary to implement a hospital's workplace violence security plan. It requires that as part of a hospital's budget review process, a hospital files information pertaining to costs associated with implementing its security plan, including any capital investments, program operation, and staff. Lastly, as part of each hospital's proposed budget review, this act requires the Green Mountain Care Board to take into consideration the costs of implementing its security plan.

Effective Date: July 1, 2025