

DDS Legislative Update – April 5, 2013

CT General Assembly Passes S. B. No. 1160 - An Act Concerning Gun Violence Prevention and Children's Safety. Governor Malloy Signs It Into Law.

The Connecticut General Assembly and the Governor have been working since the beginning of the 2013 legislative session to craft a set of laws to address gun violence, school safety and mental and behavioral health services in the wake of the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy. Because of the complexity of these issues, much of the focus of the legislature this session has been in drafting a bipartisan bill that would increase citizens' safety while preserving citizens' rights. On April 3, 2013 after long debate both the Senate and the House passed [S. B. No. 1160 - An Act Concerning Gun Violence Prevention and Children's Safety](#). Governor Malloy signed the bill into law the next day.

The Office of Legislative Research (OLR) summarized the bill's provisions as follows: "The bill makes numerous changes in the laws governing firearms. The major changes pertain to assault weapons, handguns (pistols and revolvers), long guns (rifles and shotguns), and large capacity magazines (LCM)."

"Among its mental health provisions, the bill creates a 20-member task force to study the provision of behavioral health services in Connecticut and report to the legislature by February 1, 2014. It also requires the Department of Mental Health and Addition Services (DMHAS) to: 1. administer a mental health first aid training program, in consultation with the Department of Education (DOE); 2. implement an assertive community treatment (ACT) program in three additional cities (programs currently operate in Manchester, Middletown, New Britain, and Norwich); and 3. provide case management and care coordination services to up to 100 people with mental illness who are involved in the probate court system and are not receiving these services."

"The bill requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) commissioner, by January 1, 2014, to establish and implement a regional behavioral health consultation and care coordination program for primary care providers who serve children."

"The bill makes various changes to the process for grieving adverse determinations (e. g., claims denials) by health insurers. Among other things, it reduces the time health insurers have to (1) make initial determinations on requests for treatments for certain mental or substance use disorders and (2) review claim denials and other adverse determinations of such requests. It expands the role of and qualifications required for health care professionals who evaluate the appropriateness of adverse determinations."

"The bill (1) creates a new council to establish new school safety infrastructure standards, (2) authorizes up to \$ 15 million in bonds for a new competitive grant program for school safety projects, and (3) establishes a procedure leading to new requirements under the school construction law. It also requires school districts to perform a number of new school safety activities including establishing safety and security plans and committees for each school."

“It also (1) requires mental health first aid training for school district staff, (2) gives safe school climate committees new responsibilities, (3) creates a school security consultant registry, and (4) changes the law regarding civil service testing for UConn and state university police.”

The link to the complete **OLR Bill Analysis for S.B. No. 1160** is <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2013/BA/2013SB-01160-R00-BA.htm>

DDS Testimony 2013

[DDS Testimony for the Connecticut General Assembly](#)

DDS Legislative List of Bills Being Tracked as of April 4, 2013

Below is a link to the list of bills DDS is tracking and assessing as of April 4, 2013 that may be of interest to or may have a potential impact on DDS consumers, families and guardians, DDS employees and DDS providers.

[DDS Legislative List of Bills Being Tracked – April 4, 2013](#)

Link to the DDS Legislative Affairs Webpage

<http://www.ct.gov/dds/cwp/view.asp?a=2039&q=394202>