

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2009

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SENATE BILL 799  
House Committee Substitute Favorable 6/1/09

Short Title: Increase Transparency of MH/DD/SA Facilities.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 25, 2009

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO INCREASE TRANSPARENCY OF STATE FACILITIES THAT PROVIDE  
3 MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE  
4 SERVICES BY REQUIRING THE DISCLOSURE OF CERTAIN INFORMATION  
5 ABOUT DEATH REPORTS, FACILITY POLICE REPORTS, AND INCIDENT  
6 REPORTS.

7 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

8 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 122C-31(g) reads as rewritten:

9 "(g) In addition to the reporting requirements specified in subsections (a) through (e) of  
10 this section, and pursuant to G.S. 130A-383, every State facility shall ~~report the~~ report, without  
11 redactions other than to protect confidential personnel information, the death of any client of  
12 the facility, and, if known, the death of any former client of a facility who dies within seven  
13 days of release from the facility, regardless of the manner of ~~death,~~ death:

14 (1) ~~to~~ To the medical examiner of the county in which the body of the deceased is  
15 found. ~~found;~~ and

16 (2) To the State protection and advocacy agency designated under the  
17 Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act 2000, P.L.  
18 106-402. The State protection and advocacy agency shall use the  
19 information in accordance with its powers and duties under applicable State  
20 or federal law and regulations."

21 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 122C-31 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

22 "(h) Notwithstanding G.S. 122C-52, and unless otherwise prohibited by State or federal  
23 law or requirements, in order to provide for greater transparency in connection with the  
24 reporting requirements specified in subsections (a) through (g) of this section, the following  
25 information in reports made pursuant to this section shall be public records within the meaning  
26 of G.S. 132-1 when reported by a State facility:

27 (1) The name, sex, age, and date of birth of the deceased.

28 (2) The name of the facility providing the report.

29 (3) The date, time, and location of the death.

30 (4) A brief description of the circumstances of death, including the manner of  
31 death, if known.

32 (5) A list of all entities to whom the event was reported."

33 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 122C-52(a) reads as rewritten:

34 "(a) Except as provided in G.S. 132-5 and G.S. 122C-31(h), confidential information  
35 acquired in attending or treating a client is not a public record under Chapter 132 of the General  
36 Statutes."

37 **SECTION 4.** G.S. 122C-54 is amended by adding the following new subsections:



1        "(i) G.S. 132-1.4 shall apply to the records of criminal investigations conducted by any  
2 law enforcement unit of a State facility, and information described in G.S. 132-1.4(c) that is  
3 collected by the State facility law enforcement unit shall be public records within the meaning  
4 of G.S. 132-1.

5        (j) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, the Secretary may inform any  
6 person of any incident or event involving the welfare of a client or former client when the  
7 Secretary determines that the release of the information is essential to maintaining the integrity  
8 of the Department. However, the release shall not include information that identifies the client  
9 directly, or information for which disclosure is prohibited by State or federal law or  
10 requirements, or information for which, in the Secretary's judgment, by reference to publicly  
11 known or available information, there is a reasonable basis to believe the client will be  
12 identified."

13        **SECTION 5.** This act is effective when it becomes law.