
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1183 Session of
2015

INTRODUCED BY COHEN, BISHOP, V. BROWN, CALTAGIRONE, DRISCOLL,
HARKINS, J. HARRIS, KINSEY, KIRKLAND, McNEILL, MURT,
PASHINSKI, ROEBUCK AND THOMAS, MAY 11, 2015

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, MAY 11, 2015

AN ACT

1 Relating to the delivery of services and programs to persons
2 with disabilities; conferring powers and duties on the Office
3 of the Governor; establishing the Office for People with
4 Disabilities, Cabinet for People with Disabilities and
5 Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities; and
6 providing for their powers, duties and funding.

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8 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
9 hereby enacts as follows:

10 CHAPTER 1

11 PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

12 Section 101. Short title.

13 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Office for
14 People with Disabilities Act.

15 Section 102. Definitions.

16 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
17 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
18 context clearly indicates otherwise:

19 "Advisory committee." The Advisory Committee for People with
20 Disabilities established by this act.

21 "Cabinet." The Governor's Cabinet for People with
22 Disabilities established by this act.

23 "Office." The Office for People with Disabilities
24 established by this act.

25 "Person with a disability." A child or adult in this
26 Commonwealth who has a physical or mental impairment that
27 substantially limits one or more major life activities.

28 CHAPTER 3

29 OFFICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

30 Section 301. Establishment.

1 The Office for People with Disabilities is established within
2 the Office of the Governor. The office shall be administered by
3 the Office of the Governor.

4 Section 302. Powers and duties of office.

5 The office shall:

6 (1) Make recommendations to the Governor on policies,
7 procedures, regulations and legislation that aid people with
8 disabilities in this Commonwealth.

9 (2) Serve as the Governor's liaison to people with
10 disabilities on policies, procedures, regulations and
11 legislation that affect people with disabilities to ensure
12 that State government is accessible, accountable and
13 responsive to people with disabilities.

14 (3) Serve as a resource to State agencies under the
15 Governor's jurisdiction to ensure that the agencies are
16 cognizant of the needs of people with disabilities and that
17 their respective services and programs are accessible to
18 those individuals.

19 (4) Work with the Governor and State agencies to ensure
20 the efficient and effective delivery of services to people
21 with disabilities by:

22 (i) Facilitating cooperation among State agencies as
23 to their disability-related functions.

24 (ii) Serving as a liaison between the advisory
25 committee and State agencies.

26 (5) Work with the Governor and State agencies to advance
27 the hiring, retention and promotion practices of the
28 Commonwealth relating to the employment of people with
29 disabilities to ensure that there are no discriminatory
30 practices.

1 disabilities, including individuals from existing stakeholder
2 groups, in such number as the Governor deems appropriate.

3 (2) At a minimum, 60% of these members shall be persons
4 with disabilities or family members of persons with
5 disabilities.

6 (3) Members shall be selected based upon an evaluation
7 of information received through formal application.

8 (4) Members appointed shall serve at the pleasure of the
9 Governor as long as they represent the interest of the
10 membership class for which they were appointed and shall
11 serve until their successors are appointed.

12 (b) Chairperson.--The members of the advisory committee
13 shall elect a chairperson from among the members. Ballots may be
14 cast either in person or by proxy.

15 (c) Expenses of members.--The executive director shall make
16 every effort to minimize the cost of meetings through the use of
17 videoconferencing or other electronic meeting devices. Members
18 of the advisory committee shall receive no compensation for
19 their services. Members who are not employees of State
20 government shall be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the
21 course of their duties in accordance with Commonwealth policy.

22 (d) Studies and reports.--The advisory committee may conduct
23 studies and issue reports upon request and as it deems necessary
24 on issues affecting persons with disabilities in this
25 Commonwealth.

26 (e) Construction.--Nothing in this section shall be
27 construed to prevent the advisory committee from establishing ad
28 hoc work groups or local committees to assist in research and
29 other duties necessary to carry out the mission of the office.

30 (f) Work with cabinet.--The cabinet and the advisory

1 committee shall meet jointly at least once a year. The advisory
2 committee may request additional joint meetings with the cabinet
3 to facilitate communications. Representatives of the cabinet
4 shall attend advisory committee meetings.

5 (g) Existing committees.--The establishment of the advisory
6 committee is not intended to replace any existing committee that
7 performs a similar advisory function.

8 CHAPTER 9

9 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

10 Section 901. Responsibilities of State agencies.

11 State agencies shall cooperate with and provide necessary
12 assistance to the cabinet and advisory committee in performing
13 their functions.

14 Section 902. Cooperation.

15 In implementing this act, the cabinet and advisory committee
16 shall utilize existing resources available through the
17 Commonwealth and donated resources of members before incurring
18 additional expenses.

19 Section 903. Funding.

20 The Office of the Governor shall use Federal funds where
21 possible for the administration of the Office for People with
22 Disabilities, the Governor's Cabinet for People with
23 Disabilities and the Advisory Committee for People with
24 Disabilities and shall expend Federal funds, on appropriation by
25 the General Assembly, prior to expending any State
26 appropriations for the same or similar purpose. The Office of
27 the Governor shall utilize any available private funds to carry
28 out the provisions of this act.

29 Section 904. Effective date.

30 This act shall take effect in 60 days.