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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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SENATE BILL

No. 511 Session of  
2019

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INTRODUCED BY BOSCOLA, COSTA, FONTANA, HUGHES, MENSCH, BREWSTER,  
HAYWOOD, SABATINA, SCAVELLO AND KILLION, APRIL 3, 2019

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REFERRED TO JUDICIARY, APRIL 3, 2019

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AN ACT

1 Amending Title 42 (Judiciary and Judicial Procedure) of the  
2 Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, providing for  
3 registration of domestic violence predators; establishing the  
4 Domestic Violence Predator Assessment Board; and imposing  
5 powers and duties on the Pennsylvania State Police and on the  
6 Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

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

9 Section 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as  
10 Robin's Law.

11 Section 2. Title 42 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated  
12 Statutes is amended by adding a chapter to read:

13 CHAPTER 96

14 REGISTRATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREDATORS

15 Sec.

16 9601. Scope of chapter.

17 9602. Definitions.

18 9603. Registration of certain offenders for 10 years.

19 9604. Designation of domestic violence predators.

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4 9609. Duties of Pennsylvania State Police.

5 9610. Duties of Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

6 9611. Board.

7 9612. Domestic violence predators.

8 9613. Exemption from notification.

9 § 9601. Scope of chapter.

10 This chapter relates to registration of domestic violence  
11 criminal offenders.

12 § 9602. Definitions.

13 The following words and phrases when used in this chapter  
14 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 "Board." The Domestic Violence Predator Assessment Board  
17 established under section 9611 (relating to board).

18 "Conviction." An adjudication of guilt by a court of  
19 competent jurisdiction whether upon a verdict or plea of guilty  
20 or plea of nolo contendere, notwithstanding a pending appeal or  
21 habeas corpus proceeding arising from the adjudication.

22 "Domestic violence offense."

23 (1) An offense under the laws of this Commonwealth or  
24 any other jurisdiction:

25 (i) an element of which is the use or attempted use  
26 of physical force;

27 (ii) which is punishable by a term of imprisonment  
28 exceeding two years; and

29 (iii) which was committed by:

30 (A) the current or former spouse, parent or

1 guardian of the victim;

2 (B) an individual with whom the victim shares a  
3 child in common;

4 (C) an individual who cohabits with or has  
5 cohabited with the victim as a spouse, parent or  
6 guardian; or

7 (D) an individual similarly situated to a  
8 spouse, parent or guardian of the victim.

9 (2) The relationship specified under paragraph (1)(iii)  
10 need not be an element of the offense to meet the  
11 requirements of this definition.

12 (3) The term includes an attempt, solicitation or  
13 conspiracy to commit the offense.

14 "Domestic violence predator." An individual who:

15 (1) Has been convicted of a domestic violence offense.

16 (2) Is determined to be a domestic violence predator  
17 under section 9604 (relating to designation of domestic  
18 violence predators) due to a mental abnormality or  
19 personality disorder that makes the individual likely to  
20 engage in predatory domestic violence offenses.

21 "Mental abnormality." A congenital or acquired condition of  
22 an individual that affects the emotional or volitional capacity  
23 of the individual in a manner as to predispose the individual to  
24 commit violent criminal offenses to a degree that makes the  
25 individual a menace to the health and safety of other persons.

26 "Municipality." A city, borough, incorporated town or  
27 township.

28 "Personality disorder." A personality disorder as defined in  
29 the fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of  
30 Mental Disorders adopted by the American Psychiatric

1 Association.

2 "Predatory." Directed at an individual with whom a  
3 relationship has been established or promoted for the primary  
4 purpose of victimization.

5 § 9603. Registration of certain offenders for 10 years.

6 (a) Requirement.--Except as provided under subsection (b):

7 (1) An individual convicted of a domestic violence  
8 offense shall register a current address with the  
9 Pennsylvania State Police upon:

10 (i) release from incarceration;

11 (ii) parole from a State or county correctional  
12 facility; or

13 (iii) commencement of a sentence of intermediate  
14 punishment or probation.

15 (2) The period of registration shall be 10 years.

16 (b) Exceptions.--

17 (1) Subsection (a) does not apply to an individual  
18 incarcerated in a maximum or medium security correctional  
19 facility of the Department of Corrections, a private  
20 correctional facility or a correctional facility of another  
21 jurisdiction. This exception ends upon release from  
22 incarceration.

23 (2) Subsection (a) does not apply to an individual  
24 required to register under Subchapter H of Chapter 97  
25 (relating to registration of sexual offenders).

26 (c) Registration information.--The Pennsylvania State Police  
27 shall provide the information obtained under sections 9605  
28 (relating to other registration requirements) and 9606 (relating  
29 to verification of residence) and this section and the address  
30 at which the offender will reside after release from

1 incarceration, parole or probation to the chief law enforcement  
2 officer of the police department of the municipality in which  
3 the offender will reside.

4 § 9604. Designation of domestic violence predators.

5 (a) Order for assessment.--Before sentencing, the court  
6 shall order a person convicted of a domestic violence offense to  
7 be assessed by the board.

8 (b) Presumption.--There shall be a presumption that an  
9 offender convicted of a domestic violence offense is a domestic  
10 violence predator. The presumption may be rebutted by clear and  
11 convincing evidence at a hearing held under subsection (e).

12 (c) Assessment.--The board shall conduct an assessment of  
13 the offender to determine if the offender is a domestic violence  
14 predator. An assessment shall include, but not be limited to,  
15 the following:

16 (1) Age of the offender.

17 (2) Offender's prior criminal record of domestic  
18 violence offenses and any other offenses.

19 (3) Age of the victim.

20 (4) Whether the domestic violence offense involved  
21 multiple victims.

22 (5) Use of illegal drugs by the offender.

23 (6) Whether the offender completed any prior sentence  
24 and participated in a program for violent offenders.

25 (7) Mental illness or mental disability of the offender.

26 (8) The nature of the violent contact with the victim  
27 and whether the contact was part of a demonstrated pattern of  
28 abuse.

29 (9) Whether the domestic violence offense included a  
30 display of unusual cruelty by the offender during commission

1 of the crime.

2 (10) Behavioral characteristics that contribute to the  
3 offender's conduct.

4 (d) Submission of report by board.--The board shall submit a  
5 written report containing its assessment to the court no later  
6 than 30 days after the assessment was ordered.

7 (e) Court review of findings.--Upon receipt of the board's  
8 report, the court shall determine if the offender is a domestic  
9 violence predator. The determination shall be based on evidence  
10 presented at a hearing held prior to sentencing and before the  
11 trial judge. The offender and district attorney shall be given  
12 notice of the hearing and an opportunity to be heard, the right  
13 to call witnesses, including expert witnesses, and the right to  
14 conduct cross-examination. The offender shall have the right to  
15 counsel and to have an attorney appointed to represent the  
16 offender if he cannot afford one.

17 (f) Subsequent review.--No sooner than one year prior to  
18 release from a State or county correctional facility and in  
19 five-year intervals thereafter, an offender designated a  
20 domestic violence predator may petition a court having original  
21 jurisdiction in the matter for reconsideration. The court may  
22 request a new report by the board and enter an order terminating  
23 the designation, in which case the court shall notify the  
24 Pennsylvania State Police.

25 § 9605. Other registration requirements.

26 (a) Registration of domestic violence predators.--A domestic  
27 violence predator shall be required to register all current  
28 addresses with the Pennsylvania State Police upon release from  
29 incarceration, upon parole from a State or county correctional  
30 facility or upon commencing a sentence of intermediate

1 punishment. Registration shall continue unless a court  
2 terminates designation under section 9604(f) (relating to  
3 designation of domestic violence predators).

4 (b) Court information for all offenders.--At the time of  
5 sentencing, the court shall inform offenders designated under  
6 section 9603 (relating to registration of certain offenders for  
7 10 years) and domestic violence predators designated under  
8 subsection (a) of the provisions of this chapter. The court  
9 shall:

10 (1) Specifically inform the offender of the duty to  
11 register and obtain the information required for each  
12 registration.

13 (2) Specifically inform the offender of the duty to  
14 inform the Pennsylvania State Police within 10 days if the  
15 offender changes residence.

16 (3) Specifically inform the offender of the duty to  
17 register with a new law enforcement agency not later than 10  
18 days after establishing residence in another state.

19 (4) Order the fingerprints and photograph of the  
20 offender to be provided to the Pennsylvania State Police upon  
21 sentencing.

22 (5) Require the offender to read and sign a form stating  
23 that the duty to register under this chapter has been  
24 explained. If the offender is unable to read, the court shall  
25 certify that the duty to register was explained to the  
26 offender and the offender indicated an understanding of the  
27 duty.

28 (c) Correctional facilities and parole authorities.--When an  
29 offender is about to be released from incarceration or paroled  
30 from a State or county correctional facility, the prison

1 official of the State or county correctional facility, no later  
2 than 10 days prior to the release or parole of the offender,  
3 shall again provide the offender with notice of the duty to  
4 register with the Pennsylvania State Police under this chapter.

5 (d) Penalty.--An offender who fails to register as required  
6 under this section commits a felony of the third degree.

7 § 9606. Verification of residence.

8 (a) Quarterly verification.--The Pennsylvania State Police  
9 shall verify the residence of domestic violence predators every  
10 90 days through use of a nonforwardable verification form to the  
11 last reported address. The form shall be returned by the  
12 offender within 10 days.

13 (b) Annual verification.--The Pennsylvania State Police  
14 shall verify the residence of offenders designated in section  
15 9603 (relating to registration of certain offenders for 10  
16 years) annually through the use of a residence verification  
17 form. The form shall be returned by the offender within 10 days.

18 (c) Notification of address change.--A change of address of  
19 an offender required to register under this chapter reported to  
20 the Pennsylvania State Police shall be immediately reported by  
21 the Pennsylvania State Police to the appropriate law enforcement  
22 agency having jurisdiction over the offender's new place of  
23 residence. The Pennsylvania State Police shall, if the offender  
24 changes residence to another state, notify the law enforcement  
25 agency having jurisdiction of the offender's new place of  
26 residence.

27 (d) Failure to provide verification.--If an offender fails  
28 to provide verification of residence within the required 10-day  
29 period, the Pennsylvania State Police shall immediately notify  
30 the local municipal police department of the offender's last



1 verified residence. The local municipal police shall locate the  
2 offender and place the offender under arrest. The Pennsylvania  
3 State Police shall assume responsibility for locating the  
4 offender and making the arrest in jurisdictions where there is  
5 no local municipal police force. The Pennsylvania State Police  
6 shall assist any local municipal police department requesting  
7 assistance with locating and arresting an offender who fails to  
8 verify his residence.

9 (e) Penalty.--An offender who fails to verify his residence  
10 as required under this section commits a felony of the third  
11 degree.

12 § 9607. Victim notification.

13 (a) Duty to inform victim.--

14 (1) If an offender is determined to be a domestic  
15 violence predator by a court order under section 9604(e)  
16 (relating to designation of domestic violence predators), the  
17 local municipal police department or, if there is no local  
18 municipal police department, the Pennsylvania State Police  
19 shall give written notice to the victim of the offender  
20 within 72 hours after the offender registers initially or  
21 notifies the Pennsylvania State Police of an address change.  
22 The notice shall contain the offender's name and the address  
23 or addresses where the offender resides.

24 (2) A victim may waive the right to be informed under  
25 paragraph (1) by providing the local municipal police  
26 department or, if there is no local municipal police  
27 department, the Pennsylvania State Police with a written  
28 request.

29 (b) Public information.--Information provided under  
30 subsection (a) shall be available to the general public upon

1 request.

2 (c) Offenders not designated as domestic violence  
3 predators.--If an offender is not determined to be a domestic  
4 violence predator, the victim shall be notified under the act of  
5 November 24, 1998 (P.L.882, No.111), known as the Crime Victims  
6 Act.

7 § 9608. Immunity for good faith conduct.

8 The following entities shall not be held liable for damages  
9 arising from a good faith discretionary release or dissemination  
10 of or good faith failure to release or disseminate information  
11 under this section:

12 (1) The Pennsylvania State Police and local law  
13 enforcement agencies and their agents and employees.

14 (2) District attorneys and their agents and employees.

15 (3) Directors and employees of county children and youth  
16 agencies.

17 (4) The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole and  
18 its agents and employees.

19 § 9609. Duties of Pennsylvania State Police.

20 (a) General rule.--The Pennsylvania State Police shall:

21 (1) Create and maintain a State registry of offenders  
22 under section 9603 (relating to registration of certain  
23 offenders for 10 years) that shall be available on the  
24 Internet.

25 (2) In consultation with the Attorney General and the  
26 Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole, promulgate  
27 regulations necessary for administration of this chapter.

28 (3) Within 72 hours of receiving a registration, notify  
29 the chief law enforcement officer of the police department  
30 having primary jurisdiction of the municipality in which an

1 offender resides that the offender is registered with the  
2 Pennsylvania State Police under this chapter.

3 (4) Immediately forward to the Federal Bureau of  
4 Investigation information received from the Pennsylvania  
5 Board of Probation and Parole under this chapter and the  
6 fingerprints of the domestic violence predator.

7 (b) Publication.--Regulations under this chapter shall be  
8 published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin no later than one year  
9 after the effective date of this section.

10 § 9610. Duties of Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

11 The Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole shall:

12 (1) Formulate a process to be followed by State and  
13 county prison and probation and parole personnel when  
14 informing offenders of their duties and responsibilities  
15 under this chapter.

16 (2) Obtain the following information concerning each  
17 offender to whom this chapter applies:

18 (i) Name, including any aliases.

19 (ii) Identifying factors.

20 (iii) Anticipated future residence.

21 (iv) Offense history.

22 (v) Documentation of treatment received for mental  
23 abnormalities and personality disorders.

24 (3) Transmit the information under paragraph (2) to the  
25 Pennsylvania State Police without delay for immediate entry  
26 into the State registry of domestic violence offenders and  
27 the criminal history record of the offender as provided in 18  
28 Pa.C.S. Ch. 91 (relating to criminal history record  
29 information).

30 § 9611. Board.

1 (a) Establishment.--The Domestic Violence Predator  
2 Assessment Board is established and shall be composed of three  
3 persons, including a psychiatrist, a psychologist and a criminal  
4 justice expert, each of whom shall have a minimum of 10 years of  
5 experience and specialized training in the behavior and  
6 treatment of violent offenders.

7 (b) Appointment.--The Governor shall appoint the  
8 psychiatrist and psychologist board members, and the Attorney  
9 General shall appoint the criminal justice expert. All  
10 appointments shall be made within 30 days of the effective date  
11 of this section.

12 (c) Chairperson.--The board shall select a member to serve  
13 as chairperson of the board.

14 (d) Term of office.--Members of the board shall serve four-  
15 year terms.

16 (e) Compensation.--Members of the board shall be compensated  
17 at a rate of \$125 per day and receive reimbursement for their  
18 actual and necessary expenses while performing the business of  
19 the board. The chairperson shall receive \$500 additional  
20 compensation per year.

21 (f) Staff.--Support staff for the board shall be provided by  
22 the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

23 § 9612. Domestic violence predators.

24 (a) Lifetime parole and counseling.--Notwithstanding any  
25 other provision of law, a person designated as a domestic  
26 violence predator under this chapter shall remain on lifetime  
27 parole when released from a State or county correctional  
28 facility unless the court terminates the designation under  
29 section 9604(f) (relating to designation of domestic violence  
30 predators). The offender shall be required to attend at least

1 monthly counseling sessions in a program approved by the board  
2 and be financially responsible for all fees assessed from the  
3 counseling sessions. If the offender can establish to the  
4 satisfaction of the court inability to pay for counseling  
5 sessions, the offender shall attend the sessions and the parole  
6 office shall pay the requisite fees.

7 (b) Lifetime registration.--

8 (1) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an  
9 offender designated as a domestic violence predator under  
10 this chapter shall register for life if the offender:

11 (i) is convicted of a subsequent domestic violence  
12 offense requiring registration; or

13 (ii) enters this Commonwealth after the effective  
14 date of this chapter and has a conviction in another  
15 jurisdiction that would have required registration if  
16 committed in Pennsylvania.

17 (2) If a conviction is vacated and an acquittal or final  
18 discharge is entered after it has been determined that this  
19 section applies, the offender shall have the right to  
20 petition the sentencing court for reconsideration if this  
21 section would not have applied except for the conviction that  
22 was vacated.

23 (c) Authority of court in sentencing.--A court may not  
24 impose on an offender to which this section is applicable any  
25 lesser sentence than provided for in subsection (b), place the  
26 offender on probation or suspend the offender's sentence.  
27 Nothing in this section may prevent the sentencing court from  
28 imposing a sentence greater than that provided in this section.  
29 Sentencing guidelines promulgated by the Pennsylvania Commission  
30 on Sentencing shall not supersede the mandatory sentence

1 provided in this section.

2 (d) Appeal by Commonwealth.--If a sentencing court refuses  
3 to apply this section when applicable, the Commonwealth shall  
4 have a right to appellate review. The appellate court shall  
5 vacate the sentence and remand the case to the sentencing court  
6 for the imposition of a sentence in accordance with this section  
7 if it finds that the sentence was imposed in violation of this  
8 section.

9 § 9613. Exemption from notification.

10 Nothing in this chapter may be construed to impose a duty on  
11 a person licensed under the act of February 19, 1980 (P.L.15,  
12 No.9), known as the Real Estate Licensing and Registration Act,  
13 or an employee of the person, to disclose information regarding  
14 an offender required to register under this chapter.

15 Section 3. This act shall take effect in six months.