

# News

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Press Release  
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FURTHER INFORMATION:  
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## **Central Registry of Offenders against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities in Effect**

**TRENTON** – Department of Human Services (DHS) Commissioner Jennifer Velez today announced that the law signed by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie on April 30, 2010 establishing a “Central Registry of Offenders against Individuals with Developmental Disabilities” within DHS, goes into effect today.

This law exclusively applies to DHS’ funded, licensed, contracted or regulated programs that provide services to people with developmental disabilities. It requires DHS to maintain a central registry - a confidential list of caregivers working in these programs who have been determined to have abused, neglected, or exploited an individual with a developmental disability. This law will bar listed offenders from being reemployed by, or volunteering in, DHS-funded programs.

“Governor Christie signed this landmark legislation that serves to help protect individuals with developmental disabilities from neglectful, exploitative or abusive caregivers,” said Commissioner Velez. “The creation of the central registry resulted from a bipartisan effort of the New Jersey Legislature and has the support of individuals with developmental disabilities, family members, advocates, service providers this department.”

Both paid and volunteer caregivers providing services and supports to individuals with developmental disabilities are subject to the central registry. Employers providing these services are required to determine if potential caregivers are included on the central registry. Names appearing on the list will be barred from consideration by the employer.

“This central registry law and regulations provide a fair and formal way to reduce the risk of potentially rehiring, in Department of Human Services funded programs, caregivers who have been found to have neglected, abused or exploited individuals with developmental disabilities entrusted to their care,” said Commissioner Velez.

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Qualified employers will have access to a confidential list of caregiver names that have been determined to have caused, or potentially caused, injury to an individual with a developmental disability. Individuals listed on the registry are prohibited from working or volunteering in a facility or program of DHS, or any facility or program licensed, contracted or regulated by DHS.

The law, S825/A2038 (Sweeney/Beck/Fuentes/Vainieri Huttler/ Ramos /Scalera /Greenstein), provided 180 days to DHS to develop the necessary regulations to maintain a list of offenders and to provide confidential access to the list to DHS licensed and contracted facilities. The proposed regulations are [available online](#) and will be published in the December 6, 2010 edition of the New Jersey Register.

An accused offender's rights to due process and confidentiality from public disclosure are protected by the regulations. The regulations allow for the rehabilitation of an offender in order to be removed from the central registry.

Under state law, employees and volunteers of DHS and any facility or program licensed, contracted or regulated by DHS are required to report allegations of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of any individual with a developmental disability. Reports also may be made by any person having reasonable cause to believe that an individual has been a victim. The toll-free number to report abuse is 1-800-832-9173.

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