

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2018 Session of
2025

INTRODUCED BY HANBIDGE, SHUSTERMAN, PROBST, T. DAVIS, WAXMAN,
HILL-EVANS, FREEMAN, CONKLIN, KHAN, BOROWSKI, SANCHEZ,
HOHENSTEIN, HOWARD, CEPEDA-FREYTIZ, INGLIS, D. WILLIAMS,
FRANKEL AND BRIGGS, NOVEMBER 6, 2025

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025

AN ACT

1 Amending Titles 18 (Crimes and Offenses) and 23 (Domestic
2 Relations) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, further
3 providing for the disclosure of certain criminal history
4 record information and certain information related to abuse
5 to the Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board and to any
6 domestic violence fatality review team; and establishing the
7 Domestic Violence Fatality Review Program.

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

10 Section 1. Section 9104(d) of Title 18 of the Pennsylvania
11 Consolidated Statutes is amended to read:

12 § 9104. Scope.

13 * * *

14 (d) Certain disclosures authorized.--

15 (1) Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit a criminal
16 justice agency from disclosing an individual's prior criminal
17 activity to an individual or agency if the information
18 disclosed is based on records set forth in subsection (a).

19 (2) Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit a criminal

justice agency from disclosing criminal history record
information and intelligence information, investigative
information, treatment information, including medical and
psychological information, caution indicator information,
modus operandi information, missing persons information,
employment history information, personal history information
or presentence investigative information to members of a
Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board established under 23
Pa.C.S. Ch. 68 (relating to Domestic Violence Fatality Review
Program) and authorized under that chapter to investigate and
analyze domestic violence-related fatalities.

* * *

Section 2. Section 9121(b.1) of Title 18 is amended to read:
§ 9121. General regulations.

* * *

(b.1) Exception.--Subsection (b)(1) and (2) shall not apply
[if]:

(1) If the request is made by a county children and
youth agency or the Department of Human Services in the
performance of duties relating to children and youth under
the act of June 24, 1937 (P.L.2017, No.396), known as the
County Institution District Law, [section 2168 of the act of
August 9, 1955 (P.L.323, No.130), known as The County Code,]
16 Pa.C.S. § 15768 (relating to powers and duties of county
commissioners relating to children), the act of June 13, 1967
(P.L.31, No.21), known as the Human Services Code, 23 Pa.C.S.
Ch. 63 (relating to child protective services) or 42 Pa.C.S.
Ch. 63 (relating to juvenile matters).

(2) If the request is made by a domestic violence
fatality review team or the Domestic Violence Fatality Review

1 Board established under 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 68 (relating to
2 Domestic Violence Fatality Review Program) and authorized
3 under that chapter to investigate and analyze domestic
4 violence-related fatalities.

5 * * *

6 Section 3. Section 6340(a) of Title 23 is amended by adding
7 a paragraph to read:

8 § 6340. Release of information in confidential reports.

9 (a) General rule.--Reports specified in section 6339
10 (relating to confidentiality of reports) shall only be made
11 available to:

12 * * *

13 (10.1) Members of a domestic violence fatality review
14 team and members of the Domestic Violence Fatality Review
15 Board established under Chapter 68 (relating to Domestic
16 Violence Fatality Review Program) and authorized under that
17 chapter to investigate and analyze domestic violence-related
18 fatalities.

19 * * *

20 Section 4. Title 23 is amended by adding a chapter to read:

21 CHAPTER 68

22 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW PROGRAM

23 Sec.

24 6801. Scope of chapter.

25 6802. Definitions.

26 6803. Domestic Violence Fatality Review Program.

27 6804. Domestic violence fatality review teams.

28 6805. Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board.

29 6806. Access to records.

30 6807. Confidentiality.

1 6808. Penalties.

2 § 6801. Scope of chapter.

3 This chapter relates to domestic violence fatality review.

4 § 6802. Definitions.

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

8 "Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board" or "board." A
9 multidisciplinary, Statewide panel that advises domestic
10 violence fatality review teams and recommends Statewide
11 improvements in domestic violence investigation, intervention
12 and prevention efforts.

13 "Domestic violence fatality review team" or "review team." A
14 multidisciplinary team that reviews domestic violence-related
15 fatalities in a local jurisdiction.

16 "Domestic violence-related fatality." A death resulting from
17 or relating to an act of abuse as defined in section 6102
18 (relating to definitions), including the fatality of a victim,
19 perpetrator, family member, partner or bystander.

20 § 6803. Domestic Violence Fatality Review Program.

21 (a) Establishment.--The Office of Attorney General shall
22 establish a program to be known as the Domestic Violence
23 Fatality Review Program and a Domestic Violence Fatality Review
24 Board, consisting of domestic violence fatality review teams
25 with the purpose of investigating domestic violence-related
26 fatalities and identifying gaps in systemic responses to
27 domestic violence, as well as recommending improvements in
28 domestic violence investigations, interventions and prevention
29 efforts throughout this Commonwealth.

30 (b) Administration.--The Office of Attorney General shall

1 coordinate the activities of the board and shall be responsible
2 for the provision of standard protocols, training and technical
3 assistance to review teams.

4 (c) Case selection.--A review team and the board may only
5 review domestic violence-related fatalities in which:

6 (1) no criminal charges have been filed against a
7 perpetrator associated with a domestic violence-related
8 fatality and the chief law enforcement officer of the
9 jurisdiction indicates that no criminal charges will be
10 filed; or

11 (2) all criminal legal proceedings associated with a
12 domestic violence-related fatality have been closed.

13 § 6804. Domestic violence fatality review teams.

14 (a) Duties.--A domestic violence fatality review team shall:

15 (1) Gather information regarding the events leading to
16 and facts surrounding incidences of domestic violence-related
17 fatalities.

18 (2) Analyze information gathered regarding domestic
19 violence-related fatalities.

20 (3) Identify trends, patterns and risk factors resulting
21 from domestic violence-related fatality investigations.

22 (4) Examine and assess service delivery related to
23 domestic violence.

24 (5) Provide aggregated fatality review reports to the
25 board pursuant to section 6805 (relating to Domestic Violence
26 Fatality Review Board).

27 (b) Protocols.--A review team shall establish a protocol for
28 the investigation of domestic violence-related fatalities in
29 consultation with the board.

30 (c) Location.--A review team may be established in any

1 jurisdiction or combination of jurisdictions.

2 (d) Membership.--Membership of a review team may include
3 court personnel, law enforcement, medical professionals, victim
4 advocates and any other individual or entity that the review
5 team deems appropriate for the conduct of the review.

6 (e) Additional duties.--In furtherance of the purposes of
7 this section, a review team may recommend any of the following:

8 (1) Changes in legislation, regulations, policies,
9 budgets, treatment and service standards that may facilitate
10 the reduction of domestic violence-related fatalities.

11 (2) Prevention and intervention strategies.

12 (3) Public awareness strategies.

13 (4) Strategies for enhanced interagency coordination.

14 § 6805. Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board.

15 (a) Powers and duties.--The Domestic Violence Fatality
16 Review Board shall:

17 (1) Advise and consult with review teams.

18 (2) Provide education and technical assistance to review
19 teams.

20 (3) Develop minimum data collection guidelines for
21 review teams.

22 (4) Receive summary fatality review reports from review
23 teams.

24 (5) Analyze data from the reports of review teams to
25 identify Statewide trends and patterns associated with
26 domestic violence-related fatalities.

27 (6) Recommend changes to domestic violence prevention,
28 intervention and investigation efforts and monitor the
29 implementation of these recommendations.

30 (7) Prepare an annual report of findings,

1 recommendations and steps taken to implement recommendations
2 subject to the following requirements:

3 (i) The annual report may not contain information
4 identifying any victim or alleged perpetrator of domestic
5 violence or their family members.

6 (ii) The annual report shall be submitted to the
7 public and the Governor on September 1 of each year and
8 shall be presented at a joint meeting of the Judiciary
9 Committee of the Senate and the Judiciary Committee of
10 the House of Representatives at a public hearing.

11 (b) Membership.--At a minimum, the board shall be composed
12 of a designee from:

13 (1) The Office of Attorney General.

14 (2) The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic
15 Violence.

16 (3) Two local domestic violence programs as defined in
17 section 2333(e) of the act of April 9, 1929 (P.L.177,
18 No.175), known as The Administrative Code of 1929, to be
19 chosen by a majority vote of the board from a list of at
20 least six programs provided by the Pennsylvania Coalition
21 Against Domestic Violence.

22 (4) The Office of Physician General.

23 (5) The Office of Victim Advocate.

24 (6) The Pennsylvania Parole Board.

25 (7) The Pennsylvania State Police.

26 (8) The Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts.

27 (9) Three community members impacted by domestic
28 violence or a domestic violence-related fatality to be chosen
29 by a majority vote of the board from a list of at least nine
30 community members provided by the Pennsylvania Coalition

1 Against Domestic Violence.

2 (10) The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and
3 Delinquency.

4 (11) An eligible legal services provider as defined in
5 42 Pa.C.S. § 4903 (relating to definitions).

6 (12) The State association of sheriffs authorized by the
7 act of June 14, 1923 (P.L.774, No.305), entitled "An act
8 authorizing the sheriffs of the several counties of this
9 Commonwealth to organize themselves into a State Association,
10 for the purpose of holding annual meetings, to secure more
11 uniformity and cooperation in the conduct of their offices,
12 and providing for the payment of certain expenses in
13 connection with such meetings by the various counties."

14 (13) A rape crisis center, as defined in section 2333(e)
15 of The Administrative Code of 1929, to be selected by a
16 majority vote of the board.

17 (14) The State association for district attorneys as
18 provided in 16 Pa.C.S. § 12340 (relating to State
19 associations) to be selected by a majority vote of the board.

20 (15) Two members of the Senate appointed by the
21 President pro tempore, one from the majority party and one
22 from the minority party.

23 (16) Two members of the House of Representatives
24 appointed by the Speaker, one from the majority party and one
25 from the minority party.

26 (17) Any other person that the board by a majority vote
27 deems appropriate.

28 (c) Initial board organization.--The initial organization of
29 the board shall consist of the designees under subsection (b)
30 (1), (2), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (10), (11), (12), (15) and

1 (16). After these members are organized into the board, the
2 board shall act to name designees to the board under subsection
3 (b) (2), (3), (9), (13), (14) and (17). Thereafter the board
4 shall conduct its normal business.

5 § 6806. Access to records.

6 (a) Power.--A review team and the board have the power to
7 access and review the following records to the extent permitted
8 by law or court rule:

9 (1) Guardian ad litem reports, parenting evaluations and
10 victim impact statements.

11 (2) Media accounts.

12 (3) Protection from abuse documents, transcripts,
13 violations and other materials as produced by the courts and
14 law enforcement officials.

15 (4) Criminal history record information.

16 (5) Law enforcement incident documentation from closed
17 cases, such as incident reports, dispatch records, victim,
18 witness and suspect reports.

19 (6) Medical examiners' and coroners' reports.

20 (7) Records of court proceedings.

21 (8) Documents, reports and evaluations prepared in
22 conjunction with court proceedings pursuant to general or
23 local court rules.

24 (9) Probation and parole information.

25 (10) Reports to animal control.

26 (11) Presentence interviews and reports, and any
27 recommendations made regarding bail and release on own
28 recognizance.

29 (12) Investigative reports from the Office of Children,
30 Youth and Families.

1 (13) Statements from witnesses, friends, family and
2 employers of the victim and perpetrator.

3 (14) Any other information determined to be relevant to
4 the review that will not jeopardize an ongoing investigation
5 or prosecution.

6 (b) Court order.--In the event that the custodian of a
7 record described under subsection (a) refuses a request by a
8 review team or the board for access to the record, the court
9 shall issue an order directing the custodian of the records to
10 comply with the request.

11 (c) Confidentiality of information.--A review team and the
12 board shall maintain the confidentiality of information
13 contained in record assessment under this section to the extent
14 required by any applicable law.

15 (d) Immunity.--An entity, individual or institution that in
16 good faith provides information or records to a review team or
17 the board is immune from civil or criminal liability that might
18 otherwise be imposed as a result of providing the information or
19 record.

20 § 6807. Confidentiality.

21 (a) Signed confidentiality agreement.--Each member of a
22 review team and the board and any individual appearing before
23 them shall be required to sign a confidentiality agreement
24 created by the board in order to maintain the confidentiality of
25 the proceedings.

26 (b) Confidentiality of proceedings, deliberations and
27 opinions.--

28 (1) The proceedings, deliberations and opinions of a
29 review team and the board and their members are privileged
30 and confidential, except as otherwise provided by this

1 chapter.

2 (2) Information known to or opinions held by members of
3 a review team or the board and any individual who presents
4 information to a review team or the board is not subject to
5 discovery, subpoena or introduction into evidence in any
6 civil or criminal action, except as otherwise provided in
7 this chapter.

8 (c) Confidentiality of records.--

9 (1) The records of a review team and the board are
10 privileged and confidential, except as otherwise provided by
11 this chapter. Records of a review team and the board are not
12 subject to discovery, subpoena or introduction into evidence
13 in any civil or criminal action, except as otherwise provided
14 in this chapter.

15 (2) All records brought to a review team by a person or
16 agency remain the property of that person or agency and shall
17 be maintained by the person or agency to which the records
18 belong.

19 (3) All records produced by a review team are the
20 property of that review team. The records, including the
21 names of victims, alleged perpetrators and family members, as
22 well as documents relating to the proceedings, opinions and
23 deliberations of a review team, shall remain confidential and
24 are not subject to inspection and duplication under the
25 Right-to-Know Law.

26 (4) All records produced by the board are the property
27 of the board. The records, including the names of victims,
28 alleged perpetrators and family members, as well as documents
29 relating to the proceedings, opinions and deliberations of
30 the board shall remain confidential and are not subject to

1 inspection and duplication under the Right-to-Know Law.

2 (5) Release of aggregated statistics, scenarios, annual
3 reports, recommendations and other nonidentifying information
4 by a review team or the board does not conflict with the duty
5 of confidentiality under this section.

6 (d) Discovery.--Nothing in this section shall be construed
7 to restrict or limit the right to discover or use in a civil or
8 criminal action any evidence that is discoverable independent of
9 the proceedings of a review team or the board.

10 (e) Immunity of members.--

11 (1) The board and its members and any review team and
12 its members acting within the scope of the program are immune
13 from all civil liability resulting from an act or omission
14 arising out of and in the course of the board's or the review
15 team's performance of that activity, unless the act or
16 omission was the result of gross negligence, recklessness or
17 intentional misconduct.

18 (2) This subsection shall not be construed to limit any
19 other immunity provided by statute or common law.

20 § 6808. Penalties.

21 A person who discloses, makes use of or knowingly permits the
22 use of information concerning a victim or other persons in
23 violation of this chapter commits a summary offense.

24 Section 5. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026, or
25 immediately, whichever is later.