



DUTY TO PROTECT BILL

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This addition to our State's Mental Hygiene Law will engage mental health practitioners in protecting the citizens of New York State.

- Mental health practitioners may be the first to find out about an imminent harmful act, they can serve an important, front line function in keeping the public safe.
 - The Duty to Protect law will allow mental health practitioners, who are often the first to find out about an imminent harmful act, to take effective steps to keep the public safe.
- This addition to the Mental Hygiene Law defines how and when risk-reduction makes up part of mental health practitioners' function, service, and professional identity.
 - The Duty to Protect Law makes it much more likely that mental health practitioners will take rapid, effective action to protect the public because it clears up longstanding uncertainty about how practitioners can respond to potentially dangerous patients.
- The addition defines immunity in the context of risk-reduction and confidentiality, and thus allows the mental health practitioner, when necessary, to override a patient's confidentiality in order to protect the public.
 - Because the Duty to Protect law provides immunity to mental health practitioners, it removes a major obstacle to practitioners taking effective action when dealing with potentially dangerous patients.
- The addition of this Duty to Protect legislation provides the mental health professions (psychology and others) with a template with which to frame the training of members in their risk-reducing function.
 - The Duty to Protect law protects the public because it provides comprehensive and clear guidance that can readily be incorporated into the state-wide professional training and ongoing education of mental health practitioners.