

2025 -- H 5348 SUBSTITUTE A

LC000439/SUB A

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

A N A C T

RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION OF  
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES -- HIV/AIDS

Introduced By: Representatives Ajello, Cruz, Felix, Tanzi, Craven, Shallcross Smith,  
Speakman, Boylan, McGaw, and Furtado  
Date Introduced: February 07, 2025

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 23-6.3-4 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-6.3 entitled "Prevention  
and Suppression of Contagious Diseases — HIV/AIDS" is hereby amended to read as follows:

**23-6.3-4. Exceptions to consent requirements.**

(a) A healthcare provider may test for the presence of HIV without obtaining consent from  
the individual to be tested under the following conditions:

(1) When the individual to be tested is under one year of age;

(2) When a child between one and thirteen (13) years of age appears to be symptomatic for  
HIV;

(3) When the individual to be tested is a minor under the care and authority of the  
department of children, youth and families, and the director of that department certifies that an HIV  
test is necessary to secure health or human services for that individual;

(4) In a licensed healthcare facility or healthcare setting, in the event that an occupational  
health representative or physician, registered nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or nurse-  
midwife, not directly involved in the exposure, determines that an employee or emergency service  
worker, other than one in a supervisory position to the person making the determination, had a  
significant exposure to the blood and/or body fluids of a patient and the patient or the patient's  
guardian refuses to grant consent for an HIV test to determine whether the patient has HIV, then,  
if a sample of the patient's blood is available, that blood shall be tested for HIV.

1 (i) If a sample of the patient's blood is not otherwise available and the patient refuses to  
2 grant consent to draw blood, the employee or emergency service worker may petition the superior  
3 court for a court order mandating that the test be performed.

4 (ii) Before a patient or a sample of the patient's blood is required to undergo an HIV test,  
5 the employee or emergency service worker must submit to a baseline HIV test within seventy-two  
6 (72) hours of the exposure.

7 (iii) No person who determines that an employee or emergency service worker has  
8 sustained a significant exposure and authorizes the HIV testing of a patient, nor any person or  
9 healthcare facility who acts in good faith and recommends the test be performed, shall have any  
10 liability as a result of their actions carried out under this chapter, unless those persons are proven  
11 to have acted in bad faith.

12 (iv) For the purposes of this section, "emergency service worker" means a worker  
13 responding on behalf of a licensed ambulance/rescue service, or a fire department or a law  
14 enforcement agency, who, in the course of his/her professional duties, has been exposed to bodily  
15 fluids in circumstances that present a significant risk of transmission of HIV, and has completed a  
16 pre-hospital exposure form in accordance with § 23-4.1-19.

17 (5) In an emergency, where due to a grave medical or psychiatric condition, and it is  
18 impossible to obtain consent from the patient or, if applicable under state law, the patient's parent,  
19 guardian, or agent.

20 (6) As permitted under § 23-1-38 entitled "HIV Antibody Testing-Sperm Collection or  
21 Donation."

22 ~~(7) Any individual convicted of a violation of any provisions of chapter 34.1 of title 11~~  
23 ~~entitled "Commercial Sexual Activity," shall be required to be tested for HIV unless already~~  
24 ~~documented HIV positive. All individuals tested under this section shall be informed of their test~~  
25 ~~results. All individuals tested under this section who are determined to be injecting and/or intra-~~  
26 ~~nasal drug users shall be referred to appropriate substance abuse treatment as outlined in § 23-6.3-~~  
27 ~~3(e).~~

28 (8) Any individual convicted of possession of any controlled substance as defined in  
29 chapter 28 of title 21 entitled "Uniform Controlled Substances Act," that has been administered  
30 with a hypodermic instrument, retractable hypodermic syringe, needle, intra-nasally, or any similar  
31 instrument adapted for the administration of drugs shall be required to be tested for HIV unless  
32 already documented HIV positive.

33 (9) All individuals tested under this section shall be informed of their test results.

34 (10) In accordance with the provisions of chapter 37 of title 11, entitled, "Sexual Assault,"

1 any individual who has admitted to or been convicted of or adjudicated wayward or delinquent by  
2 reason of having committed any sexual offense involving penetration whether or not a sentence or  
3 fine is imposed or probation granted, shall be ordered by the court upon petition of the victim,  
4 immediate family members of the victim or legal guardian of the victim, to submit to a blood test  
5 for the presence of a sexually transmitted disease including, but not limited to, HIV. All individuals  
6 tested under this section shall be informed of their test results.

7 (11) In accordance with the provisions of § 42-56-37, entitled "HIV Testing," every  
8 individual who is committed to the adult correctional institutions to any criminal offense, after  
9 conviction, is required to be tested for HIV.

10 (b) It is unlawful for any person to disclose to a third party the results of an individual's  
11 HIV test without the prior written consent of that individual, except in accordance with § 23-6.3-7.

12 SECTION 2. Section 11-34.1-12 of the General Laws in Chapter 11-34.1 entitled  
13 "Commercial Sexual Activity" is hereby amended to read as follows:

14 **11-34.1-12. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).**

15 (a) Any person convicted of a violation of any provisions of this chapter shall be ~~required~~  
16 provided the option to be tested for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). ~~No consent for the~~  
17 ~~testing shall be required.~~

18 (b) The department of health shall maintain sites for providing both anonymous and  
19 confidential HIV testing, and HIV counseling and referral. Each site, funded by the department of  
20 health, shall offer free testing, counseling and referral for indigent parties and other individuals  
21 without health insurance, offer a sliding scale for payment for all other individuals and, in the case  
22 of confidential testing, screen for ability to pay through a third-party insurer. In the case of  
23 nonfunded sites for HIV testing, organizations and/or institutions performing the test shall offer  
24 free testing, counseling and referral for indigent parties and other individuals without health  
25 insurance.

26 (c) All persons tested under this section shall be provided pre-test and post-test counseling  
27 by individuals trained by the department of health, as an HIV testing counselor, in accordance with  
28 regulations promulgated by the department of health; provided, that the counseling shall be in  
29 accordance with acceptable medical standards.

30 (d) All persons who are tested under this section, who are determined to be injecting drug  
31 users, shall be referred to appropriate sources of substance abuse treatment by the HIV testing  
32 counselor and/or the attending practitioner as follows:

33 (1) Those persons who test positive for HIV infection shall be given priority for those  
34 outpatient substance abuse treatment programs that are sponsored or supported by the appropriate

1 state agency responsible for these services.

2 (2) Those persons who are injecting drug users and test negative for HIV infection shall be

3 referred, by the HIV testing counselor and/or attending practitioner, to the appropriate state agency

4 responsible for these services for earliest possible evaluation and treatment.

5 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION OF  
CONTAGIOUS DISEASES -- HIV/AIDS

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1           This act would repeal the required HIV testing for an individual convicted under chapter  
2   34.1 of title 11 ("commercial sexual activity"). It would also allow the option for HIV testing for  
3   any person convicted under this chapter.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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