Infectious Disease Prison Testing Act

Summary

This Act allows the Department of Corrections, upon taking custody, to provide for the testing of persons committed (including each adult male, adult female and juvenile) for infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and any other identified causative agent of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), and Hepatitis C virus (HCV). Also, such testing shall also be provided for committed persons incarcerated at their next regular medical examination provided by the Department. The Department shall notify the person’s spouse, if any, if such test indicates the presence of HIV or HCV infection, and shall counsel the infected individual prior to his or her release. This Act does not allow the housing a committed person, who is HIV or HCV infected, in a cell with a person, who is not so infected or whose infection status is undetermined.

Model Legislation

Section 1. {Title} This Act may be cited as the “Infectious Disease Prison Testing Act.”

Section 2. {Definitions} For the purposes of this Act the following definitions apply:

(A.) “HIV” means the human immunodeficiency virus identified or any other identified causative agents of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

(B.) “HCV” means the Hepatitis C virus.

(C.) “HIV and HCV Test” means an enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) to determine the presence of antibodies to the human immunodeficiency virus or Hepatitis C virus, or such other tests as may be approved by the Department of Public Health; in the event of a positive result, a more reliable confirmatory test, shall also be administered.

Section 3. {Testing Requirements}

(A.) (1.) Upon taking custody of a committed person (including each adult male, adult female and juvenile) the Department of Corrections shall provide for the testing of such committed persons for infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and any other identified causative agent of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), and Hepatitis C virus (HCV). Such testing shall also be provided for committed persons incarcerated before the effective date of this Act at their next regular medical examination provided by the Department. (Drafting note: this section could either include HCV testing upon entry or HCV testing whenever a standard blood test reveals and elevated ALT (liver enzyme test). Most prisons do standard blood screens as part of the entry work-up for a new prisoner. If elevated ALT then, complete a HCV blood test.)

(B.) (1.) Any person committed to any institution or facility of the Department of Corrections (including institutions for each adult male, adult female, and juvenile) shall, not more than thirty (30) nor fewer than fifteen (15) days prior to his/her release, discharge, or non-emergency furlough from the institution or facility, be given HIV and HCV tests by the Department. {Drafting note: this section could either include HCV testing upon entry or HCV testing whenever a standard blood test reveals and elevated ALT (liver enzyme test).}

(C.) Within five (5) days of receiving notification of a diagnosis of HIV or HCV infection in a committed person, the warden of the institution or facility where that person is committed shall report to the Department of Public Health the name and whereabouts of the infected person and shall cooperate with the Department of Public Health in making the person available for a confidential interview by an employee of the Department of Public Health in accordance with the provisions of ALEC’s HIV Partner Notification Act.

(D.) Each month, the Department of Corrections shall report such statistical information on the testing program as the Department of Public Health shall require. That information shall include, at a minimum, the age, gender, race, and county of residence of each committed person found to be HIV and HCV infected, whether the person has a history of intravenous drug use, and the crime or crimes for which the person is incarcerated. This information shall be incorporated into the Department of Public Health’s, regular reports on HIV and HCV infection.
(E.) The Department shall not house a committed person who is HIV or HCV infected in a cell with a person who is not so infected or whose infection status is undetermined, and the Department shall, to extent possible, separate all committed persons who are HIV or HCV infected from all other committed persons.

Section 4. {Disclosure} Notwithstanding any other Act or regulation on, the results of the blood test to detect evidence of infection by HIV or HCV shall be disclosed to the warden of the institution or facility where the individual is committed and may be disclosed by the warden to such other employees of the Department of Corrections as have a need to know in order to perform their necessary duties in the assignment of committed persons within institutions or facilities.

Section 5. {Severability Clause}

Section 6. {Repealer Clause}

Section 7. {Effective Date}

Adopted by the Health and Human Services Task Force and approved by the ALEC Board of Directors in 1990.