

# HOUSE . . . . . No. 1947

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## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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In the Year Two Thousand Nine  
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An Act relative to the treatment of prisoners..

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:*

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 127 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding after  
2   Section 32 the following new section:—Section 32A. TREATMENT OF EMOTIONALLY  
3   DISTURBED PRISONERS

4           (A) Prohibitions Concerning Intervention for Suicide Attempts and Self-Mutilation(1) A  
5   prisoner who either commits self-mutilation or attempts suicide shall not be disciplined or  
6   punished for such behavior, nor shall the prisoner be segregated or isolated except to the extent  
7   specifically authorized by medical staff for treatment. The use of “closed solid door isolation,”  
8   so-called, to punish or manage suicidal or self-mutilating prisoners is specifically prohibited.

9           (B) Requirements Concerning Intervention for Suicide Attempts and Self-Mutilation(1)  
10   The commissioner shall require that the following steps be taken to insure appropriate responses  
11   to suicide attempts. Institutional staff will be trained in techniques for responding to suicide  
12   attempts and self-mutilation that ensure the safe and quick extrication of prisoners who hang  
13   themselves and the provision of necessary first aid. A prisoner who commits self-mutilation or  
14   attempts suicide shall immediately receive appropriate medical attention and shall be interviewed

15 by a licensed mental health professional within twelve hours of the incident, which interview  
16 shall be logged in the inmate's medical record and in the block log where the prisoner is located  
17 at the time of the interview.