

AGGRAVATED ASSAULT – DIRECT CARE WORKER
(ATTEMPTING TO CAUSE OR PURPOSELY, KNOWINGLY OR
RECKLESSLY CAUSING BODILY INJURY)
N.J.S.A. 2C:12-1b(5)(k)

Count _____ of this indictment charges the defendant with aggravated assault.

(Read appropriate count of indictment)

The defendant is accused of violating a law that provides, in pertinent part:

A person is guilty of aggravated assault if he/she attempts to cause or purposely, knowingly or recklessly causes bodily injury to any direct care worker at a (State or county psychiatric hospital)(State developmental center)(Veterans' Memorial Home), while clearly identifiable as being engaged in the duties of providing direct patient care or practicing the health care profession, provided that the actor is not a patient or resident at the facility who is classified by the facility as having a mental illness or developmental disability;

In order for you to find the defendant guilty of this charge, the State must prove each of the following elements beyond a reasonable doubt:

(CHARGE AS APPROPRIATE)

OPTION ONE (Causing Bodily Injury)

1. That the defendant did cause bodily injury to **NAME OF VICTIM**;
2. That the defendant acted purposely or knowingly or recklessly in causing bodily injury to **NAME OF VICTIM**;
3. That **NAME OF VICTIM** was a direct care worker at a (State or county psychiatric hospital)(State developmental center)(Veterans' Memorial Home);
4. That the defendant caused the bodily injury while **NAME OF VICTIM** was clearly identifiable as being engaged in the duties of providing direct patient care or practicing the health care profession; and
5. The defendant was not a (patient)(resident) at the facility who was classified by the facility as having a mental illness or developmental disability;

The first element that the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is the defendant caused bodily injury to another.

Bodily injury is defined as physical pain, illness or any impairment of the physical

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condition.¹

The second element that the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is the defendant acted purposely or knowingly or recklessly in causing bodily injury to **NAME OF VICTIM**.

A person acts purposely with respect to causing bodily injury to another if it is a person's conscious object to cause bodily injury to another. A person acts purposely with respect to attendant circumstances if a person is aware of the existence of such circumstances or a person believes or hopes that they exist. One can be deemed to be acting purposely if one acts with design, with a purpose, with a particular object, if one really means to do what he/she does.

A person acts knowingly with respect to causing bodily injury if a person is aware that his/her conduct is of that nature, or that such circumstances exist or a person is aware of a high probability of their existence. A person acts knowingly with respect to a result of his/her conduct if a person is aware that it is practically certain that his/her conduct will cause bodily injury. One is said to act knowingly if one acts with knowledge, if one acts consciously, if he/she comprehends his/her acts.

A person acts recklessly with respect to causing bodily injury when a person consciously disregards a substantial and unjustifiable risk that the material element exists or will result from his/her conduct. The risk must be of such a nature and degree that, considering the nature and purpose of the actor's conduct and the circumstances known to the actor its disregard involves a gross deviation from the standard of conduct that a reasonable person would observe in the actor's situation. One is said to act recklessly if one acts with recklessness, with scorn for the consequences, heedlessly, foolhardily.

The nature of the purpose or knowledge or recklessness with which the defendant acted toward the victim of the assault is a question of fact for you the jury to decide. Purpose and knowledge and recklessness are conditions of the mind which cannot be seen and can only be determined by inferences from conduct, words or acts. It is not necessary for the State to produce a witness or witnesses who could testify that the defendant stated, for example, that his/her purpose was to cause bodily injury. It is within your power to find that proof of purpose or knowledge or recklessness has been furnished beyond a reasonable doubt by inferences which

¹ N.J.S.A. 2C:11-1(a).

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may arise from the nature of the acts and the surrounding circumstances.²

The third element that the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is that **NAME OF VICTIM** was a direct care worker at a (State or county psychiatric hospital)(State developmental center)(Veterans' Memorial Home).

A direct care worker means any person whose primary function is face-to-face interaction with the patient or resident whereby the worker is providing therapeutic contact necessary to achieve the patient or resident's treatment goals.³ The term includes any Human Services Technician; Human Services Assistant; physician; psychiatrist; dentist; psychologist; nurse; nurse assistant; physical, occupational, or speech therapist; social worker, providing patient or resident therapeutic care in a (State or county psychiatric hospital)(State developmental center)(Veterans' Memorial Home), or any other person so designated by the Adjutant General.⁴

The fourth element that the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is that the defendant caused the bodily injury while **NAME OF VICTIM** was clearly identifiable as being engaged in the duties of providing direct patient care or practicing the health care profession.

The fifth element that State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the defendant was neither a patient nor a resident at the facility who was classified by the facility as having a mental illness or developmental disability. In other words, the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt either 1) that the defendant was not a patient or resident at the facility, or, 2) if he/she was a patient or resident, then the State must prove that he/she was not classified by the facility as having a mental illness or developmental disability in order to satisfy this element.

If you find that the State has proved each element of the crime beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find the defendant guilty. If, however, you find that the State has failed to prove any element of the offense beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find the defendant not guilty.

OPTION TWO (ATTEMPT TO CAUSE BODILY INJURY):

1. That the defendant attempted to cause bodily injury to **NAME OF VICTIM**;

² If causation is an issue, the jury should be instructed on causation. See N.J.S.A. 2C:2-3a(1) et. seq.

³ See N.J.A.C. 10:37F-1.3.

⁴ See N.J.S.A. 38A:3-2b5h.

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2. That the defendant acted purposely;
3. That (**NAME OF VICTIM**) was a direct care worker at a (State or county psychiatric hospital)(State developmental center)(Veterans' Memorial Home);
4. That the defendant attempted to cause bodily injury while **NAME OF VICTIM** was clearly identifiable as being engaged in the duties of providing direct patient care or practicing the health care profession; and
5. The defendant was not a (patient)(resident) at the facility who was classified by the facility as having a mental illness or developmental disability;

The first element that the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is the defendant attempted to cause bodily injury to another.

Bodily injury is defined as physical pain, illness or any impairment of the physical condition.

The second element the state must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is the defendant purposely attempted to cause bodily injury to **NAME OF VICTIM**.

A person acts purposely with respect to causing bodily injury if it is a person's conscious object to cause bodily injury. A person acts purposely with respect to attendant circumstances if a person is aware of the existence of such circumstances or a person believes or hopes that they exist. One can be deemed to be acting purposely if one acts with design, with a purpose, with a particular object, if one really means to do what he/she does.

The law provides that a person attempts to commit the crime of assault, in this context, if, acting purposefully, he/she:

(Select appropriate section)

1. Engaged in conduct that would constitute the offense if the attendant circumstances were as a reasonable person would believe them to be;

(or)

2. Did (or omitted to do) anything with the purpose of causing bodily injury to another without further conduct on his/her part. This means that the defendant(s) did something designed to cause bodily injury without having to take any further action.

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(or)

3. Did (or omitted to do) anything that, under the circumstances as a reasonable person would believe them to be, was an act (or omission) constituting a substantial step in a course of conduct planned to culminate in his/her commission of the crime.

The step taken must be one that is strongly corroborative of the defendant's criminal purpose. The accused must be shown to have had a firmness of criminal purpose in light of the step(s) he/she had already taken. These preparatory steps must be substantial and not just very remote preparatory acts.⁵

The third element that the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is that **NAME OF VICTIM** was a direct care worker at a (State or county psychiatric hospital)(State developmental center)(Veterans' Memorial Home).

A direct care worker means any person whose primary function is face-to-face interaction with the patient or resident whereby the worker is providing therapeutic contact necessary to achieve the patient or resident's treatment goals.⁶ The term includes any Human Services Technician; Human Services Assistant; physician; psychiatrist; dentist; psychologist; nurse; nurse assistant; physical, occupational, or speech therapist; social worker, providing patient or resident therapeutic care in a (State or county psychiatric hospital)(State developmental center)(Veterans' Memorial Home).⁷

The fourth element that the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is that the defendant attempted to cause the bodily injury while **NAME OF VICTIM** was clearly identifiable as being engaged in the duties of providing direct patient care or practicing the health care profession.

The fifth element that the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt is that the defendant was neither a patient nor a resident at the facility who was classified by the facility as

⁵ If renunciation of criminal purpose is alleged, see N.J.S.A. 2C:5-1(d), that portion of the Model Jury Charge on Attempt regarding renunciation should also be charged.

⁶ See N.J.S.A. 38A:3-2(b)(5)(h), which includes in the term those personnel so designated by the Adjutant General.

⁷ See N.J.A.C. 10:37F-1.3. The term may also include any person so designated a direct care worker by the Adjutant General of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

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having a mental illness or developmental disability. In other words, the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt either 1) that the defendant was not a patient or resident at the facility or, 2) if he/she was a patient or resident, then the State must prove that he/she was not classified by the facility as having a mental illness or developmental disability in order to satisfy this element.

If you find that the State has proved each element of the crime beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find the defendant guilty. If, however, you find that the State has failed to prove any element of the offense beyond a reasonable doubt, then you must find the defendant not guilty.