

February 4, 2019

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## NYS Legislature Brings New Hope to Child Sexual Abuse Victims

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Victims of child sexual abuse have a powerful new weapon to achieve justice against their abusers.

On January 28th, 2019, the New York State Legislature approved a bill greatly increasing the time within which a person who was sexually abused as a child (under age 18) may bring a civil suit against the person or institution causing or allowing the abuse.

The period of time (statute of limitations) allowed for criminal prosecutions of such crimes was also increased. The Bill applies the Criminal Law statute of limitations for the specific crime and begins to run from the person's twenty-third birthday or from the time the offense is reported to a law enforcement agency or statewide central register, whichever occurs first.

Notice of claim provisions (which generally require written notice to a municipality within 90 days of an event) are eliminated in cases of child sexual abuse.

This Bill was passed in response to recent widespread findings of sexual abuse of children in religious institutions and other settings.

Child sexual abuse victims may now bring suit for sexual abuse until they reach age fifty-five. There is a one-year extension to commence suit for those over the age of fifty-five. This extension begins six months from the time the bill is signed into law. It is expected that the governor will sign this bill immediately.

If you or someone you know is a victim of child sexual abuse, you should consult an attorney, even if you have been told previously that no legal action could be taken.

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