

## **Lifeline Legislation (P.L. 2009, c.133) encourages young people to call for help in the event of an alcohol medical emergency.**

Action saves lives, so it must take place immediately on the scene. Unfortunately, minors faced with a medical emergency as a result of excessive drinking often hesitate to call for help, either because of uncertainty of the signs of alcohol poisoning or fear of facing legal charges related to alcohol possession and use. That is why New Jersey enacted the “911 Lifeline Legislation.”

The Lifeline Legislation is a health and safety approach to an existing problem. It is meant to do one thing, promote health and safety for minors by ensuring they receive medical attention if they need it. By no means does this legislation condone underage drinking. Rather, it responds to cases of excessive drinking by minors when medical attention is needed and creates the opportunity for their peers to save lives that are in danger due to severe intoxication. Providing immunity under these circumstances has proven to be an effective means to encourage young people to call for help.

**Purchasing, possessing or consuming alcohol is illegal for those under the Minimum Legal Drinking Age of 21. This legislation provides immunity from prosecution when the steps below are followed.**

**If a young person is suspected of alcohol poisoning and their friend(s) want to help them, they must:**

- 1. Call for Help:** One of the underage persons call 9-1-1 and reports that another underage person was in need of medical assistance due to alcohol consumption. The underage person is the first person to make the 9-1-1 report;
- 2. Stay with your Friend:** The underage person (and, if applicable, one or two others acting in concert with the underage person who made the 9-1-1 call) remains on the scene with the underage person in need of medical assistance; AND
- 3. Talk with Authorities:** The underage person who called 9-1-1 (and, if applicable, one or two others who were acting in concert with the caller) provide each of their names to the 9-1-1 operator and cooperates with medical assistance and law enforcement personnel on the scene.

**The underage person who is receiving medical assistance is also immune from prosecution. This immunity applies on public and private property.**