

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 5314

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 13, 2019

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ANDREW ZWICKER

District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)

Assemblyman MATTHEW W. MILAM

District 1 (Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland)

Assemblyman VINCENT MAZZEO

District 2 (Atlantic)

Co-Sponsored by:

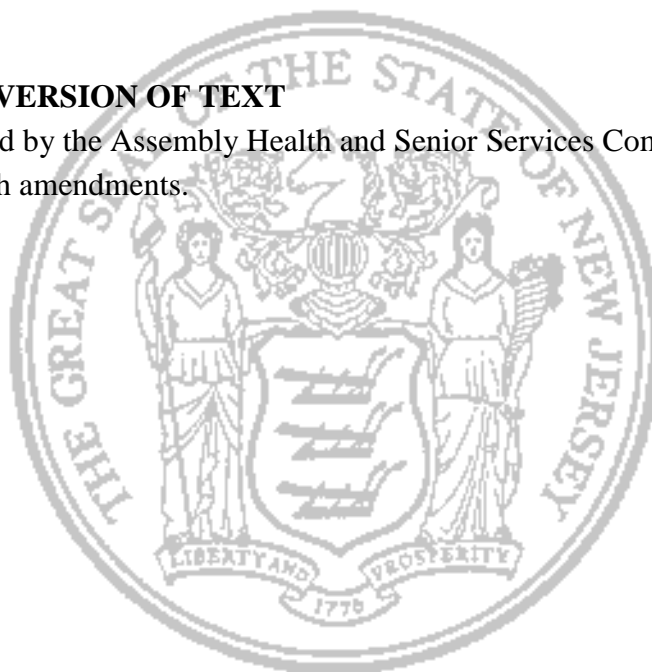
**Assemblywomen Reynolds-Jackson, Vainieri Huttle and Assemblyman
Conaway**

SYNOPSIS

Requires DHS to study social isolation occurring in certain population groups.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Health and Senior Services Committee on May 20, 2019, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/21/2019)

1 AN ACT concerning social isolation in certain population groups
2 and supplementing Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

3

4 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
5 of New Jersey:

6

7 1. a. Within ¹~~180~~ 270¹ days after the effective date of this
8 act, ¹~~and biennially thereafter,~~¹ the Commissioner of Human
9 Services shall assess and report on the nature and frequency of
10 social isolation occurring in the State, and the resources that are
11 available to combat social isolation. Each assessment and report
12 shall focus on, but need not be limited to, an analysis of social
13 isolation affecting the following vulnerable populations:

14 (1) individuals who are 65 years of age or older;

15 (2) individuals with disabilities ¹, with the definition of the term
16 “individuals with disabilities” interpreted by the Commissioner of
17 Human Services in an expansive fashion to include as many
18 disabilities as is appropriate for the purposes of this act¹;

19 (3) individuals with mental illness; and

20 (4) other vulnerable populations, as deemed by the
21 commissioner to be appropriate ¹, including, individuals who serve
22 or have served in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines or Coast
23 Guard of the United States, a Reserve component thereof, or the
24 National Guard of this State as defined in section 1 of P.L.1963,
25 c.109 (C.38A:1-1)¹.

26 b. In conducting social isolation assessments pursuant to
27 subsection a. of this section, the commissioner shall:

28 (1) consult with appropriate professionals, organizations, and
29 agencies throughout the State that provide counseling, health care,
30 mental health care, support care, or other social or daily living
31 assistance, to members of vulnerable populations;

32 (2) consult with members of vulnerable populations who are
33 currently seeking treatment or care for social isolation, and, to the
34 extent practicable, consult with the family members or caregivers of
35 such individuals;

36 (3) review available data and research materials on social
37 isolation, and consult with educational institutions and other
38 educational or public interest organizations in the State, which are
39 actively involved in the study or research of matters related to
40 social isolation; ¹~~and~~¹

41 (4) review the actions that have been undertaken, and the
42 policies that have been implemented, by other states and
43 jurisdictions to combat social isolation occurring in their
44 communities¹; and

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AHE committee amendments adopted May 20, 2019.

1 (5) consult with other State, county, and municipal departments
2 and agencies to gather information, data, and materials on social
3 isolation¹.

4 c. Each report prepared under this section shall include:

5 (1) for each type of vulnerable population listed in subsection a.
6 of this section, an indication of the frequency of social isolation
7 occurring among members of that population, including the
8 approximate number and percentage of individuals in each
9 population who are experiencing social isolation, and the
10 approximate number and percentage of such individuals who are
11 susceptible to, but are not yet experiencing, social isolation;

12 (2) a description of the demographic and other characteristics
13 that are held in common by the members of vulnerable populations
14 who are experiencing, or are susceptible to, social isolation;

15 (3) a description of the symptoms and other indicators of social
16 isolation;

17 (4) a description of the circumstantial and situational factors
18 that contribute to social isolation;

19 (5) an indication of the State resources that are available to help
20 individuals recognize, address, and recover from, social isolation,
21 including an indication of the organizations and other entities
22 throughout the State that provide information, counseling, or other
23 assistance to individuals who are experiencing, or are susceptible
24 to, social isolation, and, to the extent such information is available,
25 the number of individuals from each vulnerable population group
26 who have been assisted by such organizations or other entities
27 during the reporting period;

28 (6) an indication of the ways in which other states and
29 jurisdictions have addressed issues of social isolation occurring in
30 their communities;

31 (7) an indication of the ways in which the available State
32 resources for social isolation are lacking and could be improved;

33 (8) an analysis of trends that are evident from the data reported
34 in this area, including a description of any significant changes in the
35 reported data, which have occurred over time; and

36 (9) recommendations for legislative, executive, or other action
37 that can be taken to: (a) prevent or redress instances of social
38 isolation occurring in the State, particularly among vulnerable
39 populations; and (b) otherwise improve the accessibility and
40 effectiveness of available resources and supports for socially
41 isolated individuals.

42 d. Each report prepared pursuant to this section shall be
43 submitted to the Governor, and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991,
44 c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature; and shall additionally be
45 posted on the Internet website of the Department of Human
46 Services.

47 e. As used in this section:

48 “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Human Services.

1 “Social isolation” means aloneness or sequestration that is not
2 chosen or wanted; that stems from or results in the virtual absence
3 of interaction with others, beyond those interactions that are
4 required for the sequestered person to perform basic life functions;
5 and that has a negative or threatening effect on the sequestered
6 person.

7 “Vulnerable population” means individuals who are 65 years of
8 age or older, individuals with disabilities, individuals with mental
9 illness, and any other group of individuals who are deemed by the
10 commissioner to be inherently vulnerable to social isolation, due to
11 age, physical or mental incapacity or fragility, or other
12 distinguishing characteristics that are held in common by all, or the
13 majority of, the group’s members.

14

15 2. This act shall take effect immediately.