

SENATE, No. 2525

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

218th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 10, 2018

Sponsored by:

Senator TROY SINGLETON

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Senator SANDRA B. CUNNINGHAM

District 31 (Hudson)

Assemblyman JOHN ARMATO

District 2 (Atlantic)

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District 33 (Hudson)

Assemblyman JOE DANIELSEN

District 17 (Middlesex and Somerset)

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Assemblywoman Murphy, Assemblyman Houghtaling, Assemblywomen
Downey, Reynolds-Jackson, Pinkin, Tucker, Assemblymen Mazzeo,
Benson, Space, Wirths and Assemblywoman Quijano**

SYNOPSIS

Directs Adjutant General to enter into agreements with legal services organizations to provide legal services to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/21/2019)

1 AN ACT concerning agreements with public and private entities to
2 provide legal services to homeless veterans and supplementing
3 Title 38A of the New Jersey Statutes.

4

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

7

8 1. (New section) This act shall be known and may be cited as
9 the “Homeless Veterans Legal Services Act of New Jersey.”

10

11 2. (New section) a. Subject to the availability of funds
12 appropriated for this purpose, including but not limited to funding
13 appropriated through section 3 of P.L. 2013, c.239 (C.38A:3-6.2b),
14 the New Jersey Homeless Veterans Grant Program, the Adjutant
15 General of the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans’
16 Affairs shall enter into agreements with public or private entities to
17 fund a portion of the legal services specified in this act, that are
18 provided by such entities to homeless veterans and veterans at risk
19 of homelessness.

20 b. The Adjutant General shall ensure that, to the extent
21 practicable, agreements established under this section are made with
22 entities located in the northern, central and southern regions of the
23 State.

24 c. Legal services shall include legal services provided by
25 public or private entities that address the needs of homeless
26 veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness as follows:

27 (1) Legal services related to housing, including eviction defense,
28 representation in landlord-tenant cases, and representation in
29 foreclosure cases.

30 (2) Legal services related to family law, including assistance in
31 court proceedings for child support, divorce, estate planning and
32 family reconciliation.

33 (3) Legal services related to income support including assistance
34 in obtaining public benefits.

35 (4) Legal services related to criminal defense, including defense
36 in matters symptomatic of homelessness, such as outstanding
37 warrants, fines and driver’s license revocation, to reduce recidivism
38 and facilitate the overcoming of reentry obstacles in employment or
39 housing.

40 (5) Such other legal services as the Adjutant General deems
41 appropriate.

42 d. In developing and carrying out agreements under this
43 section, the Adjutant General shall, to the extent practicable consult
44 with veterans service organizations; and coordinate appropriate
45 outreach relationships with such organizations.

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.

1 e. The Adjutant General may require entities that enter into
2 agreements under this section to submit periodic reports on legal
3 services provided to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of
4 homelessness.

5
6 3. Section 3 of P.L. 2013, c.239 (C. 38A:3-6.2b) is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 3. There is established in the Department of Military and
9 Veterans' Affairs the "New Jersey Homeless Veterans Grant
10 Program." The purpose of this program shall be to award grants to
11 organizations that assist homeless veterans in this State from funds
12 appropriated to the department from the "Homeless Veterans Grant
13 Fund" established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.2013, c.239
14 (C.54A:9-25.33). The grants shall be allocated on a competitive
15 basis except grants allocated to public or private entities that
16 provide legal services to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of
17 homelessness shall be allocated pursuant to section 2 of
18 P.L. c. , (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill). The
19 Adjutant General of the Department of Military and Veterans'
20 Affairs shall develop criteria for the granting of awards. An
21 organization that wishes to apply for a grant under this program
22 shall submit an application to the Adjutant General. The
23 application shall, at the minimum, include a description of how the
24 organization will assist homeless veterans. The Adjutant General
25 may adopt, in accordance with the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
26 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), rules and regulations
27 necessary to effectuate the grant program.
28 (cf: P.L.2013, c.239, s.3)

29
30 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

31 32 33 STATEMENT

34
35 This bill directs the Adjutant General in the Department of
36 Military and Veterans' Affairs, subject to the availability of funds,
37 to enter into agreements with public or private entities to fund a
38 portion of the legal services such entities provide to homeless
39 veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness related to housing,
40 family law, income support, and criminal defense.

41 Under the bill, the Adjutant General shall ensure that, to the
42 extent practicable, agreements established under this section are
43 made with entities located in the northern, central and southern
44 regions of the State. The legal services shall include the following:

45 (1) Legal services related to housing, including eviction defense,
46 representation in landlord-tenant cases, and representation in foreclosure
47 cases.

1 (2) Legal services related to family law, including assistance in court
2 proceedings for child support, divorce, estate planning and family
3 reconciliation.

4 (3) Legal services related to income support including assistance
5 in obtaining public benefits.

6 (4) Legal services related to criminal defense, including defense
7 in matters symptomatic of homelessness, such as outstanding
8 warrants, fines and driver's license revocation, to reduce recidivism
9 and facilitate the overcoming of reentry obstacles in employment or
10 housing.

11 (5) Such other legal services as the Adjutant General deems
12 appropriate.

13 The bill amends N.J.S.A.38A:3-6.2b, the "New Jersey Homeless
14 Veterans Grant Program." This program awards grants, on a
15 competitive basis, to organizations that assist homeless veterans in
16 this State from funds appropriated to the department from the
17 "Homeless Veterans Grant Fund" established pursuant to section 4
18 of P.L.2013, c.239 (C.54A:9-25.33). The amendment to this section
19 provides that grants allocated to public or private entities that
20 provide legal services to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of
21 homelessness shall be allocated pursuant to section 2 of this bill
22 which directs the Adjutant General to enter into agreements with
23 public or private entities to fund a portion of the legal services
24 specified in this act.

25 Under the bill, the Adjutant General may require entities that
26 enter into agreements to submit periodic reports on legal services
27 provided to homeless veterans and veterans at risk of homelessness.

28 The bill is modeled on H.R.1993, federal legislation currently
29 pending in Congress.