

ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION No. 35

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman NICHOLAS CHIARAVALLOTI

District 31 (Hudson)

Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY

District 7 (Burlington)

Assemblyman HAROLD "HAL" J. WIRTHS

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

Co-Sponsored by:

**Assemblymen Space, Holley, Assemblywomen McKnight, Swain,
Assemblyman McKeon, Assemblywomen Jimenez and Timberlake**

SYNOPSIS

Urges all law enforcement agencies to implement training programs on how to approach individuals who are hearing impaired.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/1/2021)

AR35 CHIARAVALLOTI, MURPHY

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1 AN ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION respectfully urging all law
2 enforcement agencies to implement training programs on how to
3 approach individuals who are hearing impaired.
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5 WHEREAS, An individual who is hearing impaired often has difficulty
6 hearing conversation, which leads to exclusion from
7 communication, which may have a significant negative impact on
8 the individual's everyday life; and
9 WHEREAS, According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human
10 Services National Center for Health Statistics, approximately 15
11 percent of American adults report some trouble hearing; and
12 WHEREAS, There are approximately 850,000 New Jersey residents
13 with varying degrees of hearing loss ranging from mild to profound,
14 which includes individuals who are born deaf and individuals who
15 encounter late stage hearing loss; and
16 WHEREAS, Under the "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990",
17 individuals who are hearing impaired are entitled to the same
18 services governmental agencies provides to anyone else; and
19 WHEREAS, Although the "Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990"
20 requires individuals who are hearing impaired be guaranteed equal
21 services by governmental agencies, more can be done to properly
22 train law enforcement officers on how to approach individuals who
23 are hearing impaired; and
24 WHEREAS, Interactions with law enforcement, even for simple traffic
25 violations, can be high stress situations for individuals who are
26 hearing impaired; and
27 WHEREAS, Law enforcement agencies should provide officers with the
28 training necessary to communicate effectively with individuals who
29 are hearing impaired; and
30 WHEREAS, Effective communication between individuals who are
31 hearing impaired and law enforcement officers is essential in
32 ascertaining what actually occurred, the urgency of the matter and
33 the type of situation; and
34 WHEREAS, Individuals who are hearing impaired have unique ways of
35 communicating, either through lip-reading, gestures, visual aids, or
36 various other forms, that should be understood by law enforcement
37 officers; and
38 WHEREAS, Law enforcement agencies around the country have taken
39 steps on how to effectively and appropriately approach individuals
40 who are hearing impaired; and
41 WHEREAS, Although the New Jersey Police Training Commission
42 does mandate basic courses on how to interact with individuals with
43 special needs, including individuals who are hearing impaired,
44 more can be done; and
45 WHEREAS, All law enforcement agencies should implement training
46 programs for law enforcement officers focused exclusively on how
47 to approach individuals who are hearing impaired; now, therefore,

1 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the General Assembly of the State of New*
2 *Jersey:*

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4 1. This House respectfully urges all law enforcement agencies
5 to implement training programs on how to approach individuals
6 who are hearing impaired.

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8 2. Copies of this resolution, as filed with the Secretary of State,
9 shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly to the
10 Attorney General of the State of New Jersey and the Executive
11 Director of the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police.

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STATEMENT

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16 This resolution respectfully urges all law enforcement agencies
17 to provide training to law enforcement officers on how to approach
18 individuals who are hearing impaired. Individuals who are hearing
19 impaired face increased stress when interacting with law
20 enforcement officers given the communication barriers between the
21 two parties. Approximately 850,000 individuals in New Jersey are
22 hearing impaired and, therefore, subject to this communication
23 barrier with law enforcement officers. Individuals who are hearing
24 impaired have unique ways of communicating that should be
25 understood by law enforcement officers. Effective communication
26 between individuals who are hearing impaired and law enforcement
27 officers is essential in ascertaining what actually occurred, the
28 urgency of the matter and the type of situation.

29

30 Law enforcement agencies around the country have taken steps
31 on how to effectively and appropriately approach individuals who
32 are hearing impaired. The New Jersey Police Training Commission
33 currently mandates basic training courses for officers on how to
34 interact with individuals with special needs, including individuals
35 who are hearing impaired. However, a more comprehensive
36 training program, focused exclusively on how to approach
37 individuals who are hearing impaired, could help to overcome the
38 communication barriers between law enforcement officers and
39 individuals who are hearing impaired. Improved communication
40 between law enforcement officers and individuals who are hearing
impaired could lead to better outcomes for the two parties.