

SENATE, No. 2953

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 21, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator STEPHEN M. SWEENEY

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

Senator SANDRA B. CUNNINGHAM

District 31 (Hudson)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator Pou

SYNOPSIS

Expands scope of inmate reentry assistance and benefits.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/29/2020)

1 AN ACT concerning services for certain inmates and amending and
2 supplementing various parts of the statutory law.

3

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

6

7 1. Section 2 of P.L.2009, c.329 (C.30:1B-6.2) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 2. The Commissioner of Corrections shall provide to each
10 inmate at least 10 days prior to release from a State correctional
11 facility:

12 a. A copy of the inmate's criminal history record and written
13 information on the inmate's right to have his criminal records
14 expunged under chapter 52 of Title 2C of the New Jersey Statutes;

15 b. General written information on the inmate's right to vote
16 under R.S.19:4-1;

17 c. General written information on the availability of programs,
18 including faith-based and secular programs, that would assist in
19 removing barriers to the inmate's employment or participation in
20 vocational or educational rehabilitative programs, including but not
21 limited to, information concerning the "Rehabilitated Convicted
22 Offenders Act," P.L.1968, c.282 (C.2A:168A-1 et seq.) and the
23 certificate of rehabilitation under P.L.2007, c.327 (C.2A:168A-7 et
24 seq.);

25 d. A detailed written record of the inmate's participation in
26 educational, training, employment, and medical or other treatment
27 programs while the inmate was incarcerated;

28 e. A written accounting of the fines, assessments, surcharges,
29 restitution, penalties, child support arrearages, and any other
30 obligations due and payable by the inmate upon release;

31 f. (Deleted by amendment, P.L.2020, c.45)

32 g. A copy of the inmate's birth certificate if the inmate was
33 born in New Jersey;

34 h. Assistance in obtaining a Social Security card;

35 i. A one-day New Jersey bus or rail pass;

36 j. A **[two-week]** three-month supply of prescription
37 medication and to the extent consistent with clinical guidelines, an
38 additional 30 day prescription order and two additional refills;

39 k. General written information concerning child support,
40 including child support payments owed by the inmate, information
41 on how to seek child support payments and information on where to
42 seek services regarding child support, child custody, and
43 establishing parentage; and

44 l. (1) A medical discharge summary, which shall include
45 instructions on how to obtain from the commissioner a copy of the

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 inmate's full medical record. Upon request from the inmate, the
2 commissioner shall provide a copy of the inmate's full medical
3 record in a safe and secure manner, at no charge to the inmate.

4 (2) Within 90 days of the effective date of this act, the
5 commissioner, in consultation with the State Board of Medical
6 Examiners, shall adopt rules and regulations, pursuant to the
7 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
8 seq.), to ensure that these records are expeditiously and securely
9 provided, in a manner consistent with the provision of medical
10 records by other providers.

11 m. A benefits card approved for the purpose of obtaining
12 benefits under the:

13 (1) Medicaid program, established pursuant to P.L.1968, c.413
14 (C.30:4D-1 et seq.);

15 (2) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, established
16 pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.88-
17 525 (7 U.S.C.s.2011 et seq.); and

18 (3) Work First New Jersey program, established pursuant to
19 P.L.1997, c.38 (C.44:10-55 et seq.), which shall include, for
20 inmates who are unable to identify a residence at the time of
21 release, emergency assistance benefits issued to Work First New
22 Jersey recipients pursuant to section 8 of P.L.1997, c.14 (C.44:10-
23 51).

24 (cf: P.L.2020, c.45, s.1)

25

26 2. Section 2 of P.L.2020, c.45 (C.30:1B-6.15) is amended to
27 read as follows:

28 2. a. The Commissioner of Corrections shall provide a non-
29 driver identification card issued by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle
30 Commission to each inmate, free of charge, as soon as practicable,
31 but not less than 10 days prior to the inmate's release from a State
32 correctional facility. The New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission
33 shall issue the identification card and accept a former inmate's
34 Department of Corrections identification card as two points for the
35 purposes of applying for the identification card.

36 b. An inmate's Department of Corrections identification card
37 shall be accepted by all State, county, and municipal agencies and
38 New Jersey nonprofit organizations for six months following the
39 date of release from incarceration to allow the released inmate to
40 gain access to services for which the inmate is deemed eligible
41 including, but not limited to, establishing the inmate's identity.

42 **【Whenever the】** c. Notwithstanding the provisions of
43 subsection b. of this section, whenever Motor Vehicle Commission
44 agencies are closed during a declared public health emergency,
45 pursuant to the "Emergency Health Powers Act," P.L.2005, c.222
46 (C.26:13-1 et seq.), a state of emergency, pursuant to P.L.1942,
47 c.251 (C.App.A:9-33 et seq.), or both, the inmate's Department of
48 Corrections identification card shall be accepted by all State,

1 county, and municipal agencies and New Jersey [nonprofits]
2 nonprofit organizations in a manner as to allow the [releasee]
3 released inmate to gain access to services for which [they are] the
4 inmate is deemed eligible for the duration of the public health
5 emergency.

6 (cf: P.L.2020, c.45, s.2)

7

8 3. Section 4 of P.L.2020, c.45 (C.30:1B-6.16) is amended to
9 read as follows:

10 4. a. The Commissioner of Corrections shall ensure that an
11 inmate is assisted with completing, obtaining any required
12 signatures or authorizations for, and forwarding for processing to
13 the Department of Human Services as soon as practicable but not
14 less than 30 days prior to an inmate's release from incarceration, an
15 online application for enrollment in the Medicaid program,
16 established pursuant to P.L.1968, c.413 (C.30:4D-1 et seq.).

17 b. In addition to the requirements of subsection a. of this
18 section, the Commissioner of Corrections shall also ensure that the
19 inmate is assisted in completing, obtaining any required signatures
20 or authorizations for, and forwarding for processing to the
21 appropriate county welfare agency or board of social services, as
22 soon as practicable but not less than 30 days prior to an inmate's
23 release from incarceration, online applications for enrollment in the
24 following programs:

25 (1) the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, established
26 pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.88-
27 525 (7 U.S.C.s.2011 et seq.); and

28 (2) the Work First New Jersey program, established pursuant to
29 P.L.1997, c.38 (C.44:10-55 et seq.), which shall include , for
30 inmates who are unable to identify a residence at the time of
31 release, the application for emergency assistance benefits issued to
32 Work First New Jersey recipients pursuant to section 8 of P.L.1997,
33 c.14 (C.44:10-51).

34 c. The Department of Human Services shall be required to
35 accept and process the online applications for Medicaid received
36 from the Department of Corrections pursuant to subsection a. of this
37 section.

38 d. If an inmate is unable to identify a residence at the time of
39 application for benefits pursuant to this section, the Commissioner
40 of Corrections shall ensure that the address of the appropriate
41 regional non-profit inmate reentry organization is used for the
42 purposes of establishing proof of residence to meet any applicable
43 eligibility requirements.

44 e. All State, county, and municipal agencies, for the purposes
45 of establishing applicable eligibility requirements, shall:

46 (1) accept the address of the appropriate regional non-profit
47 inmate reentry organization for an inmate who is unable to identify
48 a residence at the time of application for benefits; and

1 (2) accept an inmate's Department of Corrections identification
2 card to establish the inmate's identity.

3 f. An inmate who appears to be eligible for benefits under the
4 Work First New Jersey program based on the inmate's certification
5 of income, resources, and family composition, and based on other
6 information immediately available at the time of application, shall
7 be deemed presumptively eligible for Work First New Jersey
8 assistance and immediate need assistance and shall receive this
9 assistance for a period of not less than 45 days following the
10 inmate's release from incarceration.

11 (cf: P.L.2020, c.45, s.4)

12
13 4. Section 5 of P.L.2020, c.45 (C.30:1B-6.17) is amended to
14 read as follows:

15 5. a. The Commissioner of Corrections shall provide to the
16 appropriate county welfare agency or board of social services, in
17 advance of an inmate's release, the inmate's name, release date, and
18 contact information, which shall include, but not be limited to, a
19 telephone number or an email address.

20 b. The commissioner shall provide to the applicable regional
21 non-profit inmate reentry organization, in advance of an inmate's
22 release, the information required in subsection a. of this section.

23 (cf: P. L.2020, c.45, s.5)

24
25 5. (New section) a. The chief executive officer, warden, or
26 keeper of each county correctional facility shall provide to each
27 inmate at least 30 days prior to release from a facility:

28 (1) a copy of the inmate's criminal history record and written
29 information on the inmate's right to have the inmate's criminal
30 records expunged under chapter 52 of Title 2C of the New Jersey
31 Statutes;

32 (2) general written information on the inmate's right to vote
33 under R.S.19:4-1;

34 (3) general written information on the availability of programs,
35 including faith-based and secular programs, that would assist in
36 removing barriers to the inmate's employment or participation in
37 vocational or educational rehabilitative programs, including but not
38 limited to, information concerning the "Rehabilitated Convicted
39 Offenders Act," P.L.1968, c.282 (C.2A:168A-1 et seq.) and the
40 certificate of rehabilitation under P.L.2007, c.327 (C.2A:168A-7 et
41 seq.);

42 (4) a detailed written record of the inmate's participation in
43 educational, training, employment, and medical or other treatment
44 programs while the inmate was incarcerated;

45 (5) a written accounting of the fines, assessments, surcharges,
46 restitution, penalties, child support arrearages, and any other
47 obligations due and payable by the inmate upon release;

- 1 (6) a copy of the inmate's birth certificate if the inmate was born
2 in New Jersey;
- 3 (7) assistance in obtaining a Social Security card;
- 4 (8) a one-day New Jersey bus or rail pass;
- 5 (9) a three-month supply of prescription medication and, to the
6 extent consistent with clinical guidelines, an additional 30 day
7 prescription order and two additional refills;
- 8 (10) general written information concerning child support,
9 including child support payments owed by the inmate, information
10 on how to seek child support payments and information on where to
11 seek services regarding child support, child custody, and
12 establishing parentage;
- 13 (11) a medical discharge summary, which shall include
14 instructions on how to obtain from the superintendent a copy of the
15 inmate's full medical record; upon request from the inmate, the
16 superintendent shall provide a copy of the inmate's full medical
17 record in a safe and secure manner, at no charge to the inmate; the
18 superintendent shall comply with rules and regulations, adopted
19 pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410
20 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), that ensure that these records are
21 expeditiously and securely provided in a manner consistent with the
22 provision of medical records by other providers; and
- 23 (12) a benefits card approved for the purpose of obtaining
24 benefits under the:
- 25 (a) Medicaid program, established pursuant to P.L.1968, c.413
26 (C.30:4D-1 et seq.);
- 27 (b) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, established
28 pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.88-
29 525 (7 U.S.C.s.2011 et seq.); and
- 30 (c) Work First New Jersey program, established pursuant to
31 P.L.1997, c.38 (C.44:10-55 et seq.), which shall include, for
32 inmates who are unable to identify a residence at the time of
33 release, emergency assistance benefits issued to Work First New
34 Jersey recipients pursuant to section 8 of P.L.1997, c.14 (C.44:10-
35 51).
- 36 b. If an inmate is at any time scheduled for release from a
37 county correctional facility in less than 30 days, the superintendent
38 shall comply with the provisions of subsection a. of this section at
39 least 48 hours prior to the inmate's release.
- 40
- 41 6. (New section) a. The chief executive officer, warden, or
42 keeper of each county correctional facility shall provide a non-
43 driver identification card issued by the New Jersey Motor Vehicle
44 Commission to each county inmate, free of charge, as soon as
45 practicable, but not less than 10 days prior to the inmate's release
46 from the county correctional facility. The New Jersey Motor
47 Vehicle Commission shall issue the identification card and accept a

1 former inmate's county correctional facility identification card as
2 two points for the purposes of applying for the identification card.

3 b. An inmate's county correctional facility identification card
4 shall be accepted by all State, county, and municipal agencies and
5 New Jersey nonprofit organizations for six months following the
6 date of release from incarceration to allow the released inmate to
7 gain access to services for which the inmate is deemed eligible
8 including, but not limited to, establishing the inmate's identity.

9 c. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection b. of this
10 section, whenever the Motor Vehicle Commission agencies are
11 closed during a declared public health emergency, pursuant to the
12 "Emergency Health Powers Act," P.L.2005, c.222 (C.26:13-1 et
13 seq.), a state of emergency, pursuant to P.L.1942, c.251
14 (C.App.A:9-33 et seq.), or both, the inmate's Department of
15 Corrections identification card shall be accepted by all State,
16 county, and municipal agencies and New Jersey nonprofit
17 organizations in a manner as to allow the released inmate to gain
18 access to services for which they are deemed eligible for the
19 duration of the public health emergency.

20

21 7. (New section) a. As soon as practicable but not less than 30
22 days prior to an inmate's release from incarceration, the chief
23 executive officer, warden, or keeper of each county correctional
24 facility shall ensure that an inmate is assisted with completing,
25 obtaining any required signatures or authorizations for, and
26 forwarding for processing to the Department of Human Services an
27 online application for enrollment in the Medicaid program,
28 established pursuant to P.L.1968, c.413 (C.30:4D-1 et seq.).

29 b. In addition to the requirements of subsection a. of this
30 section, the chief executive officer, warden, or keeper also shall
31 ensure that the inmate is assisted in completing, obtaining any
32 required signatures or authorizations for, and forwarding for
33 processing to the appropriate county welfare agency or board of
34 social services, as soon as practicable but not less than 30 days prior
35 to an inmate's release from incarceration, online applications for
36 enrollment in the following programs:

37 (1) the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, established
38 pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.88-
39 525 (7 U.S.C.s.2011 et seq.); and

40 (2) the Work First New Jersey program, established pursuant to
41 P.L.1997, c.38 (C.44:10-55 et seq.), which shall include , for
42 inmates who are unable to identify a residence at the time of
43 release, the application for emergency assistance benefits issued to
44 Work First New Jersey recipients pursuant to section 8 of P.L.1997,
45 c.14 (C.44:10-51).

46 c. The Department of Human Services shall be required to
47 accept and process the online applications for Medicaid received

1 from the Department of Corrections pursuant to subsection a. of this
2 section.

3 d. If an inmate is unable to identify a residence at the time of
4 application for benefits pursuant to this section, the chief executive
5 officer, warden, or keeper of each county correctional facility shall
6 ensure that the address of the appropriate regional non-profit inmate
7 reentry organization is used for the purposes of establishing proof
8 of residence to meet any applicable eligibility requirements.

9 e. All State, county, and municipal agencies, for the purposes
10 of establishing applicable eligibility requirements, shall:

11 (1) accept the address of the appropriate regional non-profit
12 inmate reentry organization for an inmate who is unable to identify
13 a residence at the time of application for benefits; and

14 (2) accept an inmate's county correctional facility identification
15 card to establish the inmate's identity.

16 f. An inmate who appears to be eligible for benefits under the
17 Work First New Jersey program based on the inmate's certification
18 of income, resources, and family composition, and based on other
19 information immediately available at the time of application, shall
20 be deemed presumptively eligible for Work First New Jersey
21 assistance and immediate need assistance and shall receive this
22 assistance for a period of not less than 45 days following the
23 inmate's release from incarceration.

24

25 8. (New section) An inmate released from a State or county
26 correctional facility shall be authorized to use the address of a
27 nonprofit inmate reentry organization approved by the Department
28 of Community Affairs as a mailing address in an application for
29 benefits under the:

30 a. Medicaid program, established pursuant to P.L.1968, c.413
31 (C.30:4D-1 et seq.);

32 b. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, established
33 pursuant to the federal "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.88-
34 525 (7 U.S.C.s.2011 et seq.); and

35 c. Work First New Jersey program, established pursuant to
36 P.L.1997, c.38 (C.44:10-55 et seq.).

37

38 9. Section 5 of P.L.1997, c.14 (C.44:10-48) is amended to read
39 as follows:

40 5. a. Only those persons who are United States citizens or
41 eligible aliens shall be eligible for benefits under the Work First
42 New Jersey program. Single adults or couples without dependent
43 children who are legal aliens who meet federal requirements and
44 have applied for citizenship, shall not receive benefits for more than
45 six months unless (1) they attain citizenship, or (2) they have passed
46 the English language and civics components for citizenship, and are
47 awaiting final determination of citizenship by the federal
48 Immigration and Naturalization Service.

1 b. The following persons shall not be eligible for assistance and
2 shall not be considered to be members of an assistance unit:

3 (1) non-needy caretakers, except that the eligibility of a
4 dependent child shall not be affected by the income or resources of
5 a non-needy caretaker;

6 (2) Supplemental Security Income recipients, except for the
7 purposes of receiving emergency assistance benefits pursuant to
8 section 8 of P.L.1997, c.14 (C.44:10-51);

9 (3) illegal aliens;

10 (4) other aliens who are not eligible aliens;

11 (5) a person absent from the home who is incarcerated in a
12 federal, State, county or local corrective facility or under the
13 custody of correctional authorities, except as provided by regulation
14 of the commissioner;

15 (6) a person who: is fleeing to avoid prosecution, custody or
16 confinement after conviction, under the laws of the jurisdiction
17 from which the person has fled, for a crime or an attempt to commit
18 a crime which is a felony or a high misdemeanor under the laws of
19 the jurisdiction from which the person has fled; or is violating a
20 condition of probation or parole imposed under federal or state law;

21 (7) [a person convicted on or after August 22, 1996 under
22 federal or state law of any offense which is classified as a felony or
23 crime, as appropriate, under the laws of the jurisdiction involved
24 and which has as an element the possession, use, or distribution of a
25 controlled substance as defined in section 102(6) of the federal
26 "Controlled Substances Act" (21 U.S.C. s.802 (6)), who would
27 otherwise be eligible for general public assistance pursuant to
28 P.L.1947, c.156 (C.44:8-107 et seq.); except that such a person who
29 is convicted of any such offense which has as an element the
30 possession or use only of such a controlled substance may be
31 eligible for Work First New Jersey general public assistance
32 benefits if the person enrolls in or has completed a licensed
33 residential or outpatient drug treatment program. An otherwise
34 eligible individual who has a past drug conviction shall be eligible
35 for general public assistance without enrolling in or completing a
36 drug treatment program if either: (1) an appropriate treatment
37 program is not available; or (2) the person is excused from enrolling
38 in a treatment program for good cause pursuant to regulation.

39 Eligibility for benefits for a person entering a licensed drug
40 treatment program which does not operate in a State correctional
41 facility or county jail shall commence upon the person's enrollment
42 in the drug treatment program, and shall continue during the
43 person's active participation in, and upon completion of, the drug
44 treatment program, except that during the person's active
45 participation in a drug treatment program and the first 60 days after
46 completion of a drug treatment program, the commissioner shall
47 provide for testing of the person to determine if the person is free of
48 any controlled substance. If the person is determined to not be free

1 of any controlled substance during the 60-day period, the person's
2 eligibility for benefits pursuant to this paragraph shall be
3 terminated; except that this provision shall not apply to the use of
4 prescription drugs by a person who is actively participating in a
5 drug treatment program, as prescribed by the drug treatment
6 program. The commissioner shall adopt regulations to carry out the
7 provisions of this paragraph, which shall include the criteria for
8 determining active participation in and completion of a drug
9 treatment program.

10 Eligibility for benefits for a person who completes a licensed
11 residential drug treatment program which operates in a State
12 correctional facility or county jail, in accordance with section 1 of
13 P.L.2014, c.1 (C.26:2B-40), shall commence upon release from
14 incarceration.

15 Cash benefits, less a personal needs allowance, for a person
16 receiving general public assistance benefits under the Work First
17 New Jersey program who is enrolled in and actively participating in
18 a licensed drug treatment program shall be issued directly to the
19 drug treatment provider to offset the cost of treatment. Upon
20 completion of the drug treatment program, the cash benefits shall be
21 then issued to the person. In the case of a delay in issuing cash
22 benefits to a person receiving Work First New Jersey general public
23 assistance benefits who has completed the drug treatment program,
24 the drug treatment provider shall transmit to the person those funds
25 received on behalf of that person after completion of the drug
26 treatment program; ~~] (Deleted by amendment, (P.L. , c.)~~
27 (pending before the Legislature as this bill

28 (8) a person found to have fraudulently misrepresented his
29 residence in order to obtain means-tested, public benefits in two or
30 more states or jurisdictions, who shall be ineligible for benefits for
31 a period of 10 years from the date of conviction in a federal or state
32 court; or

33 (9) a person who intentionally makes a false or misleading
34 statement or misrepresents, conceals or withholds facts for the
35 purpose of receiving benefits, who shall be ineligible for benefits
36 for a period of six months for the first violation, 12 months for the
37 second violation, and permanently for the third violation.

38 c. A person who makes a false statement with the intent to
39 qualify for benefits and by reason thereof receives benefits for
40 which the person is not eligible is guilty of a crime of the fourth
41 degree.

42 d. Pursuant to the authorization provided to the states under 21
43 U.S.C. s.862a(d)(1), this State elects to exempt from the application
44 of 21 U.S.C. s.862a(a):

45 (1) needy persons and their dependent children domiciled in
46 New Jersey for the purposes of receiving benefits under the Work
47 First New Jersey program and food assistance under the federal

1 "Food and Nutrition Act of 2008," Pub.L.110-234 (7 U.S.C. s.2011
2 et seq.); and

3 (2) single persons and married couples without dependent
4 children domiciled in New Jersey for the purposes of receiving food
5 assistance under Pub.L.110-234.

6 (cf: P.L.2016, c.69, s.1)

7

8 10. This act shall take effect immediately.

9

10

11

STATEMENT

12

13 This bill expands the scope of reentry services and benefits
14 currently available to inmates released from incarceration in State
15 and county correctional facilities.

16 The State's Fair Release and Reentry Act of 2009, recently
17 amended by P.L.2020, c.45, requires the Department of Corrections
18 (DOC) to ensure inmates are provided within 10 days of their
19 release from incarceration various documents, information, and
20 other items to assist them in their reentry efforts, including non-
21 driver identification cards and a two-week supply of prescription
22 medicine. This bill extends the provisions of the act to also require
23 inmates being released from county correctional facilities to be
24 provided with these same documents, information, and items.

25 P.L.2020, c.45 amended the act to require that an inmate's DOC
26 identification card be accepted by all State, county, and municipal
27 agencies and New Jersey nonprofit organizations for inmates to
28 access reentry services during a public health or state of emergency.
29 The bill continues to require this during the time of emergency, but
30 also requires that agencies and organizations accept these cards for
31 six months after the inmate is released, as well as extend the
32 provision to apply to county correctional facility identification
33 cards during emergencies and six months after release.

34 P.L.2020, c.45 also required the DOC to supply, in addition to
35 two weeks of prescription medication, an additional 30 day
36 prescription order and two additional refills to inmates released
37 during the 2020 public health emergency or state of emergency.
38 This bill makes the requirement permanent and extends it to county
39 correctional facilities.

40 The bill further amends the act to require the DOC to issue to
41 inmates being released a benefits card approved for the purpose of
42 obtaining benefits under the Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition
43 Assistance Program (SNAP), and Work First New Jersey programs
44 and extends this requirement to county correctional facilities.

45 Another provision of P.L.2020, c.45 requires the DOC to ensure
46 that an inmate is assisted in completing and forwarding for
47 processing online applications for enrollment in Medicaid, SNAP,
48 and Work First New Jersey 30 days before release. The Department

1 of Human Services is required to accept and process these
2 applications. The bill requires the commissioner to ensure that any
3 required signatures or authorizations are to be obtained from the
4 inmate when completing the applications. The bill also requires the
5 address of the appropriate regional non-profit inmate reentry
6 organization to be used for any inmate who is unable to identify a
7 residence at the time of application for benefits, and requires all
8 State, county, and municipal agencies to accept the address for the
9 purposes of establishing proof of residence to meet any applicable
10 eligibility requirements. This bill extends these requirements to the
11 county correctional facilities.

12 Under the bill, an inmate who appears to be eligible for benefits
13 under the Work First New Jersey program based on the inmate's
14 certification of income, resources, and family composition, and
15 based on other information immediately available at the time of
16 application, is to be deemed presumptively eligible for Work First
17 New Jersey assistance and immediate need assistance and is to
18 receive this assistance for a period of not less than 45 days
19 following the inmate's release from incarceration.

20 P.L.2020, c.45 further requires the DOC to provide to the
21 appropriate county welfare agency or board of social services, in
22 advance of an inmate's release, the inmate's name, release date, and
23 contact information, including a telephone number or an email
24 address. This bill requires this information to also be provided to
25 the applicable regional nonprofit prisoner reentry program.

26 In addition, this bill authorizes inmates released from State and
27 county correctional facilities to use the address of a nonprofit
28 prisoner reentry program as a mailing address in an application for
29 benefits under Medicaid, SNAP, and Work First New Jersey.

30 Finally, the bill eliminates the provisions under current law
31 which prohibit persons convicted of an offense involving the use,
32 possession, or distribution of a controlled dangerous substance from
33 receiving Work First New Jersey benefits.

34 According to the sponsor, this bill is necessary to assist not only
35 those inmates currently being released from correctional facilities to
36 obtain housing, food, and other services, but also any additional
37 inmates who may be released pursuant to pending legislation
38 revising criminal sentencing laws.