

ASSEMBLY, No. 1508

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 8, 1996

By Assemblyman RUSSO

1 AN ACT concerning certain municipal police departments and
2 supplementing chapter 14 of Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

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7 1. Notwithstanding any other law, rule or regulation to the
8 contrary, a municipality which has adopted the provisions of Title 11A
9 of the New Jersey Statutes may, by ordinance:

10 a. provide that no person shall be appointed as a member or officer
11 of the police department or force unless that person has successfully
12 completed a minimum of 60 credits towards a baccalaureate degree at
13 an accredited college or university; and

14 b. beginning five years after the effective date of this act, provide
15 that no person shall be appointed as a member or officer of the police
16 department or force unless that person has:

17 (1) received a baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or
18 university; or

19 (2) completed two years of active duty in a branch of the Armed
20 Forces of the United States of America and received an honorable
21 discharge therefrom, and successfully completed a minimum of 60
22 credits towards a baccalaureate degree at an accredited college or
23 university; or

24 (3) completed two years of prior experience in law enforcement
25 and successfully completed a minimum of 60 credits towards a
26 baccalaureate degree at an accredited college or university.

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28 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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33 This bill would permit a municipality that is operating under Title
34 11A of the New Jersey Statutes (Civil Service) to adopt an ordinance
35 providing that no person shall be appointed as a member or officer of
36 the police department or force unless that person has successfully
37 completed a minimum of 60 credits towards a baccalaureate degree at

1 an accredited college or university.

2 The bill would also allow a civil service municipality, beginning five
3 years after the bill takes effect, to provide that no person shall be
4 appointed as a member or officer of the police department or force
5 unless that person has been awarded a baccalaureate degree from an
6 accredited college or university. As an alternative to the college
7 degree requirement, the ordinance could allow for the appointment of
8 a person who has either: completed two years of active duty in a
9 branch of the Armed Forces of the United States of America, received
10 an honorable discharge and successfully completed a minimum of 60
11 credits towards a baccalaureate degree at an accredited college or
12 university; or completed two years of prior experience in law
13 enforcement and successfully completed a minimum of 60 credits
14 towards a baccalaureate degree at an accredited college or university.

15 The current civil service minimum educational requirement for a
16 municipal police officer is graduation from high school or vocational
17 high school or possession of a high school equivalency certificate.

18 The bill specifies that a municipality could only establish the higher
19 educational requirements by ordinance; to make use of the terminology
20 "member or officer of the department or force," rather than "police
21 officer" in order to be consistent with terminology used elsewhere in
22 chapter 14 of Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes; and to clarify the
23 amount and character of the higher education qualifications established
24 in the bill.

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30 Permits municipalities operating under Title 11A of the New Jersey
31 Statutes (Civil Service) to impose additional educational requirements
upon police officer candidates.