

ASSEMBLY, No. 1675

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MARCH 4, 1996

By Assemblymen PASCRELL and ARNONE

1 AN ACT concerning the qualification of certain persons to serve as
2 jurors and amending N.J.S.2B:20-1.

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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. N.J.S.2B:20-1 is amended to read as follows:

8 2B:20-1. Qualifications of jurors

9 Every person summoned as a juror:

10 a. shall be 18 years of age or older;

11 b. shall be able to read and understand the English language;

12 c. shall be a citizen of the United States;

13 d. shall be a resident of the county in which the person is
14 summoned;

15 e. shall not **[be serving a sentence of imprisonment, or be on**
16 **probation or parole, as a result of a conviction]** have been convicted
17 of any indictable offense under the laws of this State, another state, or
18 the United States;

19 f. shall not have any mental or physical disability which will prevent
20 the person from properly serving as a juror.

21 (cf: N.J.S.2B:20-1)

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23 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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28 P.L.1995, c.44, recently codified into Title 2B the law governing
29 the qualification and selection of jurors. Part of this statutory
30 enactment removed the per se disqualification from jury service of
31 persons convicted of an indictable offense. The new law automatically
32 disqualifies an individual convicted of an indictable offense only if that
33 person is serving a sentence of imprisonment, or is on probation or
34 parole as a result of that conviction. Persons who have completed

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

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 their prison sentence and are no longer on probation or parole are now
2 eligible to serve as jurors.

3 This bill restores the historical per se disqualification of convicted
4 criminals from jury service. Those convicted of crimes would not be
5 eligible for jury service regardless of whether they are still subject to
6 some form of official restraint as a result of that conviction. The very
7 real potential for bias by convicted criminals against law enforcement
8 officers and the criminal justice system dictates that these individuals
9 should be barred from jury service.

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14 Excludes persons convicted of indictable offenses from jury duty.