

ASSEMBLY, No. 1677

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 29, 1996

By Assemblyman GARRETT

1 AN ACT concerning the use of certain abbreviated motor vehicle
2 accident information forms, and amending R.S.39:4-131.

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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. R.S.39:4-131 is amended to read as follows:

8 39:4-131. a. The division shall prepare and supply to police
9 departments and other suitable agencies, forms for accident reports
10 calling for sufficiently detailed information with reference to a motor
11 vehicle accident, including the cause, the conditions then existing, the
12 persons and vehicles involved, the compliance with P.L. 1984, c. 179
13 (C. 39:3-76.2e et seq.) by the operators and passengers of the vehicles
14 involved in the accident, and such information as the director may
15 require. The division shall also prepare and supply to police
16 departments and other suitable agencies abbreviated accident
17 information forms which shall include the following information:
18 operator's name; address; telephone number; driver's license number;
19 names of additional occupants; vehicle registration number; insurer;
20 and insurance policy number.

21 b. Every law enforcement officer who investigates a vehicle
22 accident of which report must be made as required in this Title, or who
23 otherwise prepares a written report as a result of an accident or
24 thereafter by interviewing the participants or witnesses, shall forward
25 a written report of such accident to the division, on forms furnished by
26 it, within five days after his investigation of the accident. Every such
27 law enforcement officer shall also ensure that the abbreviated accident
28 information forms provided pursuant to subsection a. of this section:

29 (1) are completed by each operator with respect to each vehicle
30 involved in the accident; and

31 (2) are exchanged between the operators of the other vehicles
32 involved in the accident.

33 Such written reports required to be forwarded by law enforcement
34 officers and the information contained therein shall not be privileged

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 or held confidential. Every citizen of this State shall have the right,
2 during regular business hours and under supervision, to inspect and
3 copy such reports and shall also have the right in person to purchase
4 copies of the reports at the same fee established by section 2 of P.L.
5 1963, c. 73 (C. 47:1A-2). If copies of reports are requested other than
6 in person, an additional fee of up to \$5.00 for the first three pages and
7 \$1.00 per page thereafter may be added to cover the administrative
8 costs of the report.

9 The provisions of any other law or regulation to the contrary
10 notwithstanding, reports obtained pursuant to this act shall not be
11 subject to confidentiality requirements except as provided by section
12 28 of P.L. 1960, c. 52 (C. 2A:84A-28).
13 (cf: P.L.1987, c. 26, s. 1)

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15 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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20 Current law requires the driver of a vehicle involved in an accident
21 to provide his name and address and exhibit his operator's license and
22 registration certificate to the other driver. Current law also requires
23 that if a law enforcement officer investigates a vehicle accident, he
24 must complete a motor vehicle accident report and send it to the
25 Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) within five days. Current police
26 practice typically is to separate the drivers and obtain information from
27 them individually. Thus, when a police officer is present, the drivers
28 often leave the scene of an accident without the basic information they
29 are required to provide each other by law. Moreover, neither the
30 drivers nor their insurers obtain any information about the other driver
31 to begin processing a claim until the accident report has been filed and
32 is made available.

33 This bill is intended to address this situation by requiring the DMV
34 to prepare and distribute to law enforcement agencies abbreviated
35 accident information forms calling for basic information about the
36 driver and vehicle involved in an accident. Law enforcement officers
37 would be responsible for ensuring that such forms are completed by
38 each driver and distributed to the other drivers.

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44 Requires use of DMV abbreviated accident information forms for
exchange of information by involved parties.