

P.L. 1997, CHAPTER 257, *approved September 23, 1997*
Assembly, No. 691 (*Third Reprint*)
(CORRECTED COPY)

1 AN ACT creating the New Jersey Human Relations Council and
2 supplementing chapter 9DD of Title 52 of the ²[New Jersey]
3 Revised² Statutes and making an appropriation.
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*
7

8 1. a. There is hereby created the New Jersey Human Relations
9 Council, referred to hereinafter as the council, which shall ³promote
10 prejudice reduction education and³ address the problem of bias and
11 violent acts based on the victim's race, color ³,³ religion, ³ national
12 origin,³ ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender or disability. The council
13 shall be a permanent, independent body in but not of the Department
14 of Law and Public Safety.

15 b. The council shall consist of an executive committee which shall
16 include ten public members who shall be representative of the various
17 ethnic; religious; ³national origin;³ racial; sexual orientation; gender;
18 and disabilities organizations in this State, of whom four shall be
19 appointed by the Governor, no more than two of whom shall be of the
20 same political party; three shall be appointed by the President of the
21 Senate, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party;
22 and three shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly,
23 no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party; two
24 members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, no
25 more than one of whom shall be of the same political party; two
26 members of the General Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the
27 General Assembly, no more than one of whom shall be of the same

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.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹ Assembly ACO committee amendments adopted June 3, 1996.

² Assembly floor amendments adopted June 24, 1996.

³ Senate floor amendments adopted March 10, 1997.

1 political party; ¹[two] ³[three¹] seven³ representatives from county
2 human relations commissions representing ¹[two] ³[three¹ different
3 regions] the diversity of all county human relations commissions from
4 the 21 counties³ of the State appointed by the Governor; and the
5 following ex officio members: the Attorney General of the State of
6 New Jersey; Commissioner of the Department of Education; the
7 Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs; the
8 Commissioner of the Department of Corrections; the Commissioner of
9 the Department of Human Services; the Public Defender; the Director
10 of the Administrative ³[Offices] Office³ of the Courts; the Director
11 of the Division of Criminal Justice; the Superintendent of the Division
12 of State Police; the Director of the Division on Civil Rights; the
13 President of the County Prosecutors Association of New Jersey; ³the
14 ³ President of the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police;
15 the President of the Bias Crime Officers Association of New Jersey; a
16 county Superintendent of Schools selected by the Commissioner of the
17 Department of Education; the President of the New Jersey Principals
18 and Supervisors Association; and the President of the New Jersey
19 Education Association.

20 c. Of the public members first appointed to the council, six shall be
21 appointed for a term of three years, two shall be appointed for terms
22 of two years and two shall be appointed for a term of one year. The
23 ¹[two] ³[three¹] seven³ county human relations commissions
24 representatives shall be appointed for terms of two years. The
25 legislative members appointed initially under this act shall serve until
26 the end of the legislative session in which the appointment is made.
27 Thereafter, the legislative members shall be appointed for two year
28 terms to coincide with the two year legislative term in which they
29 serve on the council. Thereafter, the public members shall be
30 appointed for terms of three years. Vacancies on the council shall be
31 filled in the same manner as the original appointment but for the
32 unexpired term. A chairperson shall be selected from among the
33 public members of the council. The council shall have the authority
34 to establish subcommittees as it deems appropriate and pursuant to
35 this act. ³The public members of the council shall adopt bylaws to
36 govern the council and elect officers from among the public members
37 as it deems appropriate and pursuant to this act.³

38 d. Each ex officio member may designate ¹[an employee of] a
39 person from¹ the member's department or agency to represent the
40 member at hearings of the council. All designees may lawfully vote
41 and otherwise act on behalf of the member for whom they constitute
42 the designee.

43

44 2. It shall be the duty of the council:

45 a. to develop policy proposals for the State and assist with
46 coordinating efforts to ³ promote prejudice reduction and³ prevent

- 1 and deter crimes based upon the victim's race ³[;].³ color ³[;].³
 2 religion ³[;] , national origin,³ sexual orientation ³[;].³ ethnicity
 3 ³[;].³ gender ³[;].³ or physical, mental or cognitive disability;
- 4 b. to assist in diffusing tensions in communities affected by such
 5 crimes;
- 6 c. to act as a clearinghouse for information and program ideas
 7 among the existing county human relations commissions;
- 8 d. to assist the efforts of the county human relations commissions
 9 in relieving tensions within the community;
- 10 e. to assist in providing training programs for members of the
 11 county human relations commissions and other interested community
 12 leaders;
- 13 f. to develop and present a biennial report to the Governor and
 14 Legislature on the status of bias and violence based upon race ³[;].³
 15 color ³[;].³ religion ³[;] , national origin,³ sexual orientation ³[;].³
 16 ethnicity ³[;].³ gender ³[;].³ or physical, mental or cognitive
 17 disability;
- 18 g. to establish and maintain a listing of conflict resolution programs
 19 and experts to be available as a resource for communities in time of
 20 crisis;
- 21 h. to develop in conjunction with law enforcement agencies,
 22 including the Office of Bias Crimes and Community Relations in the
 23 Division of Criminal Justice, and the educational community cultural
 24 diversity training for law enforcement personnel;
- 25 i. to develop in conjunction with the Department of Education and
 26 the educational, civil rights and human relations communities
 27 educational programs intended to educate, encourage, develop,
 28 promote and strengthen respect for human rights and cultural diversity
 29 and prevent and combat racism, intolerance and bigotry;
- 30 j.³ to assist local communities in establishing local human
 31 ¹[resources] relations¹ commissions;
- 32 ³[j.] k.³ to assess changes in local demographics and assist
 33 communities in adapting to minority population shifts;
- 34 ³[k.] l.³ to assist State, county and local government agencies with
 35 multi-cultural awareness programs; ³[and
- 36 l.] m.³ to require that the ³[two]³ representatives from the county
 37 human relations commissions report back to the counties ³[in each
 38 region]³ regarding the work and activities of the State council ³;
- 39 n. to provide conciliation assistance and conduct all activities in
 40 confidence and without publicity; and
- 41 o. to make recommendations to governmental entities for the
 42 development of policies and procedures in general and for programs
 43 of formal and informal education that will aid in eliminating all types
 44 of discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual
 45 orientation, ethnicity, gender, or physical, mental or cognitive
 46 disability³ .

1 ³3. The council shall hold confidential any information acquired
2 during the course of mediation or dispute resolution.³

3
4 ³[3.] 4.³ The council shall have the following powers:

5 a. to conduct public hearings throughout the State;

6 b. to establish subcommittees;

7 c. to perform fact finding functions and prepare reports on
8 particular issues regarding racial; color; religious; sexual orientation;
9 ethnicity; gender; or physical, mental or cognitive disability; and

10 d. to call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of any
11 official of this State and its political subdivisions and their
12 departments, boards, bureaus, commissions and agencies as it may
13 require and may expend any funds appropriated or otherwise made
14 available to it.

15

16 ³[4.] 5.³ The council shall meet ³at least quarterly³ and hold
17 hearings at such place or places it shall deem necessary.

18

19 ³[5. The Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and
20 Public Safety shall assist the council in the performance of its duties.]³

21

22 6. The Legislature shall annually appropriate such sums as are
23 necessary to effectuate the purposes of this act.

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25 7. This act shall take effect immediately.

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28

29

30 Creates New Jersey Human Relations Council to address problems of
31 bias and violent acts.