

SENATE, No. 679

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 5, 1996

By Senator LaROSSA

1 AN ACT granting paid leave to State and county employees who  
2 participate in certain emergency service organizations and  
3 reimbursement to the counties therefor, and supplementing chapter  
4 9 of Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes and chapter 14 of Title  
5 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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

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10 1. a. The governing body of a county shall grant leave from work  
11 with pay to an employee who is a member of a volunteer fire company  
12 or a volunteer first aid or rescue squad, or who is a volunteer driver  
13 of a publicly owned or operated ambulance, when the employee is  
14 called to respond to an alarm occurring during the hours of  
15 employment or whenever the employee's arrival at work is delayed  
16 because the employee had responded to an alarm. Leave shall be  
17 granted only to an employee who is a member, volunteer, or driver in  
18 a municipality in the county in which the person is employed.

19 The governing body shall promulgate regulations concerning leave  
20 from work granted under this section. The regulations may place  
21 limitations on entitlement to such leave for specifically designated  
22 employees who are deemed essential for the orderly operation of  
23 employment activities and whose absence would significantly disrupt  
24 those operations. The regulations shall require that accurate records  
25 be kept of the time off from work granted to an employee pursuant to  
26 this section. The regulations shall also require, as a prerequisite to the  
27 granting of such leave, written verification of the employee's response  
28 to an alarm. The regulations shall provide that this written verification  
29 shall be submitted by the employee's supervising officer in the  
30 volunteer fire company or volunteer first aid or rescue squad, or the  
31 public entity for which the employee is a volunteer driver of a publicly  
32 owned or operated ambulance.

33 b. There is established in the General Fund a special account, to be  
34 administered by the Commissioner of the Department of Community  
35 Affairs, into which the money allocated pursuant to section 3 of  
36 P.L. , c. (C. )(now pending before the Legislature as this bill)  
37 shall be deposited. The purpose of this account shall be to provide

1 reimbursement to the governing body of a county whenever it grants  
2 a leave from work with pay to an employee as provided for in  
3 subsection a. of this section. The commissioner shall adopt such rules  
4 and regulations as the commissioner may deem necessary to provide  
5 for the proper distribution of all such reimbursements.

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7 2. A State appointing authority shall grant leave from work with  
8 pay for an employee who is a member of a volunteer fire company or  
9 a volunteer first aid or rescue squad, or who is a volunteer driver of a  
10 publicly owned or operated ambulance, when the employee is called  
11 to respond to an alarm occurring during the hours of employment or  
12 whenever the employee's arrival at work is delayed because the  
13 employee had responded to an alarm. Leave shall be granted to an  
14 employee if the employee is a member, volunteer, or driver in the  
15 municipality in which the employee's place of employment for the State  
16 is located or in a municipality not more than 15 miles distant from the  
17 place of employment.

18 The Merit System Board shall promulgate regulations concerning  
19 leave from work granted under this section. The regulations may  
20 place limitations on entitlement to such leave for employees serving in  
21 specifically designated positions which are deemed essential for the  
22 orderly operation of employment activities and the absence from which  
23 would significantly disrupt those operations. The regulations shall  
24 require that accurate records be kept of the time off from work  
25 granted to an employee pursuant to this section. The regulations shall  
26 also require, as a prerequisite to the granting of such leave, written  
27 verification of the employee's response to an alarm. The regulations  
28 shall provide that this written verification shall be submitted by the  
29 employee's supervising officer in the volunteer fire company or  
30 volunteer first aid or rescue squad, or the public entity for which the  
31 employee is a volunteer driver of a publicly owned or operated  
32 ambulance.

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34 3. There shall be allocated \$1 million from the funds available to  
35 the Department of Community Affairs to the account established  
36 pursuant to subsection b. of section 1 of this act for the purposes  
37 provided for in section 1 this act.

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39 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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42 STATEMENT

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44 This bill requires any State appointing authority and any county to  
45 grant leave with pay to an employee who is a member of a volunteer  
46 fire company or a volunteer first aid or rescue squad, or who is a

1 volunteer driver of a publicly owned or operated ambulance, when the  
2 employee is called to respond to an alarm occurring during the hours  
3 of employment or whenever the employee's arrival at work is delayed  
4 because the employee had responded to an alarm. The Merit System  
5 Board in the Department of Personnel or the county, as appropriate,  
6 is to promulgate regulations to govern the granting of leave under the  
7 bill. These regulations may, in the case of personnel deemed essential  
8 for the orderly operations of employment activities, place limitations  
9 on entitlement to such leave. In addition, the regulations shall require,  
10 as a prerequisite to the approval of an employee's request for leave,  
11 that written verification be provided of the employee's response to an  
12 alarm.

13 This bill would provide State and county employees with a similar  
14 opportunity as is currently provided to municipal employees under  
15 section 1 of P.L.1971, c.200 (C.40A:9-160.1).

16 The bill establishes a special account in the General Fund, to be  
17 administered by the Commissioner of the Department of Community  
18 Affairs, to provide reimbursement to the governing body of a county  
19 whenever it grants a leave from work with pay as provided for by the  
20 bill. The bill provides that \$1 million shall be allocated from the funds  
21 available to the department for these purposes. The commissioner is  
22 given the authority to adopt such rules and regulations as the  
23 commissioner may deem necessary to provide for the proper  
24 distribution of all such reimbursements.

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29 Grants paid leave to State and county employees who participate in  
30 certain emergency service organizations; provides for State  
31 reimbursement to counties for such leave; allocates \$1 million.