

ASSEMBLY AGING AND SENIOR SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 1058

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 7, 2020

The Assembly Aging and Senior Services Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 1058.

As amended by the committee, this bill requires the Commissioner of Human Services or the commissioner's designee to develop a training program that is designed to prevent and eliminate discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression in the delivery of services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and intersex senior citizens in the State. The bill requires that the training program be developed no later than nine months following the bill's enactment.

The training program is to be designed to increase awareness among, and provide cultural competency to, service providers and their employees about the issues encountered by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, and intersex seniors, in order to both ensure equal access to services for senior citizens and improve the delivery of those services to senior citizens and caregivers in the State.

The bill provides that each person who is licensed or certified to provide services or supports to senior citizens, and who contracts with, provides services through programs administered by, or receives funding from, the Department of Human Services (DHS), any of its divisions, or any area agency on aging must complete the training program within six months after the program is made available or within one month after commencing the delivery of services or supports to senior citizens in the State, whichever is later. Each service provider who is required to undergo training would also be required to ensure that each staff member employed thereby completes the anti-discrimination training program, either within six months after the program is made available or within one month after the staff member commences employment with the provider, whichever is later.

The DHS would be required to make the training program available online, by webinar, or by other means and would further be required to establish a protocol to ensure that service providers comply with the bill's provisions.

The bill would take effect immediately upon enactment.

This bill was pre-filed for introduction in the 2020-2021 session pending technical review. As reported, the bill includes the changes required by technical review, which has been performed.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to require each service provider to ensure that each staff member employed thereby completes the anti-discrimination training program developed under the bill. The bill, as introduced, would have only required the licensed service provider, but not the provider's employees, to complete the training. These employees will be required to complete the training either within six months after the program is developed or within one month after commencing employment with the provider, whichever is later.

The amendments would also make minor technical changes to the bill to correct sentence structure, improve readability, and ensure the consistent and parallel use of language throughout the bill's provisions.