

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 2117

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman P. CHRISTOPHER TULLY

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblywoman LISA SWAIN

District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblyman JOHN ARMATO

District 2 (Atlantic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywomen McKnight, Vainieri Huttie, Murphy and Downey

SYNOPSIS

Establishes State to oversee application for and receipt of federal funds
Ombudsman by State agencies.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly State and Local Government Committee on
February 22, 2021, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/25/2021)

1 AN ACT establishing the State Ombudsman for Federal Funds and
2 supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

3

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

6

7 1. a. There is created the Office of the Ombudsman for Federal
8 Funds within the Department of the Treasury. The purpose of the
9 office and the duties of the ombudsman shall be to serve as a resource
10 to enable State agencies to qualify for, apply for, and receive federal
11 funds, and to oversee the activities of State agencies in this regard.

12 The ombudsman shall be appointed by the Governor ¹**【with the**
13 **advice and consent of the Senate】**¹ and shall serve at the pleasure of
14 the Governor during the Governor's term of office. Any vacancy
15 occurring in the position of ombudsman shall be filled in the same
16 manner as the original appointment. If the ombudsman shall be unable
17 for any reason to serve the full term of office, the Governor shall
18 designate an acting ombudsman until a successor is appointed and has
19 qualified.

20 The ombudsman shall be qualified by training and experience to
21 perform the duties of the office. The ombudsman shall be a person of
22 recognized judgment, integrity, and objectivity.

23 The ombudsman shall devote his entire time to the duties of the
24 office.

25 b. The ombudsman shall organize, administer, and direct the work
26 of the office, including the work of such professional and clerical staff
27 as may be necessary to carry out the duties. The ombudsman shall be
28 entitled to call upon and receive the services of any full-time or part-
29 time employee of any State department, agency, board, bureau, or
30 commission, as may be available to carry out the duties. When existing
31 State employees are not available, the ombudsman shall hire such
32 persons as deemed necessary and appropriate, subject to Title 11A
33 (Civil Service) of the New Jersey Statutes and within the limits of
34 funds made available to the office. The ombudsman shall appoint and
35 employ such officers, investigators, experts, consultants, or other
36 professionally qualified personnel on a contract basis or otherwise as
37 deemed necessary and appropriate, in accordance with any applicable
38 law, regulation, or executive order, for the purpose of providing such
39 professional advice as the ombudsman may from time to time require,
40 within the limits of the funds made available therefor.

41 The ombudsman shall coordinate with State agencies and
42 implement a strategy for those State agencies to ensure that they
43 qualify and apply for and receive available federal funds in a timely
44 manner.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **【thus】** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly ASL committee amendments adopted February 22, 2021.

1 It shall be the duty of the ombudsman to:
2 serve as a source of information for federal funds available to the
3 State under federal laws and regulations;
4 provide information and support to State agencies in navigating
5 and understanding the process for obtaining federal funds;
6 review the processes of State agencies regarding the application for
7 federal funds and make recommendations;
8 identify the areas within State agencies that need to be
9 strengthened to qualify for federal funds;
10 evaluate, report on, and recommend strategies and best practices to
11 improve the ability of State agencies to qualify for and receive federal
12 funds;
13 establish procedures to monitor the application for and receipt of
14 all federal funds to State agencies;
15 promote and facilitate a coordinated approach for applications by
16 State agencies for federal funds;
17 promote State agencies to provide an opportunity for their
18 qualification for and receipt of federal funds;
19 develop productive relationships with the various State and federal
20 agencies to promote the success of State agencies in receiving federal
21 funds;
22 act as the contact person for State and federal agencies to support
23 and advocate on behalf of State agencies in qualifying and applying
24 for federal funds;
25 make information available to State and federal agencies to
26 improve access to federal funds by State agencies;
27 create and maintain an electronic system to track all federal
28 funding opportunities as they become available;
29 collaborate with the federal and State agencies to develop a
30 centralized database of available federal funds;
31 respond to inquiries from State and federal agencies regarding all
32 aspects of an application for and receipt of federal funds by the State;
33 publish and disseminate information on the availability and receipt
34 of federal funds;
35 investigate whether applications for federal funds were submitted
36 appropriately and in accordance with relevant deadlines, laws, rules
37 and regulations and policies;
38 make necessary inquiries and obtain such information as deemed
39 necessary;
40 inspect any documents, forms, books, or records which are relevant
41 to an application and receipt of federal funds;
42 report to the Governor, the State Treasurer, and the Presiding
43 Officers of the Legislature any failure by a State agency to apply for or
44 receive in a timely manner any available federal funds; and
45 perform such other functions as the Governor or State Treasurer
46 shall direct or as the ombudsman may deem appropriate regarding
47 applications for and receipt of federal funds by the State.

1 c. The ombudsman shall establish a website describing the
2 functions of the office and ombudsman, and providing the mailing
3 address and the e-mail address of the office and ombudsman and a toll-
4 free information telephone number.

5 The ombudsman may publicize the existence, function, and
6 activities of the office to the public at large.

7 d. The ombudsman shall report to the Governor, and pursuant to
8 section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1) to the Legislature, on or
9 before January 31 of each year, summarizing the activities of the office
10 for the preceding year; documenting any significant problems with
11 regard to qualifying for, applying for, and receiving federal funds or
12 the applications therefor by State agencies; and setting forth any
13 recommendations for statutory or regulatory change which will further
14 the ability of the State to qualify for, apply for, and receive federal
15 funds.

16

17 2. This act shall take effect immediately.