

# ASSEMBLY, No. 5500

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 17, 2021

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman SHANIQUE SPEIGHT**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT**

**District 31 (Hudson)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywomen Vainieri Huttle and Jimenez**

**SYNOPSIS**

Expands duties of Commission on Human Trafficking to prevent human trafficking in women and children of color.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/21/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning human trafficking, and amending P.L.2013,  
2 c.51.

3  
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
5 *of New Jersey:*

6  
7 1. Section 1 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.52:17B-237) is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 1. a. There is hereby created, in the Division of Criminal Justice  
10 in the Department of Law and Public Safety, a commission to be  
11 known as the Commission on Human Trafficking, consisting of 15  
12 members as follows: the Attorney General, or his designee; the  
13 Commissioner of Children and Families, or his designee; the  
14 Commissioner of Human Services, or his designee; a county  
15 prosecutor, appointed by the Governor based upon the  
16 recommendation of the County Prosecutors Association of the State  
17 of New Jersey; one member of the New Jersey Human Trafficking  
18 Task Force established within the Department of Law and Public  
19 Safety, designated by the Attorney General; two public members  
20 appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the  
21 Senate President, one representing law enforcement and one  
22 representing a victim's assistance organization; one public member  
23 appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the  
24 Senate Minority Leader representing either a non-profit health care  
25 facility or mental health services; two public members appointed by  
26 the Governor based upon the recommendation of the Speaker of the  
27 General Assembly, one representing law enforcement and one  
28 representing a victim's assistance organization; one public member  
29 appointed by the Governor based upon the recommendation of the  
30 Assembly Minority Leader representing either a non-profit health  
31 care facility or mental health services; and four public members  
32 appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall be a representative  
33 of a child advocacy organization concerning missing, abducted, or  
34 exploited children, and one of whom shall be a human trafficking  
35 survivor. All public members shall have experience with, possess a  
36 background in, or demonstrate a specialized knowledge of, the  
37 legal, policy, educational, social, or psychological aspects of human  
38 trafficking.

39 b. (1) Of the public members first appointed:

40 (a) the following shall serve for a term of three years: one  
41 member appointed upon the recommendation of the Senate  
42 President; one member appointed upon the recommendation of the  
43 Speaker of the General Assembly; and two members appointed by  
44 the Governor; and

**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.

1 (b) the following shall serve for a term of two years: one  
2 member appointed upon the recommendation of the Senate  
3 President; one member appointed upon the recommendation of the  
4 Speaker of the General Assembly; each member appointed upon the  
5 recommendation of the Senate and Assembly Minority Leaders; and  
6 two members appointed by the Governor.

7 (c) Upon the conclusion of the initial terms, each public member  
8 shall be appointed for a term of three years.

9 (2) Each member appointed shall hold office for the term of  
10 appointment and until a successor shall have been appointed and  
11 qualified.

12 (3) Any vacancy in the membership of the commission shall be  
13 filled by appointment in the same manner as the original  
14 appointment was made.

15 c. (1) The commission shall organize upon the appointment of a  
16 majority of its authorized membership. The members shall elect  
17 one of the members to serve as chair and vice-chair, and the chair  
18 may appoint a secretary, who need not be a member of the  
19 commission.

20 (2) The commission shall meet at those times and places within  
21 the State of New Jersey as the commission shall determine. A  
22 majority of the commission's authorized membership shall  
23 constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business, for the  
24 performance of any duty, or for the exercise of any power of the  
25 commission.

26 d. The members of the commission shall serve without  
27 compensation, but shall be eligible for reimbursement for necessary  
28 and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their  
29 official duties within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise  
30 made available to the commission for its purposes.

31 e. The Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law  
32 and Public Safety shall, at the direction of the Attorney General,  
33 provide legal, stenographic, technical, clerical, and other staff and  
34 resource assistance to the commission, and additionally the  
35 commission may incur expenses as may be necessary in order to  
36 perform its duties within the limits of funds appropriated or  
37 otherwise made available to it for its purposes.

38 f. It shall be the duty of the commission to:

39 (1) Evaluate the existing law concerning human trafficking and  
40 the enforcement thereof, conduct research and produce findings on  
41 human trafficking of women and children of color, identify social  
42 and racial factors that make women and children of color more  
43 vulnerable to human trafficking, identify effective strategies,  
44 support, and services to reduce human trafficking of women and  
45 children of color, study the interactions between law enforcement  
46 agencies and women and children of color who have been victims  
47 of human trafficking, and to make recommendations for legislation,  
48 if appropriate;

1 (2) Review existing victim assistance programs and analyze the  
2 costs, organization, and availability of these services for victims of  
3 human trafficking and to make recommendations for legislation, if  
4 appropriate;

5 (3) Promote a coordinated response by public and private  
6 resources for victims of human trafficking; and

7 (4) Develop mechanisms to promote public awareness of human  
8 trafficking, victim remedies and services, and trafficking prevention  
9 including the creation of a public awareness sign promoting the  
10 national, 24-hour toll-free hotline telephone service on human  
11 trafficking described under section 18 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.2C:13-  
12 11), and the promotion of training courses and other educational  
13 materials for use by persons required under section 19 of P.L.2013,  
14 c.51 (C.2C:13-12) to undergo training on the handling of and  
15 response procedures for suspected human trafficking activities.

16 g. The commission shall report annually to the Governor and to  
17 the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-  
18 19.1), its activities, as well as its findings and recommendations for  
19 any needed new services or resources for victims of human  
20 trafficking, and any proposed changes to the current law concerning  
21 human trafficking.

22 (cf: P.L.2021, c.3, s.1)

23  
24 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

## 25 26 27 STATEMENT

28  
29 This bill would expand the duties of the Commission on Human  
30 Trafficking. In addition to its existing duties, the Commission  
31 would conduct research and produce findings on human trafficking  
32 of women and children of color, identify social and racial factors  
33 that make women and children of color more vulnerable to human  
34 trafficking, identify effective strategies, support, and services to  
35 reduce human trafficking of women and children of color, study the  
36 interactions between law enforcement agencies and women and  
37 children of color who have been victims of human trafficking.

38 Data provided by the National Human Trafficking Hotline  
39 indicates that out of the 247 human trafficking cases reported in  
40 2019 in New Jersey, 207 were female. Though studies and news  
41 reports indicate that human trafficking is more rampant in  
42 communities of color, there is no conclusive data on the number of  
43 women and children of color trafficked in the State of New Jersey.

44 Nationally, the available data confirms that human trafficking in  
45 women and children is overwhelmingly for sexual exploitation and  
46 more widespread in communities of color. According to a 2011  
47 study by the Justice Department's Bureau of Justice Statistics  
48 (BJS), more than 80 percent of suspected incidents of human

1   trafficking investigated between January 2008 and June 2010  
2   involved allegations of adult prostitution (48 percent) or the  
3   prostitution or sexual exploitation of a child (40 percent). Based  
4   upon cases where the race was known, 40 percent of sex trafficking  
5   victims were black.