

SENATE, No. 2161

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Senator TROY SINGLETON

District 7 (Burlington)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Pou, Ruiz and Madden

SYNOPSIS

Requires DCA to make information on homeless prevention programs and services available on its Internet website.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/19/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning homeless prevention programs and services 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. The Department of Community Affairs shall prepare and
8 make available on the department's Internet website, in an easily
9 printable format, information on all county, State, and federal
10 homeless prevention programs and services that are available to a
11 homeless person or to a person who is at imminent risk of
12 homelessness. The department shall update the information
13 whenever new information about the programs and services
14 becomes available. The information shall include, but not be
15 limited to, a list, by county, of:

16 (1) grant programs and homeless intervention programs,
17 including the "Homeless Veterans Grant Fund" established by
18 section 4 of P.L.2013, c.239 (C.54A:9-25.33), "Statue of Liberty
19 Trust Fund," established by section 3 of P.L.1987, c.57 (C.32:32-3),
20 "County Homelessness Trust Fund," created by P.L.2009,
21 c.123 (C.52:27D-287a et al.), and the Homeless Intervention
22 Program in the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, that
23 supply grants and provide referral assistance services to homeless
24 veterans, homeless persons, and persons at imminent risk of
25 homelessness, as applicable;

26 (2) homeless youth programs and other homeless services
27 provided to teens and young adults by the Division of Children's
28 System of Care and Office of Adolescent Services in the
29 Department of Children and Families;

30 (3) homeless prevention services provided by the Division of
31 Child Protection and Permanency in the Department of Children
32 and Families to families involved in the child welfare system;

33 (4) homeless services provided by the Division of Mental Health
34 and Addiction Services in the Department of Human Services to
35 persons suffering from mental illness or co-occurring addiction and
36 mental health disease; and

37 (5) other county, State, or federal housing and homeless
38 prevention programs that provide financial and other supportive
39 services to homeless persons or those at imminent risk of
40 homelessness.

41 b. The department shall notify each county welfare agency,
42 Division of Child Protection and Permanency local office, veterans
43 service office, emergency shelter for the homeless, health care
44 facility, State psychiatric hospital, crisis intervention unit, screening
45 service, library, and community-based outreach program and
46 nonprofit organizations providing housing and homeless prevention
47 services in the State of the requirement to:

1 (1) post the information specified in paragraph (1) of subsection
2 a. of this section in a conspicuous public place in the agency, office
3 shelter, facility, hospital, unit, screening service, library, or place
4 where housing and homeless prevention services are provided; and

5 (2) provide the information, at no cost, to homeless persons or
6 persons at imminent risk of homelessness.

7 c. The department shall ensure, in consultation with the
8 Departments of Children and Families, Health, Human Services,
9 and Military and Veterans Affairs, that:

10 (1) the information posted on its website is made available on
11 the websites of the Departments of Children and Families, Health,
12 Human Services, and Military and Veterans Affairs, and is updated
13 as necessary; and

14 (2) a website link to the information is posted to the Internet
15 website of every county welfare agency, Division of Child
16 Protection and Permanency local office, and veterans service office
17 in the State.

18 d. As used in this section, "homeless person" means a teen, a
19 young adult, a veteran, as defined under N.J.S.11A:5-1,
20 N.J.S.18A:66-2, section 6 of P.L.1954, c.84 (C.43:15A-6), or
21 section 1 of P.L.1983, c.391 (C.43:16A-11.7), an unemployed or
22 underemployed person, a person with mental illness, or a person
23 with developmental disabilities who is living outside, or in a
24 building not meant for human habitation or which the person has no
25 legal right to occupy, or in an emergency shelter, in a temporary
26 housing program which may include a transitional and supportive
27 housing program if habitation time limits exist, or temporarily in
28 the home of another household, or in a motel.

29

30 2. Pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968,
31 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the Department of Community Affairs,
32 in consultation with the Departments of Children and Families,
33 Health, Human Services, and Military and Veterans Affairs, may
34 adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act.

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36 3. This act shall take effect immediately, but in order to
37 provide the department with time to prepare the website, the
38 requirement to make the website publicly available, fully
39 incorporating the information required under section 1, shall remain
40 inoperative until the first day of the third month next following
41 enactment.

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STATEMENT

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46 This bill requires that the Department of Community Affairs
47 (DCA) prepare and make available information on its website
48 concerning all homeless prevention programs that are available to

1 homeless persons or persons who are at imminent risk of
2 homelessness. The bill also requires that DCA update this information
3 whenever necessary.

4 Specifically, the bill requires that the information provided by
5 DCA include, but not be limited to, a list by county of the following
6 programs: grant programs and homeless intervention programs that
7 provide assistance services to homeless veterans, homeless persons,
8 and persons at imminent risk of homelessness; homeless services
9 provided by the Departments of Military and Veterans Affairs
10 (DMVA), Children and Families (DCF), Human Services (DHS), and
11 Health (DOH); and other county, State, or federal housing and
12 homeless prevention programs that provide supportive services to
13 homeless persons or those at imminent risk of homelessness.

14 Under the bill, DCA is to notify the following entities of the
15 requirement to conspicuously post and provide this information, at no
16 cost, to homeless persons and those at imminent risk of homelessness:
17 county welfare agencies, Division of Child Protection and Permanency
18 local offices, veterans service offices, emergency shelters for the
19 homeless, health care facilities, State psychiatric hospitals, crisis
20 intervention units, screening services, libraries, and community-based
21 outreach programs and nonprofit organizations providing housing and
22 homeless prevention services in the State.

23 The bill also requires DCA, in consultation with DCF, DHS, DOH,
24 and DMVA, to ensure that: (1) the updated information posted on the
25 DCA website also is made available on each department's website;
26 and (2) a link to the information also is posted to the Internet website
27 of every county welfare agency, DCPD local office, and veterans
28 service office in the State.

29 Under the bill, a "homeless person" is defined as a teen, a young
30 adult, a veteran, as defined under N.J.S.11A:5-1, N.J.S.18A:66-2,
31 section 6 of P.L.1954, c.84 (C.43:15A-6), or section 1 of
32 P.L.1983, c.391 (C.43:16A-11.7), an unemployed or underemployed
33 person, a person with mental illness, or a person with developmental
34 disabilities who is living outside, or in a building not meant for human
35 habitation or which the person has no legal right to occupy, or in an
36 emergency shelter, or in a temporary housing program which may
37 include a transitional and supportive housing program if habitation
38 time limits exist, or temporarily in the home of another household, or
39 in a motel.

40 The bill provides that DCA, in consultation with DCF, DHS, DOH,
41 and DMVA, may adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the
42 purposes of the bill.