

# ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

[Second Reprint]

**SENATE, No. 3672**

with committee amendments

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 6, 2022

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 3672 (2R).

Under current law, a person must pass the civil service examination prior to becoming eligible for employment as an entry-level county correctional police officer.

Under this bill, a county or municipal police department, county sheriff's office, or a State or county correctional facility is permitted to recruit and employ a person as a temporary entry-level officer prior to taking the appropriate training course and such person will be exempt from taking the civil service examination for an entry-level officer position.

The bill also requires the person to successfully complete the appropriate training course within nine months from the date of hire and requires that, upon successful completion of the course, the person will be promoted from a temporary to a permanent entry-level officer to an entry-level officer. The bill, as amended, permits a sheriff's department to hire a person under the provisions of the bill upon adoption of a conflict of interest and nepotism policy by the county sheriff.

The bill also prohibits the use of the law to circumvent the intergovernmental transfer process and removes the current provision of the law permitting the exemption from the requirement to take the civil service examination for an entry-level law enforcement officer position for those persons who have successfully completed the required training course.

The bill also provides that a State correctional facility or department may hire a person, exempt from the requirement to take an examination for an entry-level State correctional police officer position, upon authorization of the Commissioner of Corrections.

The bill also provides that the starting salary of a State correctional police officer shall be not less than \$48,000 and adjustments would be made to the remaining steps in the salary scale of a State correctional police officer.

The bill further provides that a sheriff's investigator in a sheriff's department will be eligible for transfer to a sheriff's officer position in that same department in accordance with the law under certain conditions and provides that, beginning on January 1, 2023, a sheriff cannot appoint sheriff's investigators in accordance with this bill to more than 50 percent of open sheriff's officer positions in any calendar year.

The bill appropriates \$10,300,000 from the State General Fund to the Department of Corrections for the purpose of increasing salaries for State correctional officers, to be distributed in amounts determined by the Commissioner of Corrections and the Chairperson of the Civil Service Commission.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) clarify that applicants for a State correctional police officer position would also be exempt from examination;

(2) clarify that officers would be appointed from a temporary position following successful completion of the required training course;

(3) provide that a State correctional facility or department may hire a person, exempt from the requirement to take an examination for an entry-level State correctional police officer position, upon authorization of the Commissioner of Corrections;

(4) provide that the starting salary of a State correctional police officer would be not less than \$48,000 and adjustments would be made to the remaining steps in the salary scale of a State correctional police officer;

(5) provide that a sheriff's investigator in a sheriff's department would be eligible for transfer to a sheriff's officer position in that same department in accordance with this law (N.J.S.A.11:4-1.3) provided that:

(a) the investigator has completed at least one year in the position of sheriff's investigator in that sheriff's department or has served at least one year as a police officer or sheriff's officer in a municipal or county police or sheriff's department in this State; and

(b) the sheriff's investigator is not over 35 years of age at the time of initial appointment in accordance with this law to the sheriff's officer position;

(6) provide that, beginning on January 1, 2023, a sheriff cannot appoint sheriff's investigators in accordance with this law to more than 50 percent of open sheriff's officer positions in any calendar year;

(7) remove the provision that prohibited a sheriff's investigator from being hired as a sheriff's officer in accordance with the provisions of this law; and

(8) provide for an appropriation of \$10,300,000 from the State General Fund to the Department of Corrections for the purpose of

increasing salaries for State correctional officers, to be distributed in amounts determined by the Commissioner of Corrections and the Chairperson of the Civil Service Commission.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill has not been certified for a fiscal note.