

**SENATE, No. 3690**

**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**219th LEGISLATURE**

INTRODUCED APRIL 26, 2021

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator NICHOLAS P. SCUTARI**

**District 22 (Middlesex, Somerset and Union)**

**Senator JOSEPH P. CRYAN**

**District 20 (Union)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Expands modified basic training program to allow county corrections officers to be certified as county prosecutor's detectives or investigators, and county or municipal police officers.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.

1 AN ACT concerning the modified basic training program for county  
2 corrections officers and amending P.L.2019, c.247.

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.2019, c.247 (C.52:17B-68.2) is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 1. a. The Police Training Commission in the Division of  
10 Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety shall  
11 develop a supplemental course to be known as the modified basic  
12 training program for county corrections officers. The program shall  
13 provide the additional training necessary to allow an eligible county  
14 corrections officer to be certified as a county sheriff's officer,  
15 detective or investigator in the county prosecutor's office, or county  
16 or municipal police officer. The Police Training Commission shall  
17 develop the program within 180 days of the effective date of **[this**  
18 **act]** P.L.2019, c.247 and shall revise the program within 30 days  
19 of the effective date of P.L. , c. (now pending before the  
20 Legislature as this bill).

21 b. A county corrections officer is eligible for the modified basic  
22 training program if the officer has:

23 (1) previously completed a basic training course administered by  
24 the Police Training Commission pursuant to P.L.1961, c.56  
25 (C.52:17B-66 et seq.);

26 (2) been designated by the county sheriff as eligible to transition  
27 into the position of sheriff's officer or by the chief executive officer  
28 of the county or municipality, as appropriate, as eligible to transition  
29 into the position of detective or investigator in the county  
30 prosecutor's office, or county or municipal police officer based on  
31 the officer's law enforcement examination test score and seniority;

32 (3) served in the county correction's officer title for a minimum  
33 of **[36]** 12 months in the facility under the jurisdiction of the county  
34 sheriff or the chief executive officer of the county, whichever is  
35 applicable; and

36 (4) a criminal history record background check of the officer has  
37 been conducted by the appointing authority and the officer has not  
38 been deemed ineligible to transition to the position of sheriff's  
39 officer, detective or investigator in the county prosecutor's office, or  
40 county or municipal police officer on the basis of any conviction  
41 disclosed by the background check.

42 c. The modified basic training program shall, at a minimum,  
43 provide comprehensive and consistent training in law enforcement  
44 practices and concepts. Each course instructor shall be proficient and  
45 experienced in law enforcement practices and concepts.

**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 d. The modified basic training program shall be offered at an  
2 academy approved by the Police Training Commission to provide  
3 police training courses pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1961, c.56  
4 (C.52:17B-66 et seq.).

5 e. The waiver rule set forth in N.J.A.C.13:1-8.4 authorizing the  
6 Police Training Commission to waive all or part of a basic training  
7 course shall apply to an eligible county corrections officer taking the  
8 modified basic training program developed pursuant to subsection a.  
9 of this section.

10 f. A county corrections officer who successfully completes the  
11 modified basic training program shall be eligible for a lateral transfer  
12 to the position of sheriff's officer, detective or investigator in the  
13 county prosecutor's office, or county or municipal police officer in  
14 the any county or municipality, as applicable, in which the officer  
15 serves the State. An officer eligible for a lateral transfer shall not  
16 be denied a transfer to an available position without cause.

17 g. The Civil Service Commission shall adopt rules and  
18 regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"  
19 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), to implement the provisions of  
20 this section.

21 (cf: P.L.2019, c.247, s.1)

22  
23 2. This act shall take effect immediately.  
24  
25

## 26 STATEMENT

27  
28 This bill authorizes county corrections officers to take a modified  
29 training course to transition into a position as a detective or  
30 investigator in the county prosecutor's office, or as a county or  
31 municipal police officer.

32 Current law authorizes a county corrections officer to transition to  
33 a position as a county sheriff's officer by completing a supplemental  
34 course known as the modified basic training course for county  
35 corrections officers. This abbreviated training course, often referred  
36 to as the "GAP program," allows an eligible county corrections  
37 officer to be certified as a county sheriff's officer without having to  
38 take the entire basic training course required of other candidates for  
39 county sheriff's officer positions. Successful completion of the GAP  
40 program makes the county corrections officer eligible for a lateral  
41 transfer to the county sheriff's office in the county where the officer  
42 serves. The officer is not to be denied transfer to an available  
43 position without cause.

44 To be eligible for the GAP program under current law, a county  
45 corrections officer is required to have: 1) previously completed a  
46 Police Training Commission (PTC) basic training course; 2) been  
47 designated by the county sheriff as eligible to transition into the  
48 position of county sheriff's officer based on the officer's law

1 enforcement examination test score and seniority; 3) served in the  
2 county correction's officer title for a minimum of 36 months in the  
3 facility under the jurisdiction of the county sheriff; and 4) passed a  
4 criminal history record background check.

5 This bill requires the PTC to expand the GAP program to similarly  
6 authorize county corrections officers to transition into positions as  
7 detectives or investigators in the county prosecutor's office, or  
8 county or municipal police officers. The PTC has 30 days to make  
9 the necessary changes to the GAP program to implement provisions  
10 of the bill.

11 Under the bill, the chief executive officer of the county or  
12 municipality is responsible for designating whether a county  
13 corrections officer is eligible to transition to a position as a detective  
14 or investigator in the county prosecutor's office or county or  
15 municipal police officer based on the officer's examination scores  
16 and seniority. The county sheriff continues to be responsible for  
17 designating eligible officers to transition to county sheriff's officer  
18 positions. The bill also reduces the number of months that the county  
19 corrections officer is required to have served in a county correctional  
20 facility to be eligible for the GAP program from 36 months to 12  
21 months. The bill acknowledges that there are instances in which the  
22 county correctional facility is under the jurisdiction of the chief  
23 executive officer of the county rather than the county sheriff.

24 Finally, the bill authorizes county corrections officers to laterally  
25 transfer to a position as a county sheriff's officer, detective or  
26 investigator in the county prosecutor's office, or county or municipal  
27 police officer anywhere in the State, not just the county in which they  
28 serve.