

SENATE, No. 3946

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 15, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator JOSEPH F. VITALE

District 19 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Requires each principal department in Executive Branch to conduct review of department's COVID-19 preparedness, response, and recovery and make recommendations.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning a review of the State's COVID-19 pandemic
2 preparedness, response, and recovery efforts.

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

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7 1. a. The head of each principal department in the Executive
8 Branch of State government shall conduct an internal analysis of the
9 department's preparedness, response, and recovery efforts
10 concerning the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, and
11 develop a preparedness, response, and recovery plan for any future
12 state of emergency or public health emergency.

13 b. In the department's internal analysis, the head of each
14 principal department in the Executive Branch of State government,
15 at a minimum, shall:

16 (1) make a full and complete accounting of the COVID-19
17 pandemic's impact on the department's functions;

18 (2) review and evaluate the department's preparedness for the
19 COVID-19 pandemic, and the actions taken by the department at
20 critical junctures before and after the World Health Organization
21 designated COVID-19 as a public health emergency of international
22 concern on January 30, 2020, and before and after the World Health
23 Organization designated the COVID-19 outbreak as a global
24 pandemic on March 11, 2020;

25 (3) review any laws, executive orders, regulations, administrative
26 orders, plans, practices, and procedures related to the department's
27 operations during the COVID-19 state of emergency and public
28 health emergency, as declared on March 9, 2020 by the Governor
29 pursuant to Executive Order No. 103 of 2020 and as extended, and
30 assess the impact of those laws, executive orders, regulations,
31 administrative orders, plans, practices, and procedures on the
32 department's operations;

33 (4) identify and examine lessons learned regarding preparedness,
34 response, and recovery efforts at the department related to COVID-
35 19; and

36 (5) review any recommendations from the federal government
37 and similar departments in other states and local governmental units
38 on future preparedness concerning health security and pandemic
39 preparedness, response, and recovery and on combatting natural and
40 unnatural disasters, and incorporate any relevant recommendations
41 into the department's preparedness, response, and recovery plan.

42 c. The head of each principal department in the Executive
43 Branch of State government shall report the findings and
44 recommendations from the internal analysis to the Governor and,
45 pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the
46 Legislature no later than two years following the effective date of this
47 act, P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

1 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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6 For over a year, the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has
7 had a significant impact on the lives of every resident of this State.
8 Many New Jersey families have experienced firsthand the effects of
9 furloughs and layoffs, the stresses of prolonged social isolation, and
10 the pain of preventable illnesses and deaths. It is anticipated that
11 COVID-19 will have lasting deleterious effects on the State and the
12 nation due to the costs of the COVID-19 response, widespread
13 upticks in unemployment claims, and the lasting toll of the disease
14 on first responders, health care workers, and the health care industry,
15 as well as to other commercial and social sectors.

16 This bill requires each principal department in the Executive
17 Branch to conduct a review of the department's COVID-19
18 preparedness, response, and recovery and to make recommendations.
19 Under the bill, the head of each principal department in the Executive
20 Branch must conduct an internal analysis of the department's
21 preparedness, response, and recovery efforts concerning the COVID-
22 19 pandemic, and develop a preparedness, response, and recovery
23 plan for any future state of emergency or public health emergency.

24 The bill also requires the head of each principal department in the
25 Executive Branch to report the findings and recommendations from
26 the internal analysis to the Governor and the Legislature no later than
27 two years following the effective date of the bill.