

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 3713

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JUNE 20, 2022

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** “College Mental Health Services Act”; establishes grant program for public institutions of higher education and requires public institutions of higher education to report certain information concerning mental health treatment and suicides.
- Type of Impact:** Annual State expenditure increase; annual revenue increase for public institutions of higher education; potential annual expenditure increase for public institutions of higher education.
- Agencies Affected:** The Office of the Secretary of Higher Education; Public institutions of higher education.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>
State Cost Increase		Indeterminate	
Public Institutions of Higher Education Revenue Increase		Indeterminate	
Public Institutions of Higher Education Cost Increase		Indeterminate	

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that this bill will increase annual State expenditures due to the bill’s establishment of the College Mental Health Services Grant Program. While the OLS finds the costs of the program to be indeterminate and dependent on resource allocation decisions by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, the OLS posits based on allocations from other states that a reasonable maximum of annual costs is \$5 million.
- Grant moneys allocated to public institutions of higher education to improve access to campus mental health services would represent revenue increases to these institutions.
- The OLS determines that public institutions of higher education may experience marginal administrative cost increases due to the bill’s requirement that the institutions post certain information on their websites regarding student mental health services.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill establishes in the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education the College Mental Health Services Grant Program, under which grant moneys would be allocated to public institutions of higher education to improve access to campus mental health services. A grant received by a public institution of higher education under the program would be specifically used for efforts to improve student access to, and the timeliness of the provision of, mental health services and supports. Grant moneys would be provided to a public institution of higher education for a three-year period.

The bill also requires public institutions of higher education to provide for public inspection on its website various information concerning student mental health, including: the ratio of students who seek mental health services to mental health professionals at the institution; the total number of students who had appointments with a mental health professional at the institution; the total number of appointments, segmented by type of service, made by students with mental health professionals at the institution, including initial screening, individual therapy, group therapy, psychiatric services, on call crisis, and Let's Talk sessions; and the average wait time for students to meet with a mental health professional at the institution.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that this bill will increase annual State expenditures due to the bill's establishment of the College Mental Health Services Grant Program. While the OLS finds the costs of the program to be indeterminate and dependent on resource allocation decisions by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education, the OLS posits, based on higher education mental health programs established in other states, that a reasonable maximum of annual costs is \$5 million. Grant moneys allocated to public institutions of higher education to improve access to campus mental health services would represent revenue increases to these institutions.

The OLS bases the \$5 million maximum estimate amount on program allocations made by New Mexico, Connecticut, and North Carolina. In April 2021, New Mexico announced that \$1 million would be provided to the New Mexico Higher Education Department to support the development and enhancement of mental and behavioral health services for college students at public and Tribal colleges and universities. Connecticut, meanwhile, announced in December 2021 that it would provide \$2.7 million in federal Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund moneys to colleges and universities in Connecticut as they respond to the ongoing student mental health challenges driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. North Carolina similarly directed \$5 million in federal Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund moneys to support mental health initiatives across the University of North Carolina System and in the state's community colleges and independent colleges and universities.

The OLS determines that public institutions of higher education may experience marginal administrative cost increases due to the bill's requirement that the institutions post certain information on their websites regarding student mental health service.

Section: Education

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This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).