

CHAPTER 43

AN ACT concerning exemption from jury service and amending N.J.S.2B:20-10.

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

1. N.J.S.2B:20-10 is amended to read as follows:

Grounds for excuse from jury service.

2B:20-10. An excuse from jury service shall be granted only if:

- a. The prospective juror is 75 years of age or older;
- b. The prospective juror has served as a juror within the last three years in the county to which the juror is being summoned;
- c. Jury service will impose a severe hardship due to circumstances which are not likely to change within the following year. Severe hardship includes the following circumstances:
 - (1) The prospective juror has a medical inability to serve which is verified by a licensed physician.
 - (2) The prospective juror will suffer a severe financial hardship which will compromise the juror's ability to support himself, herself, or dependents. In determining whether to excuse the prospective juror, the Assignment Judge shall consider:
 - (a) the sources of the prospective juror's household income; and
 - (b) the availability and extent of income reimbursement; and
 - (c) the expected length of service.
 - (3) The prospective juror has a personal obligation to care for another, including:
 - (a) a dependent who is sick, is elderly, or has an infirmity or a minor child, who requires the prospective juror's personal care and attention, and no alternative care is available without severe financial hardship on the prospective juror or the person requiring care; or
 - (b) a child who is one year of age or younger where the prospective juror is the child's mother and is nursing or expressing milk for the child.
 - (4) The prospective juror provides highly specialized technical health care services for which replacement cannot reasonably be obtained.
 - (5) The prospective juror is a health care worker directly involved in the care of a person with a mental or physical disability, and the prospective juror's continued presence is essential to the personal treatment of that person.
 - (6) The prospective juror is a member of the full-time instructional staff of a grammar school or high school, the scheduled jury service is during the school term, and a replacement cannot reasonably be obtained. In determining whether to excuse the prospective juror or grant a deferral of service, the Assignment Judge shall consider:
 - (a) the impact on the school considering the number and function of teachers called for jury service during the current academic year; and
 - (b) the special role of certified special education teachers in providing continuity of instruction to students with disabilities;
 - d. The prospective juror is a member of a volunteer fire department or fire patrol; or
 - e. The prospective juror is a volunteer member of a first aid or rescue squad.

2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to jurors impaneled on or after the effective date.

Approved April 22, 2025.