

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2207

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 23, 2026

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 2207.

As amended, the bill authorizes medication aides, who are certified by the Department of Health (DOH), to administer medications, as delegated by and under the authority of a registered professional nurse, in State licensed nursing homes. Current law and regulations authorize certified medication aides to practice in assisted living facilities, comprehensive personal care homes, dementia care homes, and assisted living programs.

Under the bill, an individual seeking certification from the DOH as a medication aide, must first be a nurse aide certified by the DOH for employment in a long-term care facility, as provided under regulations found at N.J.A.C.8:39-43.1 through N.J.A.C.8:39-43.9; a homemaker home health aide certified by the Board of Nursing in the Division of Consumer Affairs, who also meets statutory requirements for employment as a certified nurse aide in a long-term care facility; or a personal care assistant certified by the DOH.

Individuals seeking certification as a medication aide in a nursing home will also be required to successfully complete a DOH approved training course on medication administration in a long term care setting, and within six months of completing the training course, attain a passing score on a DOH designated standardized examination on the administration of medication for personal care assistants. DOH certification for medication aides will be valid for two years. Medication aides seeking to renew their certification must complete at least 10 hours of continuing education courses, seminars, or in-service training. The bill provides that the continuing education requirement will be in addition to any continuing education requirements for certified personal care assistants or certified nurse aides, as provided by the DOH, or for certified homemaker home health aides, as required by the Board of Nursing. The facility employing the certified medication aide, additionally, will maintain the continuing education records for all current and former certified medication aides for at least a two year period. The bill provides for the suspension, denial, or revocation of a medication aide's certification under circumstances outlined in the bill.

The bill additionally establishes a process by which the DOH will notify the certified medication aide of any pending disciplinary action, and a process by which the medication aide may request an administrative hearing to appeal the department's determination. The bill amends section 2 of P.L.1997, c.100 (C.26:2H-83), which requires the DOH to conduct criminal history record background checks on applicants for initial and renewal certification as nurse aides and personal care assistants, to now require background checks for applicants for initial and renewal certification as medication aides. The bill additionally establishes certain crimes for which a medication aide will be disqualified from certification. The bill further amends section 3 of P.L.1997, c.100 (C.26:2H-84) to include provisions for establishing a process by which a medication aide may be temporarily employed by a facility while the criminal history record background check on the medication aide is pending. The bill additionally amends this statute to require the DOH to establish a registry of certified medication aides, in addition to the existing registries for DOH certified nurse aides and personal care assistants.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendment makes technical changes to section 7 of the bill to reflect the enactment of P.L.2024, c.67.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) determines that the Department of Health may realize an indeterminate increase in annual expenditures to process applications for certification as a medication aid submitted by certified personal care assistants and homemaker-home health aides.

Given the number of certified personal care assistance and certified homemaker-home health aides who may successfully complete the training to become a certified medication aid and subsequently apply to the department for a certification as a medication aide is unknown, the OLS lacks the information basis to determine how the bill's provisions would impact the department's administrative costs.

To the extent that the State's nursing homes that accept Medicaid patients are able to fill direct care staff vacancies with certified medication aides, the facilities' staffing costs will increase, thereby potentially placing upward pressure on NJ FamilyCare reimbursement rates in future years. Any future increase in Medicaid expenditures will increase State revenues in the form of federal Medicaid reimbursements.

Similarly, to the extent that county-operated nursing homes fill direct care staff vacancies with certified medication aides, their staffing costs may increase accordingly. The State's six county-operated nursing homes are located in Bergen (1), Middlesex (2), Atlantic (1), Gloucester (1), and Passaic (1) counties.