

ASSEMBLY, No. 2291

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2026 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman MARGIE DONLON, M.D.

District 11 (Monmouth)

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Azzariti Jr. and Sampson

SYNOPSIS

Establishes State stockpile of medicine and medical supplies; makes appropriation.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Assembly Health Committee with technical review.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/23/2026)

1 AN ACT concerning medicine and medical supplies and
2 supplementing Title 26 of the Revised Statutes, and making an
3 appropriation.
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*
7

8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that having access to a
9 Statewide strategic buffer stock, essential medicine reserve, or
10 strategic inventory of essential medicines in the event of
11 emergencies and disasters is vital to the State's health care system,
12 educational settings, and general population who may rely on its
13 healthcare resources, especially residents in rural and medically
14 underserved areas.
15

16 2. As used in this act:

17 "Department" means the Department of Health.

18 "Designated recipients" shall include, but shall not limited to,
19 healthcare providers, healthcare facilities, State disaster relief
20 organizations, State-operated facilities, and other entities that
21 strategically reserve medical resources, which may be disbursed
22 pursuant to section 3 of this act.

23 "Essential buffer stock" means an essential buffer stock of
24 emergency and chronic disease medication, vaccines, and medical
25 supplies, essential medicine reserve, or strategic inventory of
26 essential medicines.

27 "Natural disaster" means any catastrophic event including, but
28 not limited to, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, floods, winter
29 storms, or wildfires that are declared by the Governor as a state of
30 emergency.

31 "Outbreak" means any widespread illness, disease, or other
32 specific health-related behavior.

33 "State Office of Emergency Management" means the Office of
34 Emergency Management in the Division of State Police in the
35 Department of Law and Public Safety.

36 "Virtually sequestered buffer stock" means an inventory of
37 medications managed by a distribution vendor to avoid expiration
38 and ensure availability during emergencies and disasters.
39

40 3. a. The department, in collaboration with the State Office of
41 Emergency Management, shall establish a Statewide essential
42 buffer stock for emergency preparedness and drug shortage
43 prevention to be used and dispensed in the event of a public health
44 emergency, outbreak, or other emergency, including, but not limited
45 to a natural disaster, man-made disaster, or a mass casualty events
46 at the local and State level.

47 b. The department, in collaboration with the State Office of
48 Emergency Management, shall establish guidelines for the

1 procurement, management, and distribution of medicines, vaccines,
2 and medical supplies items in the essential buffer stock, including a
3 virtually sequestered buffer stock. At a minimum, the guidelines
4 shall consider the following:

5 (1) the various types of items that may be required during a
6 public health emergency, outbreak, or other emergency;

7 (2) the amount of each type of item required for a sustained
8 outbreak, public health emergency, or other emergency;

9 (3) the development of an action plan establishing policies and
10 standards for an essential buffer stock surge capacity, including a
11 virtually sequestered buffer stock, to ensure that hospitals,
12 emergency providers, and other designated recipients have access to
13 an adequate supply of any relevant items during a public health
14 emergency, outbreak, or other emergency;

15 (4) the type of federal and State policies and funding that would
16 be required for the State to establish the essential buffer stock; and

17 (5) the method of prioritizing distribution from any procurement
18 of medicine, vaccines, and medical supplies in the event that there
19 are insufficient resources to meet the identified needs of healthcare
20 providers, healthcare facilities, and other designated recipients,
21 including consideration of the following populations:

22 (a) healthcare providers, recipients, or employers located in
23 areas with a high share of rural or underserved residents;

24 (b) healthcare providers, recipients, or employers located in
25 medically underserved areas, as designated by the United States
26 Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and
27 Services Administration;

28 (c) healthcare providers, recipients, or employers that
29 disproportionately serve a medically underserved or rural
30 population, as designated by the United States Department of
31 Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services
32 Administration; and

33 (d) healthcare providers, recipients, or employers located in a
34 county with a high infection rate or high hospitalization rate related
35 to the emergency.

36 c. The department, in consultation with the State Office of
37 Emergency Management and other relevant agencies, shall define a
38 list of entities that may receive resources from the essential buffer
39 stock under the qualifying circumstances listed in subsection a. of
40 this section.

41 d. The department may contract with a private entity for the
42 procurement of strategic emergency readiness supplies for, and the
43 management and distribution of, the essential buffer stock,
44 including a virtually sequestered buffer stock. The department may
45 contract for the reservation of supplies stored by a private vendor-
46 managed entity for the essential buffer stock, and the distribution of
47 those supplies to locations specified by the department, consistent

1 with the guidelines established pursuant to subsection b. of this
2 section.

3 e. The department, in collaboration with the State Office of
4 Emergency Management, and other stakeholders, as necessary, shall
5 conduct demand planning and essential buffer stock modeling to
6 help determine which emergency readiness supplies are to be
7 included in the essential buffer stock at the discretion of the
8 department. The demand planning and essential buffer stock
9 modeling shall include at a minimum:

10 (1) recommendations on the types of supplies to be included in
11 the essential buffer stock, especially for rural and medically
12 underserved settings;

13 (2) an analysis on the anticipated demand for supplies for
14 various public health emergencies and natural disaster scenarios;

15 (3) recommendations on the quantities to be held in the essential
16 buffer stock for each type of supply;

17 (4) distribution guidelines for these supplies to be distributed to
18 municipalities and healthcare settings in the event of a local or
19 regional public health emergency; and

20 (5) possible logistical and operational strategies that could be
21 used to reduce the costs of these supplies including, but not limited
22 to, the use of a virtually sequestered buffer stock procured and
23 managed by an external vendor.

24 f. In maintaining and securing supplies pursuant to this section,
25 the department shall seek to maximize available federal and State
26 funding to implement the provisions of this act.

27
28 4. The Commissioner of Health and the Director of the State
29 Office of Emergency Management may each adopt rules and
30 regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
31 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), as necessary to implement the
32 provisions of this act.

33
34 5. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the
35 Department of Health such sums as are necessary to implement the
36 provisions of this act.

37
38 6. This act shall take effect 180 days after the date of enactment,
39 except that the Commissioner of Health may take any anticipatory
40 administrative action in advance as shall be necessary for the
41 implementation of this act.