

SENATE, No. 2224

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
211th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 24, 2005

Sponsored by:

Senator NICHOLAS ASSELTA

District 1 (Cape May, Atlantic and Cumberland)

Senator NIA H. GILL

District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

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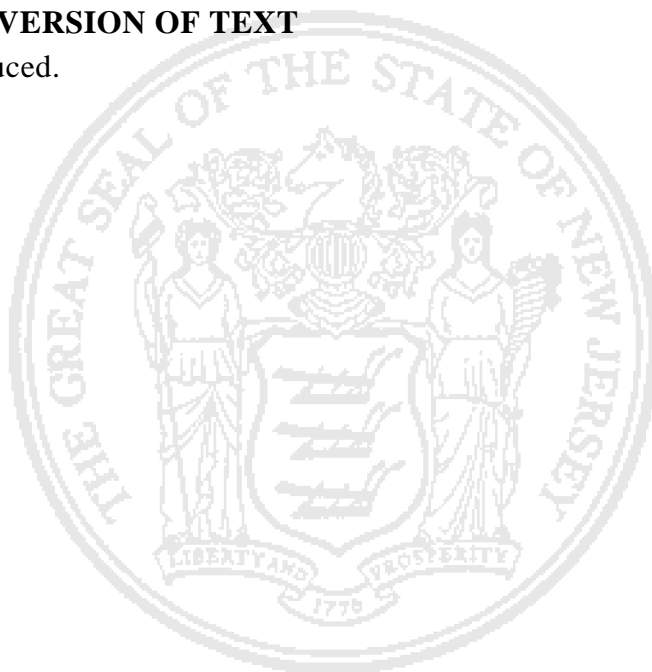
Senators Allen and Madden

SYNOPSIS

Exempts veteran's discharge certificate from State's open public records law; permits veteran and veteran's spouse to access discharge certificate.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 7/1/2005)

1 AN ACT concerning certain public records and amending P.L.1995,
2 c.23.

3

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

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7 1. Section 1 of P.L.1995, c.23 (C.47:1A-1.1) is amended to read
8 as follows:

9 1. As used in P.L.1963, c.73 (C.47:1A-1 et seq.) as amended and
10 supplemented:

11 "Biotechnology" means any technique that uses living organisms,
12 or parts of living organisms, to make or modify products, to improve
13 plants or animals, or to develop micro-organisms for specific uses;
14 including the industrial use of recombinant DNA, cell fusion, and novel
15 bioprocessing techniques.

16 "Custodian of a government record" or "custodian" means in the
17 case of a municipality, the municipal clerk and in the case of any other
18 public agency, the officer officially designated by formal action of that
19 agency's director or governing body, as the case may be.

20 "Government record" or "record" means any paper, written or
21 printed book, document, drawing, map, plan, photograph, microfilm,
22 data processed or image processed document, information stored or
23 maintained electronically or by sound-recording or in a similar device,
24 or any copy thereof, that has been made, maintained or kept on file in
25 the course of his or its official business by any officer, commission,
26 agency or authority of the State or of any political subdivision thereof,
27 including subordinate boards thereof, or that has been received in the
28 course of his or its official business by any such officer, commission,
29 agency, or authority of the State or of any political subdivision
30 thereof, including subordinate boards thereof. The terms shall not
31 include inter-agency or intra-agency advisory, consultative, or
32 deliberative material.

33 A government record shall not include the following information
34 which is deemed to be confidential for the purposes of P.L.1963, c.73
35 (C.47:1A-1 et seq.) as amended and supplemented:

36 information received by a member of the Legislature from a
37 constituent or information held by a member of the Legislature
38 concerning a constituent, including but not limited to information in
39 written form or contained in any e-mail or computer data base, or in
40 any telephone record whatsoever, unless it is information the
41 constituent is required by law to transmit;

42 any memorandum, correspondence, notes, report or other
43 communication prepared by, or for, the specific use of a member of the
44 Legislature in the course of the member's official duties, except that

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 this provision shall not apply to an otherwise publicly-accessible report
2 which is required by law to be submitted to the Legislature or its
3 members;
4 any copy, reproduction or facsimile of any photograph, negative or
5 print, including instant photographs and videotapes of the body, or any
6 portion of the body, of a deceased person, taken by or for the medical
7 examiner at the scene of death or in the course of a post mortem
8 examination or autopsy made by or caused to be made by the medical
9 examiner except:
10 when used in a criminal action or proceeding in this State which
11 relates to the death of that person,
12 for the use as a court of this State permits, by order after good
13 cause has been shown and after written notification of the request for
14 the court order has been served at least five days before the order is
15 made upon the county prosecutor for the county in which the post
16 mortem examination or autopsy occurred,
17 for use in the field of forensic pathology or for use in medical or
18 scientific education or research, or
19 for use by any law enforcement agency in this State or any other
20 state or federal law enforcement agency;
21 criminal investigatory records;
22 victims' records, except that a victim of a crime shall have access to
23 the victim's own records;
24 trade secrets and proprietary commercial or financial information
25 obtained from any source. For the purposes of this paragraph, trade
26 secrets shall include data processing software obtained by a public
27 body under a licensing agreement which prohibits its disclosure;
28 any record within the attorney-client privilege. This paragraph shall
29 not be construed as exempting from access attorney or consultant bills
30 or invoices except that such bills or invoices may be redacted to
31 remove any information protected by the attorney-client privilege;
32 administrative or technical information regarding computer
33 hardware, software and networks which, if disclosed, would jeopardize
34 computer security;
35 emergency or security information or procedures for any buildings
36 or facility which, if disclosed, would jeopardize security of the building
37 or facility or persons therein;
38 security measures and surveillance techniques which, if disclosed,
39 would create a risk to the safety of persons, property, electronic data
40 or software;
41 information which, if disclosed, would give an advantage to
42 competitors or bidders;
43 information generated by or on behalf of public employers or public
44 employees in connection with any sexual harassment complaint filed
45 with a public employer or with any grievance filed by or against an
46 individual or in connection with collective negotiations, including
47 documents and statements of strategy or negotiating position;

1 information which is a communication between a public agency and
2 its insurance carrier, administrative service organization or risk
3 management office;

4 information which is to be kept confidential pursuant to court
5 order;

6 any copy of form DD-214, or that form, issued by the United States
7 Government, or any other certificate of honorable discharge, or copy
8 thereof, from active service or the reserves of a branch of the Armed
9 Forces of the United States, or from service in the organized militia of
10 the State, that has been filed by an individual with a public agency,
11 except that a veteran or the veteran's spouse or surviving spouse shall
12 have access to the veteran's own records; and

13 that portion of any document which discloses the social security
14 number, credit card number, unlisted telephone number or driver
15 license number of any person; except for use by any government
16 agency, including any court or law enforcement agency, in carrying out
17 its functions, or any private person or entity acting on behalf thereof,
18 or any private person or entity seeking to enforce payment of
19 court-ordered child support; except with respect to the disclosure of
20 driver information by the Division of Motor Vehicles as permitted by
21 section 2 of P.L.1997, c.188 (C.39:2-3.4); and except that a social
22 security number contained in a record required by law to be made,
23 maintained or kept on file by a public agency shall be disclosed when
24 access to the document or disclosure of that information is not
25 otherwise prohibited by State or federal law, regulation or order or by
26 State statute, resolution of either or both houses of the Legislature,
27 Executive Order of the Governor, rule of court or regulation
28 promulgated under the authority of any statute or executive order of
29 the Governor.

30 A government record shall not include, with regard to any public
31 institution of higher education, the following information which is
32 deemed to be privileged and confidential:

33 pedagogical, scholarly and/or academic research records and/or the
34 specific details of any research project conducted under the auspices
35 of a public higher education institution in New Jersey, including, but
36 not limited to research, development information, testing procedures,
37 or information regarding test participants, related to the development
38 or testing of any pharmaceutical or pharmaceutical delivery system,
39 except that a custodian may not deny inspection of a government
40 record or part thereof that gives the name, title, expenditures, source
41 and amounts of funding and date when the final project summary of
42 any research will be available;

43 test questions, scoring keys and other examination data pertaining
44 to the administration of an examination for employment or academic
45 examination;

46 records of pursuit of charitable contributions or records containing
47 the identity of a donor of a gift if the donor requires non-disclosure of

1 the donor's identity as a condition of making the gift provided that the
2 donor has not received any benefits of or from the institution of higher
3 education in connection with such gift other than a request for
4 memorialization or dedication;

5 valuable or rare collections of books and/or documents obtained by
6 gift, grant, bequest or devise conditioned upon limited public access;
7 information contained on individual admission applications; and
8 information concerning student records or grievance or disciplinary
9 proceedings against a student to the extent disclosure would reveal the
10 identity of the student.

11 "Public agency" or "agency" means any of the principal departments
12 in the Executive Branch of State Government, and any division, board,
13 bureau, office, commission or other instrumentality within or created
14 by such department; the Legislature of the State and any office, board,
15 bureau or commission within or created by the Legislative Branch; and
16 any independent State authority, commission, instrumentality or
17 agency. The terms also mean any political subdivision of the State or
18 combination of political subdivisions, and any division, board, bureau,
19 office, commission or other instrumentality within or created by a
20 political subdivision of the State or combination of political
21 subdivisions, and any independent authority, commission,
22 instrumentality or agency created by a political subdivision or
23 combination of political subdivisions.

24 "Law enforcement agency" means a public agency, or part thereof,
25 determined by the Attorney General to have law enforcement
26 responsibilities.

27 "Constituent" means any State resident or other person
28 communicating with a member of the Legislature.

29 "Member of the Legislature" means any person elected or selected
30 to serve in the New Jersey Senate or General Assembly.

31 "Criminal investigatory record" means a record which is not
32 required by law to be made, maintained or kept on file that is held by
33 a law enforcement agency which pertains to any criminal investigation
34 or related civil enforcement proceeding.

35 "Victim's record" means an individually-identifiable file or
36 document held by a victims' rights agency which pertains directly to a
37 victim of a crime except that a victim of a crime shall have access to
38 the victim's own records.

39 "Victim of a crime" means a person who has suffered personal or
40 psychological injury or death or incurs loss of or injury to personal or
41 real property as a result of a crime, or if such a person is deceased or
42 incapacitated, a member of that person's immediate family.

43 "Victims' rights agency" means a public agency, or part thereof, the
44 primary responsibility of which is providing services, including but not
45 limited to food, shelter, or clothing, medical, psychiatric, psychological
46 or legal services or referrals, information and referral services,

1 counseling and support services, or financial services to victims of
2 crimes, including victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, violent
3 crime, child endangerment, child abuse or child neglect, and the
4 Victims of Crime Compensation Board, established pursuant to
5 P.L.1971, c.317 (C.52:4B-1 et seq.).
6 (cf: P.L.2001, c.404, s.2)

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8 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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13 This bill amends the State's open public records law to exempt from
14 being considered a government record, available to the public, a DD-
15 214 form issued by the United States Government or another
16 certificate of honorable discharge or certificate of release under
17 honorable circumstances from active service or the reserves of a
18 branch of the Armed Forces of the United States or from the organized
19 militia of the State that has been filed by an individual with a State,
20 county or municipal official or agency.

21

22 The veteran who files the form, or the veteran's spouse or surviving
spouse, would be permitted to access the veteran's own records.