

**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE**  
**SENATE, No. 1965**  
**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**218th LEGISLATURE**

DATED: JUNE 1, 2018

**SUMMARY**

- Synopsis:** Allows individual to receive additional lifetime emergency assistance under certain circumstances.
- Type of Impact:** Annual General Fund and county expenditure increases.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Human Services and counties.

**Office of Legislative Services Estimate**

<b>Fiscal Impact</b>	<b><u>Annual Impact</u></b>
<b>State Cost</b>	Indeterminate
<b>County Cost</b>	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) has insufficient information on the number of households that may be affected by the bill to allow for an estimate on the cost of the bill.
- The bill may also raise the costs of county welfare agencies due to a need to process more applications for emergency assistance. However, the increased volume is likely to be small relative to the volume of other work done by county welfare agencies.
- The Department of Human Services (DHS) may incur some cost to make changes to the computer systems used by the county welfare agencies, in order to provide information on whether an applicant's past receipt of emergency assistance occurred past the 84 month look-back period provided in the bill.

**BILL DESCRIPTION**

This bill would allow for an individual to receive additional lifetime emergency assistance benefits under certain circumstances.

Currently, an individual is limited to 12 months of lifetime emergency assistance, plus an additional six months in certain circumstances. Under P.L.2017, c.34 (C.44:10-51.1), months of assistance that are repaid by the recipient are not counted toward this time limit. This bill would

require that the Commissioner of Human Services nullify any months of emergency assistance that were received by an individual more than 84 months (seven years) prior to an application for emergency assistance.

## **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

### ***EXECUTIVE BRANCH***

None received.

### ***OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES***

The OLS has insufficient information on the number of households that may be affected by the bill to allow for an estimate on the cost of the bill. The bill would affect households that have received a total of 12 months of emergency assistance, at least one of which was seven or more years in the past, and have not repaid that assistance in the intervening time. There are possibly tens of thousands of households that meet this description, but many of these may never again apply for emergency assistance regardless of the bill, due to more stable housing, lack of awareness of the change in rules, or having moved out of the State. According to the FY 2019 Budget, the Executive anticipates approximately 8,000 emergency assistance cases in an average month in FY 2019. The projected monthly grant for emergency assistance ranges from approximately \$600 to \$1000, depending on the particular characteristics and needs in each case.

The bill may also raise the costs of program administration, as county welfare agencies may need to process more applications for emergency assistance, though the increased volume is likely to be small relative to the volume of other work done by county welfare agencies. Additionally, county welfare agency staff will need to determine whether an applicant's past receipt of emergency assistance occurred past the 84 month look-back period provided in the bill. This information is known to DHS, but would need to be distributed to the counties in a useable form, which may require some indeterminate expense to make changes to the computer systems used by the county welfare agencies.

*Section: Human Services*

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*Approved: Frank W. Haines III  
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

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