

ASSEMBLY, No. 519

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANGELICA M. JIMENEZ

District 32 (Bergen and Hudson)

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District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Holley, Assemblywomen McKnight and Tucker

SYNOPSIS

Provides voter registration assistance to persons completing parole, probation, and criminal sentences.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** concerning voter registration for persons completing
2 parole, probation, and criminal sentences and supplementing
3 various parts of the statutory law.

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

7
8 1. The chief probation officer in each county shall:

9 a. cause copies of the voter registration forms and instructions
10 provided for under section 16 of P.L.1974, c.30 (C.19:31-6.4) and
11 the declination form provided for in subsection b. of section 26 of
12 P.L.1994, c.182 (C.19:31-6.11) to be distributed at each office to
13 each person who is completing probation who appears in person
14 thereat. An employee of the office shall inquire of every such
15 person whether the person wishes to be registered to vote and shall
16 inform the person that the person will become eligible to vote upon
17 completion of probation. The employee shall subsequently review
18 the forms to determine whether or not the person wishes to register
19 to vote. If the person does not wish to register, the employee shall
20 provide the person with any assistance necessary to complete the
21 declination form and then inform the person that the form will be
22 retained by the employee. If the person wishes to register, the
23 employee shall provide the person with any assistance necessary in
24 completing the voter registration form; shall inform the person that
25 the person may leave the completed form with the employee or mail
26 it personally to the Attorney General; and if the person chooses to
27 leave the form, shall accept the completed form, stamp or otherwise
28 mark the lower right hand corner of the document with the date on
29 which it was so received, and forward it to the Attorney General.
30 The employee shall provide to each person who does not decline to
31 register to vote the same degree of assistance with regard to the
32 completion of the voter registration form as is provided by the
33 office with regard to the completion of its own forms, unless the
34 person refuses such assistance;

35 b. provide for the continuous supply of the forms and
36 instructions specified in subsection a. of this section to every office;

37 c. provide the forms and instructions specified in subsection a.
38 of this section in both the English and Spanish languages to the
39 offices which are located in any county in which bilingual sample
40 ballots must be provided pursuant to R.S.19:14-21, R.S.19:49-4 or
41 section 2 of P.L.1965, c.29 (C.19:23-22.4);

42 d. provide for the collection of completed voter registration
43 forms by any employee of the office for the transmittal of the forms
44 to the Attorney General;

45 e. provide that the forms, instructions and assistance specified
46 in subsection a. of this section shall be provided to any person with
47 a disability at that person's home by an employee of the office;

48 f. inform each employee of the office who assists in registering

- 1 a person to vote that employee shall not:
- 2 (1) seek to influence an applicant's political preference or party
- 3 registration;
- 4 (2) display any such political preference or party allegiance;
- 5 (3) make any statement to an applicant or take any action the
- 6 purpose or effect of which is to discourage the applicant from
- 7 registering to vote; and
- 8 g. make certain that no information relating to a declination to
- 9 register to vote by a person is used for any purpose other than voter
- 10 registration.
- 11
- 12 2. The State Parole Board shall:
- 13 a. cause copies of the voter registration forms and instructions
- 14 provided for under section 16 of P.L.1974, c.30 (C.19:31-6.4) and
- 15 the declination form provided for in subsection b. of section 26 of
- 16 P.L.1994, c.182 (C.19:31-6.11) to be distributed at each office to
- 17 each person who is completing parole for conviction of a crime
- 18 under the laws of this State who appears in person thereat. An
- 19 employee of the office shall inquire of every such person whether
- 20 the person wishes to be registered to vote and shall inform the
- 21 person that the person will become eligible to vote upon completion
- 22 of parole. The employee shall subsequently review the forms to
- 23 determine whether or not the person wishes to register to vote. If
- 24 the person does not wish to register, the employee shall provide the
- 25 person with any assistance necessary to complete the declination
- 26 form and then inform the person that the form will be retained by
- 27 the employee. If the person wishes to register, the employee shall
- 28 provide the person with any assistance necessary in completing the
- 29 voter registration form; shall inform the person that the person may
- 30 leave the completed form with the employee or mail it personally to
- 31 the Attorney General; and if the person chooses to leave the form,
- 32 shall accept the completed form, stamp or otherwise mark the lower
- 33 right hand corner of the document with the date on which it was so
- 34 received, and forward it to the Attorney General. The employee
- 35 shall provide to each person who does not decline to register to vote
- 36 the same degree of assistance with regard to the completion of the
- 37 voter registration form as is provided by the office with regard to
- 38 the completion of its own forms, unless the person refuses such
- 39 assistance;
- 40 b. provide for the continuous supply of the forms and
- 41 instructions specified in subsection a. of this section to every office;
- 42 c. provide the forms and instructions specified in subsection a.
- 43 of this section in both the English and Spanish languages to the
- 44 offices which are located in any county in which bilingual sample
- 45 ballots must be provided pursuant to R.S.19:14-21, R.S.19:49-4 or
- 46 section 2 of P.L.1965, c.29 (C.19:23-22.4);
- 47 d. provide for the collection of completed voter registration
- 48 forms by any employee of the office for the transmittal of the forms

1 to the Attorney General;

2 e. provide that the forms, instructions and assistance specified
3 in subsection a. of this section shall be provided to any person with
4 a disability at that person's home by an employee of the office;

5 f. inform each employee of the office who assists in registering
6 a person to vote that employee shall not:

7 (1) seek to influence an applicant's political preference or party
8 registration;

9 (2) display any such political preference or party allegiance;

10 (3) make any statement to an applicant or take any action the
11 purpose or effect of which is to discourage the person from
12 registering to vote; and

13 g. make certain that no information relating to a declination to
14 register to vote by a person is used for any purpose other than voter
15 registration.

16

17 3. Whenever any person completes serving a sentence in any
18 State or county correctional facility for a crime without being
19 granted parole, the Commissioner of Corrections shall:

20 a. cause copies of the voter registration forms and instructions
21 provided for under section 16 of P.L.1974, c.30 (C.19:31-6.4) and
22 the declination form provided for in subsection b. of section 26 of
23 P.L.1994, c.182 (C.19:31-6.11) to be distributed to such person. An
24 employee of the Department of Corrections or of the county
25 correctional facility, as appropriate, shall inquire of every such
26 person whether the person wishes to be registered to vote and shall
27 inform the person that the person will become eligible to vote upon
28 release. The employee shall subsequently review the forms to
29 determine whether or not the person wishes to register to vote. If
30 the person does not wish to register, the employee shall provide the
31 person with any assistance necessary to complete the declination
32 form and then inform the person that the form will be retained by
33 the employee. If the person wishes to register, the employee shall
34 provide the person with any assistance necessary in completing the
35 voter registration form; shall inform the person that the person may
36 leave the completed form with the employee or mail it personally to
37 the Attorney General; and if the person chooses to leave the form,
38 shall accept the completed form, stamp or otherwise mark the lower
39 right hand corner of the document with the date on which it was so
40 received, and forward it to the Attorney General. The employee
41 shall provide to each person who does not decline to register to vote
42 the same degree of assistance with regard to the completion of the
43 voter registration form as is provided by the department or county
44 with regard to the completion of its own forms, unless the applicant
45 refuses such assistance;

46 b. provide for the continuous supply of the forms and
47 instructions specified in subsection a. of this section to every state
48 and county correctional facility;

1 c. provide the forms and instructions specified in subsection a.
2 of this section in both the English and Spanish languages to the
3 facilities which are located in any county in which bilingual sample
4 ballots must be provided pursuant to R.S.19:14-21, R.S.19:49-4 or
5 section 2 of P.L.1965, c.29 (C.19:23-22.4);

6 d. provide for the collection of completed voter registration
7 forms by an employee for the transmittal of the forms to the
8 Attorney General;

9 e. inform each employee of the agency or office who assists in
10 registering a person to vote that employee shall not:

11 (1) seek to influence an applicant's political preference or party
12 registration;

13 (2) display any such political preference or party allegiance;

14 (3) make any statement to an applicant or take any action the
15 purpose or effect of which is to discourage the applicant from
16 registering to vote; and

17 f. make certain that no information relating to a declination to
18 register to vote by an individual is used for any purpose other than
19 voter registration.

20
21 4. This act shall take effect immediately.
22
23

24 STATEMENT
25

26 This bill requires the chief probation officer in each county, the
27 State Parole Board and the Commissioner of Corrections to assist
28 each person under their jurisdiction who is completing probation,
29 parole, or a criminal sentence and wishes to register to vote in
30 completing a voter registration form.

31 Currently, an individual who is convicted of a crime of the fourth
32 through first degree is prohibited from voting in any primary,
33 municipal, special or general election while serving a sentence for
34 that crime and while on parole or probation as a result of that
35 conviction.