

ASSEMBLY, No. 844

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblywoman CAROL A. MURPHY

District 7 (Burlington)

Assemblyman LOUIS D. GREENWALD

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District 29 (Essex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblyman Verrelli, Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttle, Assemblymen Johnson, Spearman and Assemblywoman McKnight

SYNOPSIS

Requires each county to establish inmate reentry services committee.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/24/2020)

1 AN ACT concerning reentry services for county jail inmates and
2 supplementing Title 30 of the Revised Statutes.

3

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

6

7 1. a. The governing body of each county in this State shall, by
8 duly adopted ordinance or resolution, establish a public body
9 entitled the "County Inmate Reentry Committee" inserting all or
10 any significant part of the name of the county. Each county
11 committee shall consist of nine members as follows:

12 (1) a member of the board of chosen freeholders;

13 (2) the warden or other executive head of the county
14 correctional facility, or a designee;

15 (3) the president of a county community college, or a designee;

16 (4) the head of the county board of social services, or a
17 designee;

18 (5) one public member who shall be a provider of reentry
19 services in the county;

20 (6) one public member who shall be a provider of substance
21 abuse services in the county; and

22 (7) three public members who shall represent the general public.

23 The public members shall be appointed by the board of chosen
24 freeholders, or, in the counties operating under the county executive
25 plan or county supervisor plan pursuant to the provisions of the
26 "Optional County Charter Law," P.L.1972, c.154 (C.40:41A-
27 1 et seq.), by the county executive, or the county supervisor, as
28 appropriate, with the advice and consent of the board of chosen
29 freeholders.

30 b. Of the five public members first to be appointed, three shall
31 be appointed for terms of two years, one for a term of three years,
32 and one for a term of four years. Thereafter, all appointments shall
33 be made for terms of four years. Each of these members shall hold
34 office for the term of the appointment and until a successor has
35 been appointed and qualified. Any vacancy in the membership
36 occurring other than by expiration of term shall be filled in the same
37 manner as the original appointment but for the unexpired term only.

38 c. The board of chosen freeholders, county executive, or
39 county supervisor, as appropriate, may appoint other advisory
40 members to the committee as they may deem appropriate.

41 d. Members of the committee shall not receive compensation
42 but the appointed members may, subject to the limits of funds
43 appropriated or otherwise made available for these purposes, be
44 reimbursed for expenses actually incurred in attending meetings of
45 the committee and in performance of their duties as members of the
46 committee.

47 e. The committee shall meet as soon as practicable following
48 the appointment of its members and shall elect a chair from among

1 its members. The chair shall serve for a term of one year and may
2 be reelected. The committee shall establish procedures for the
3 conduct of regular and special meetings, provided that the regular
4 meetings shall be held at least monthly. Five members shall
5 constitute a quorum. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance
6 with the provisions of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975,
7 c.231 (C.10:4-6 et seq.).

8 f. The committee shall:

9 (1) identify those services available in the county that may be
10 needed by inmates upon release from a county correctional facility,
11 including but not limited to: housing, food, medical care, clothing,
12 substance abuse treatment, mental health care, employment, and
13 education;

14 (2) establish a health information exchange for sharing county
15 inmate health data between the county correctional facility and
16 appropriate medical, mental health, social service, and other
17 providers;

18 (3) establish best practices for:

19 (i) preparing county inmates for release;

20 (ii) providing the services identified in paragraph (1) of this
21 subsection; and

22 (iii) continuing post-release services, support, and supervision
23 for a minimum of one year; and

24 (4) make appropriate recommendations to the county and
25 municipal governing bodies and boards with respect to resolutions,
26 ordinances, and regulations needed to prepare county inmates for
27 successful reentry into the community and reduce recidivism.

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29 2. This act shall take effect immediately.
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32 STATEMENT

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34 This bill would require each county in this State to form a nine-
35 member "County Inmate Reentry Committee."

36 The committee in each county is tasked with identifying those
37 services available in the county that may be needed by inmates
38 upon release from a county correctional facility. These services
39 include housing, food, medical care, clothing, substance abuse
40 treatment, mental health care, employment, and education. The
41 committee also is to establish a health information exchange for
42 sharing county inmate health data between the county correctional
43 facility and appropriate medical, mental health, social service, and
44 other providers. In addition, the committee is required to establish
45 best practices for preparing county inmates for release; providing
46 appropriate services to county inmates upon release; and continuing
47 post-release services, support, and supervision for at least one year.
48 Finally, the committee is to make recommendations to the county

1 and municipalities as to laws and regulations that may be needed to
2 prepare county inmates for successful reentry into the community
3 and reduce recidivism.

4 These nine-member county committees are to be comprised of: a
5 member of the board of chosen freeholders; the warden or other
6 executive head of the county correctional facility; the president of a
7 county community college; the head of the county board of social
8 services; a public member who provides reentry services in the
9 county; a public member who provides substance abuse services in
10 the county; and three public members who shall represent the
11 general public.

12 The county committee is to meet as soon as practicable after the
13 members have been appointed. A chair is to be selected from
14 among the members to serve a one-year term. The committee is to
15 meet at least monthly and five members constitute a quorum to
16 conduct official business. The meetings of the county committees
17 are subject to the "Open Public Meetings Act."