

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
ASSEMBLY, No. 844

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

ADOPTED AUGUST 24, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblyman LOUIS D. GREENWALD

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Co-Sponsored by:

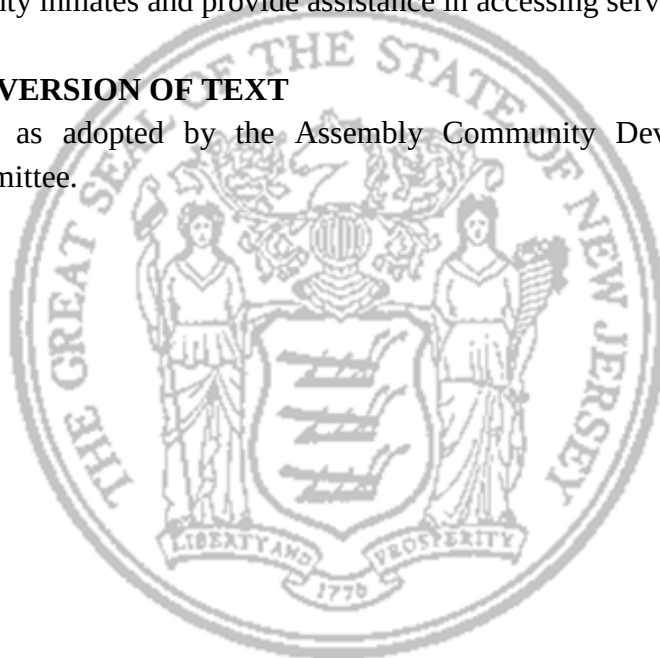
**Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttie, Assemblymen Johnson, Spearman,
Assemblywoman McKnight, Assemblymen Chiaravalloti and Coughlin**

SYNOPSIS

Requires each county to appoint county reentry coordinator to evaluate needs of county inmates and provide assistance in accessing services.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Substitute as adopted by the Assembly Community Development and Affairs Committee.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 8/27/2020)

1 **AN ACT** concerning county inmates and supplementing Title 30 of
2 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, appoint a county reentry
9 coordinator who shall be responsible for evaluating the needs of,
10 and navigating the appropriate treatment and services for, each
11 inmate in a county correctional facility in this State.

12 b. The county reentry coordinator in each county shall evaluate
13 each inmate in a county correctional facility who has been
14 sentenced to a term of incarceration or ordered detained pending
15 trial following a pretrial detention hearing. The purpose of the
16 evaluation shall be to:

17 (1) identify which social services and reentry and rehabilitative
18 programs would benefit the inmate including, but not limited to, the
19 WorkFirst NJ Substance Abuse Initiative;

20 (2) determine whether the inmate is eligible to apply for federal,
21 State, and county public assistance program benefits including, but
22 not limited to, State and federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
23 Program benefits, Medicaid, and housing assistance program
24 benefits;

25 (3) determine whether the inmate would benefit from substance
26 use disorder treatment including, but not limited to, medication-
27 assisted treatment; and

28 (4) identify other appropriate treatment, services, and programs
29 which would benefit the inmate.

30 c. The evaluation required pursuant to subsection b. of this
31 section shall be conducted in conjunction with the clinical screening
32 of inmates as part of the initial classification process.

33 d. The county reentry coordinator shall offer assistance to the
34 inmate in accessing any services deemed appropriate for the inmate,
35 based on the evaluation conducted pursuant to subsection b. of this
36 section, by:

37 (1) assisting the inmate with scheduling and otherwise accessing
38 appropriate treatment, services, and programming upon the inmate's
39 release from the facility;

40 (2) providing information concerning, and assistance in
41 completing, applications for appropriate State and county public
42 assistance program benefits which shall include, but not be limited
43 to, State and federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
44 benefits, Medicaid, and housing assistance program benefits. The
45 county reentry coordinator shall make every effort to ensure that the
46 inmate is actively enrolled in appropriate programming upon or as
47 soon as practicable following the inmate's release from the facility;

(3) providing information concerning available substance use disorder treatment and services including, but not limited to, medication-assisted treatment. The county reentry coordinator shall assist the inmate with scheduling and otherwise accessing appropriate treatment and services upon the inmate's release from the facility;

(4) providing information concerning relevant social services and reentry and rehabilitative programs including, but not limited to, the WorkFirst NJ Substance Abuse Initiative. The county reentry coordinator shall assist the inmate with completing applications for and otherwise accessing appropriate services and programming upon the inmate's release from the facility;

(5) providing information concerning services provided by the State's One-Stop Career Centers. The county reentry coordinator shall schedule appointments for the inmate to meet with representatives from the career center and shall register the inmate for participation in any mandatory programming upon the inmate's release from the facility;

(6) providing information concerning insurance eligibility and assistance in completing applications for insurance coverage; the county reentry coordinator shall make every effort to ensure that coverage for the inmate is active upon or as soon as practicable following the inmate's release from the facility; and

(7) providing information concerning any other treatment, services, and programming deemed appropriate based on the evaluation required pursuant to this section.

e. The county reentry coordinator also shall:

(1) provide assistance to each inmate, upon release from a county correctional facility, with obtaining a non-driver identification card; and

(2) ensure, to the best of the coordinator's ability, and conditioned on discharge information provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts, that each inmate is released from custody during regular business hours so that the inmate may access appropriate treatment and services immediately upon release.

2. a. Each county reentry coordinator shall record data regarding: the number of inmates who are offered services pursuant to section 1 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill); the number of inmates who accept the services offered; the types of services provided to each inmate who accepts the services offered; the race, gender, ethnicity, and age of each inmate; a record of any crimes committed by inmates who are released from the facility and the types of crimes committed for a period of three years following the inmate's release; and the number of inmates who were not released, and the reasons why they were not released, from a county correctional facility during regular business hours.

1 b. The data shall be analyzed to determine whether the rates
2 and nature of rearrests and convictions differ according to whether
3 an inmate received services in accordance with section 1 of P.L. ,
4 c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill). The
5 county reentry coordinator shall annually prepare and transmit the
6 findings to the warden, keeper, or administrator of a county
7 correctional facility, as appropriate; the superintendent, director, or
8 other chief administrative officer of the County Board of Social
9 Services or welfare agency, as appropriate; the governing body of
10 the county in which the correctional facility is located; and the
11 Commissioner of Corrections.

12
13 3. The county reentry coordinator in each county shall, in
14 collaboration with the warden, director, or administrator in the
15 county correctional facility, develop peer counseling programs in
16 the county correctional facility that support the treatment of county
17 inmates with substance use disorders. The warden, director, or
18 administrator may additionally develop initiatives to provide
19 inmates in the custody of the county correctional facility with
20 access to professional substance use disorder counseling.

21
22 4. a. The county reentry coordinator in each county shall meet
23 regularly with community stakeholders who may offer guidance for
24 evaluating the needs of and providing services to inmates in county
25 correctional facilities including, but not limited to:

- 26 (1) the Commissioner of Corrections, or a designee;
- 27 (2) the Commissioner of Human Services, or a designee;
- 28 (3) the warden, director, or administrator of the county
- 29 correctional facility;
- 30 (4) the superintendent, director, or other chief administrative
- 31 officer of the County Board of Social Services or welfare agency, as
- 32 appropriate;
- 33 (5) the county human services director, or a designee;
- 34 (6) the county mental health administrator, or a designee;
- 35 (7) the president of a county community college, or a designee;
- 36 (8) reentry services providers in the county;
- 37 (9) substance use disorder treatment providers in the county;
- 38 and
- 39 (10) a person who previously has received substance use disorder
- 40 services in the county.

41 b. Based on the guidance received during the meetings
42 conducted pursuant to subsection a. of this section, the county
43 reentry coordinator shall:

- 44 (1) establish best practices for preparing county inmates for
- 45 release;
- 46 (2) identify services available in the county that may be needed
- 47 by inmates upon release from a county correctional facility
- 48 including, but not limited to, housing, food, medical care, clothing,

- 1 substance use disorder treatment; mental health services,
2 employment assistance, and education assistance;
3 (3) make appropriate recommendations to the county
4 correctional facility and County Board of Social Services or welfare
5 agency with respect to preparing county inmates for successful
6 reentry into the community and reducing recidivism.
7
8 5. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month
9 next following the date of enactment.