

ASSEMBLY, No. 1118

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

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District 37 (Bergen)

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SYNOPSIS

Requires certain State employees receive mental health first aid training.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** requiring certain State employees receive mental health
2 first aid training, and supplementing Title 30 of the Revised
3 Statutes.

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

7
8 1. a. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 (1) Mental illness impacts approximately 44 million people, but
10 most do not get professional help or delay getting professional help;

11 (2) There is often discrimination and a stigma against people
12 with mental illness, which may be reduced by understanding their
13 experiences, but most people are not well informed about how to
14 recognize mental health problems or how to best provide support;

15 (3) Someone with appropriate mental health first aid training
16 can reduce the risk of a person coming to harm, including a person
17 who is feeling suicidal or deliberately harming themselves, having a
18 panic attack, or being acutely psychotic;

19 (4) Mental health first aid training programs teach a person to
20 help another who is developing a mental health problem, including
21 a substance abuse problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing
22 mental health problem, or experience a mental health crisis; and

23 (5) Directors are in a unique position to provide assistance and
24 the State should work to make sure directors have the necessary
25 training to recognize and help those who suffer from mental illness.

26 b. As used in this act:

27 “Director” means a person employed by the State who has the
28 authority to direct and control the work performance of other State
29 employees, who has authority to take corrective action regarding
30 the violation of any laws, rules or regulations, technical practices,
31 operations, and management techniques, or who has been
32 designated as, or is serving in such a capacity, as a director, or head
33 of any branch, authority, commission, office, department, division,
34 bureau, board, or any other agency or instrumentality thereof of the
35 State as herein defined.

36 “State” means all branches of State Government, and any
37 authority, commission, office, department, division, bureau, board,
38 or any other agency or instrumentality thereof.

39 c. The Civil Service Commission, in consultation with the
40 Commissioner of the Department of Human Services, shall take
41 such actions as are necessary to ensure that every State employee
42 who is a director or has director status receives mental health first
43 aid training. Each State employer shall provide to the commission a
44 list of directors, or persons with director status, in need of training.

45 The training shall include, at a minimum, information regarding
46 common mental health disorders that may arise, information to
47 assist in recognizing early signs of mental health problems and who

1 may need professional mental health services, and information on
2 appropriate intervention and referral strategies.

3 d. The Civil Service Commission shall, pursuant to the
4 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et
5 seq.), adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this
6 act.

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8 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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13 Mental illness impacts approximately 44 million people, but
14 many people with mental illness do not get professional help or
15 delay getting professional help. Directors in a workplace are in a
16 unique position to provide assistance to those dealing with mental
17 illness, and the State, as an employer, should provide its directors
18 with the necessary training to recognize and help those dealing with
19 mental illness.

20 This bill requires the Civil Service Commission to ensure that
21 every State employee with director status receives mental health
22 first aid training. The commission will establish appropriate
23 requirements for the training, and each employer will provide a list
24 of directors in need of training to the commission.

25 The training will include, at a minimum, information regarding
26 common mental health disorders that may arise, information to
27 assist in recognizing early signs of mental health problems and who
28 may need professional mental health services, and information on
29 appropriate intervention and referral strategies.