

ASSEMBLY, No. 1597

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman PEDRO MEJIA

District 32 (Bergen and Hudson)

Assemblywoman BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE

District 34 (Essex and Passaic)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Murphy

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Task Force to Promote Employment by State Agencies of People with Disabilities.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/7/2020)

1 **AN ACT** establishing the Task Force to Promote the Employment by
2 State Agencies of People with Disabilities and supplementing
3 Title 34 of the Revised Statutes.

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

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8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. More than 19 million people in the United States work in
10 state and local governments, and more than 570,000 people have
11 public sector jobs in New Jersey, including 130,000 State
12 government employees, employed in a wide variety of jobs and
13 occupations, including accountants, corrections officers, mail
14 clerks, chaplains, social workers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and
15 computer programmers;

16 b. People with disabilities can benefit from the experience of
17 employment in State agencies, gaining skills and receiving benefits
18 through both internships and employment in the public sector and
19 the State can benefit from the contributions that they can make as
20 State employees;

21 c. Nine states have instituted within their human resources
22 agencies policies and programs that foster the inclusion of people
23 with disabilities into state government jobs, including provisional
24 appointments, alternative examination and interview processes, trial
25 work periods, and special appointment lists;

26 d. As a leading employer, and as an employer providing many
27 well-paid, quality jobs with ample paid time off and medical and
28 pension benefits, the State of New Jersey can set an important
29 example to other employers, especially private sector employers, by
30 increasing its efforts to recruit and retain in employment individuals
31 with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and

32 e. It is therefore appropriate to establish a Task Force to
33 Promote the Employment by State Agencies of People with
34 Disabilities for the purposes of studying the problem of
35 unemployment and underemployment among individuals in New
36 Jersey with disabilities, reviewing existing programs in this and
37 other states, and private sector companies, to recruit and retain in
38 employment individuals with intellectual and developmental
39 disabilities, and assisting in the identification and implementation
40 of strategies to expand efforts of New Jersey State agencies to
41 recruit and retain in employment individuals with disabilities,
42 including by providing guidance and support to agencies and
43 institutions of higher education.

44
45 2. a. There is established, in the Department of Labor and
46 Workforce Development, the Task Force to Promote the
47 Employment by State Agencies of People with Disabilities. The
48 task force shall consist of 13 members, including one representative

1 each for the Civil Service Commission, the Department of
2 Education, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development,
3 the State Treasurer, the Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals
4 with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and their Families,
5 the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, the State
6 Rehabilitation Council, and the John J. Heldrich Center for
7 Workforce Development, who shall serve ex officio, and five
8 members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of
9 the Senate as follows: a member representing the Association for
10 Choices in Community Supports and Employment Services
11 (ACCSES New Jersey); a member representing The Arc of New
12 Jersey; a representative of a community rehabilitation program, and
13 two individuals who have a disability.

14 b. All appointments shall be made within 90 days after the
15 effective date of this act. The appointed members of the task force
16 shall serve for terms of three years. Vacancies in the membership
17 of the appointed members of the task force shall be filled in the
18 same manner as the original appointments.

19 c. Members of the task force shall serve without compensation,
20 but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the
21 performance of their duties as members of the task force, within the
22 limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to the task
23 force for its purposes.

24 d. The task force shall organize as soon as possible after the
25 appointments are made and select a chairperson from among its
26 members. The task force shall meet at least quarterly, may hold
27 meetings and hearings at places and times as it designates, and may
28 meet at any other times at the call of the chairperson. No action
29 shall be taken by the task force except by an affirmative vote of a
30 majority of the voting members.

31
32 3. a. The purpose of the task force is to study the problem of
33 unemployment and underemployment among individuals with
34 disabilities, review relevant, available programs within the State of
35 New Jersey for State agencies to recruit and retain in employment
36 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well
37 as similar programs in other states and private sector employers,
38 and assist in the identification and implementation of strategies to
39 expand efforts of New Jersey State agencies to recruit and retain in
40 employment individuals with disabilities.

41 b. The task force shall issue annual reports which offer a vision
42 and provide viable recommendations on how the State can increase
43 opportunities for employment for individuals with disabilities by
44 expanding efforts of New Jersey State agencies to recruit and retain
45 in employment those individuals, including by providing guidance
46 and support to agencies and institutions of higher education.

47 c. The task force shall issue its first report to the Governor and
48 Legislature not later than one year after the members of the task
49 force are appointed. Each annual report shall be made available to

1 the public by means including the posting of the report on the web
2 sites of the State agencies represented on the task force.

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4 4. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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9 This bill establishes the Task Force to Promote the Employment
10 by State Agencies of People with Disabilities. The Task Force is
11 directed to study and make recommendations to the Governor and
12 Legislature regarding the problem of unemployment and
13 underemployment among individuals with disabilities in the State.
14 The Task Force will have 13 members, including one representative
15 each for the Civil Service Commission, the Department of
16 Education, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development,
17 the State Treasurer, the Office of the Ombudsman for Individuals
18 with Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities and their Families,
19 the State Council on Developmental Disabilities, the State
20 Rehabilitation Council, and the John J. Heldrich Center for
21 Workforce Development, who shall serve ex officio, and five
22 members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of
23 the Senate for three year terms, as follows: a member representing
24 the Association for Choices in Community Supports and
25 Employment Services (ACCSES New Jersey); a member
26 representing The Arc of New Jersey; a representative of a
27 community rehabilitation program, and two individuals who have a
28 disability.

29 The task force is directed to study the problem of unemployment
30 and underemployment among individuals with disabilities, review
31 relevant, available programs within the State of New Jersey for
32 State agencies to recruit and retain in employment individuals with
33 intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as similar
34 programs in other states and private sector employers, and assist in
35 the identification and implementation of strategies to expand efforts
36 of New Jersey State agencies to recruit and retain in employment
37 individuals with disabilities, and issue annual reports which offer a
38 vision and provide viable recommendations on how the State can
39 increase opportunities for employment for individuals with
40 disabilities by expanding efforts of New Jersey State agencies to
41 recruit and retain in employment those individuals, including by
42 providing guidance and support to agencies and institutions of
43 higher education.

44 The first report is to be issued to the Governor and Legislature
45 not later than one year after the members of the task force are
46 appointed. Each annual report shall be made available to the public
47 by means including the posting of the report on the web sites of the
48 State agencies represented on the task force.