

ASSEMBLY, No. 3658

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

SYNOPSIS

Requires emergency shelters for the homeless to admit certain persons unless they pose danger.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning emergency shelters for the homeless and
2 amending P.L.2013, c.203.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

6
7 1. Section 1 of P.L.2013, c.203 (C.55:13C-2.1) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 1. a. No person shall be refused admittance to an emergency
10 shelter for the homeless based on a perception or belief that the
11 person: (1) has a mental illness; (2) is a drug or alcohol dependent
12 person, as defined in N.J.S.2C:35-2; (3) is not in compliance with a
13 prescription medication regimen; or (4) has consumed alcoholic
14 beverages off the premises, unless there is a reasonable basis to
15 believe that the person poses a danger to self, others, or property, or
16 if the basis for the refusal is otherwise authorized by law or
17 regulation.

18 b. Nothing in subsection a. of this section shall prohibit an
19 emergency shelter for the homeless from prohibiting the possession
20 or consumption of controlled dangerous substances, as defined in
21 N.J.S.2C:35-2, or alcoholic beverages on the premises.

22 (cf: P.L.2013, c.203, s.1)

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24 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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27 STATEMENT

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29 This bill prohibits emergency shelters for the homeless from
30 restricting access to the shelter based on a perception or belief that a
31 person is: (1) a drug or alcohol dependent person; (2) not in
32 compliance with a prescription medication regimen; or (3) has
33 consumed alcoholic beverages off the premises of the shelter.

34 Current law prohibits emergency homeless shelters from refusing
35 admittance to a person who is perceived or believed to have a
36 mental illness. This bill expands the prohibition to include other
37 members of vulnerable populations in need of shelter. Current law
38 also provides that a shelter may prohibit admittance if there is a
39 reasonable basis to believe that the person poses a danger to self,
40 others, or property, or if the basis for the refusal is otherwise
41 authorized by law or regulation. Shelters continue to have the
42 authority to refuse admittance in these circumstances.

43 The bill provides that shelters may prohibit the possession or
44 consumption of controlled dangerous substances and alcoholic
45 beverages on the premises.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.