

ASSEMBLY, No. 3695

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER

District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Requires prospective volunteer firefighters to undergo criminal history record background checks.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 The bill provides that the governing body of a municipality or
2 the board of commissioners of a fire district maintaining a volunteer
3 fire department would be required to ensure that an applicant
4 undergo a criminal history record background check upon
5 application to be a volunteer firefighter. Specifically, the applicant
6 would be required to submit to the appointing body of the
7 municipality or fire district the applicant's name, address,
8 fingerprints, and written consent for a criminal history record
9 background check to be performed.

10 Under the bill, the appointing body of the municipality or fire
11 district would be authorized to exchange fingerprint data with and
12 receive criminal history record information from the State Bureau
13 of Identification in the Division of State Police and the Federal
14 Bureau of Investigation consistent with applicable State and federal
15 laws, rules, and regulations.

16 The bill provides that an applicant would be ineligible to serve if
17 the applicant's criminal history record background check reveals a
18 record of conviction for a disqualifying crime or offense. The bill
19 defines a "disqualifying crime or offense" as arson and related
20 offenses, and any criminal offense involving moral turpitude. The
21 bill also provides that if the background check reveals a conviction
22 for raising false public alarm, the applicant would be ineligible to
23 serve for a period of ten years following the date of conviction.

24 Current law requires members of paid fire departments to
25 undergo a criminal history record background check, and it is the
26 sponsor's intent that this bill will protect members of the public by
27 requiring that all persons seeking to serve in the role of firefighter
28 be screened appropriately before acceptance to a position of public
29 trust.