

ASSEMBLY, No. 4174

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 1, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblyman DANIEL R. BENSON

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Reynolds-Jackson

SYNOPSIS

Provides that institutions of higher education may permit final-year students in graduate degree programs for mental health care professions to graduate or be matched with residency or clinical programs early.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 7/9/2020)

1 AN ACT concerning the demand for mental health care professionals
2 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

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7 1. Notwithstanding any law or regulation to the contrary, for the
8 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years, an institution of higher
9 education, at its discretion, may permit a final-year student in a
10 graduate degree program leading to a degree as a mental health care
11 professional to graduate early or to be matched with a residency or
12 clinical program early.

13 As used in this section, “mental health care professional” means
14 a licensed psychiatrist, psychologist, professional counselor,
15 clinical social worker, marriage and family therapist, or any other
16 individual licensed or certified by this State to provide or
17 administer mental health care in the ordinary course of business or
18 practice of a profession.

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20 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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25 The COVID-19 pandemic is causing a national mental health
26 crisis. In order to help address this situation, this bill provides that
27 for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years, institutions of
28 higher education, at their discretion, may permit final-year students
29 in graduate degree programs leading to a degree as a mental health
30 care professional to graduate early or to be matched with a
31 residency or clinical program early. The bill defines a “mental
32 health care professional” as a licensed psychiatrist, psychologist,
33 professional counselor, clinical social worker, marriage and family
34 therapist, or any other individual licensed or certified to provide or
35 administer mental health care in the ordinary course of business or
36 practice of a profession.

37

38 This bill will help to more rapidly expand the number of mental
39 health care providers ready to address the critical mental health
needs that have developed as a result of the pandemic.