

ASSEMBLY, No. 4563

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED AUGUST 24, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman JAMEL C. HOLLEY

District 20 (Union)

Assemblyman BENJIE E. WIMBERLY

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblyman BRIAN BERGEN

District 25 (Morris and Somerset)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman McKnight

SYNOPSIS

Establishes a Division on Violence Prevention and Intervention in the DLPS.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/8/2021)

1 **AN ACT** establishing the Division on Violence Prevention and
2 Intervention in the Department of Law and Public Safety and
3 supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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

7
8 1. a. The Attorney General shall establish a Division on
9 Violence Prevention and Intervention in the Department of Law and
10 Public Safety. The purpose of the division shall be to ensure that
11 each county provides well-coordinated and accessible violence
12 prevention resources to persons in the county.

13 b. The administrator and head of the division shall be a
14 director, who shall be known as the Director of Violence Prevention
15 and Intervention, and who shall be a person qualified by training
16 and experience to perform the duties of the office of the director.
17 The director shall be appointed by the Attorney General and shall
18 receive a salary as shall be provided by law.

19 c. The director may apply for and accept on behalf of the State
20 any grants from the Federal Government or any agency thereof, or
21 from any foundation, corporation, association or person, and may
22 comply with the terms, conditions and limitations thereof, for any
23 of the purposes of the division. Any money received may be
24 expended by the division, subject to any limitations imposed in the
25 grants, to effectuate any of the purposes of the division upon
26 warrant of the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting of
27 the Department of the Treasury on vouchers certified and approved
28 by the director.

29
30 2. a. The county prosecutor in each county shall appoint or
31 designate a violence prevention and intervention coordinator to
32 serve as coordinator for the division in accordance with the
33 provisions of this section. A person designated as a program
34 coordinator pursuant to this subsection shall not be deemed an
35 employee of the county prosecutor's office.

36 b. The program coordinator shall:

37 (1) create a directory of existing violence prevention services
38 and activities in the county;

39 (2) develop and recommend services to be funded by local
40 governing bodies which encompass both interpersonal violence and
41 suicide prevention programs;

42 (3) identify vacant properties and existing community spaces
43 that may be transformed for use by local organizations that lead
44 violence prevention activities or provide supportive services to at-
45 risk youth and their families;

46 (4) develop a network of volunteers and mentors within the
47 community who:

- 1 (a) can address issues such as youth violence and suicide
2 prevention; and
- 3 (b) offer community outreach that provides guidance to young
4 people about engaging in voluntary behavior with the intent to help
5 others;
- 6 (5) emphasize collaboration among all agencies that work with
7 at-risk populations, identify cross-cutting risk factors and
8 prevention strategies, and establish working groups to address core
9 issues including, but not limited to, homicide and suicide
10 prevention, youth violence, and drug abuse;
- 11 (6) encourage local organizations that provide violence
12 prevention services to seek out and apply for grant funding in
13 support of their initiatives and provide technical assistance and
14 support to the organizations to maximize the likelihood of success
15 of the applications;
- 16 (7) partner with local institutions of higher education to
17 develop an evaluation tool for violence prevention and reduction
18 strategies and partner on grant applications to implement prevention
19 and reduction plans;
- 20 (8) focus on providing assistance to ex-offenders with an
21 expressed interest in transitioning back into the community through
22 employment assistance, treatment and counseling, and housing; and
- 23 (9) incorporate the services of ex-offenders who have
24 rehabilitated themselves to serve as mentors or role models for at-
25 risk youth who have engaged in criminal activity or are at-risk of
26 engaging in criminal behavior.
- 27 c. There shall be appropriated annually from the General Fund:
- 28 (1) to the Department of Law and Public Safety the salary costs
29 of the Director of the Division on Violence Prevention and
30 Intervention appointed pursuant to section 1 of P.L. c. (C.)
31 (pending before the Legislature as this bill); and
- 32 (2) to each county the salary costs of county violence prevention
33 and intervention coordinators appointed pursuant to this section.

34
35 3. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month
36 next following the date of enactment.

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39 STATEMENT

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41 This bill establishes a Division on Violence Prevention and
42 Intervention in the Department of Law and Public Safety. The
43 purpose of the division is to ensure that each county provides access
44 to well-coordinated violence prevention resources to persons in the
45 county.

46 The division is to be overseen by a Director of Violence
47 Prevention and Intervention, who is to be appointed by the Attorney
48 General. The director is authorized under the bill to apply for and

1 accept on behalf of the State any grants from the Federal
2 Government or agency, or from any foundation, corporation,
3 association or person, for any of the purposes of the division.

4 The provisions of the bill also require the county prosecutor in
5 each county to appoint or designate a violence prevention and
6 intervention coordinator. A person designated as a program
7 coordinator is not to be deemed an employee of the county
8 prosecutor's office.

9 The program coordinator is required to: (1) create a directory of
10 existing violence prevention services and activities in the county;
11 (2) develop and recommend services to be funded by local
12 governing bodies; (3) identify vacant properties or existing
13 community spaces that could be transformed for use by local
14 organizations that lead violence prevention activities or provide
15 supportive services to at-risk youth and their families; (4) develop a
16 network of volunteers and mentors within the community who can
17 address issues such as youth violence and suicide prevention, as
18 well as offer community outreach to provide guidance to young
19 people about engaging in voluntary behavior with the intent to help
20 others; (5) emphasize collaboration among all agencies that work
21 with at-risk populations, identify cross-cutting risk factors and
22 prevention strategies and establish working groups to address core
23 issues including, but not limited to, homicide and suicide
24 prevention, youth violence, and drug abuse; (6) encourage local
25 organizations that provide violence prevention services seek out
26 grant funding, and provide technical assistance and support to the
27 organizations to maximize the likelihood of success of the
28 applications; (7) partner with local institutions of higher education
29 to develop an evaluation tool for violence prevention and reduction
30 strategies and partner on grant applications to implement prevention
31 and reduction plans; (8) focus on providing assistance to ex-
32 offenders with an expressed interest in transitioning back into the
33 community through employment assistance, treatment and
34 counseling, and housing; and (9) incorporate the services of ex-
35 offenders who have rehabilitated themselves to serve as mentors or
36 role models for at-risk youth who have engaged in criminal activity
37 or are at-risk of engaging in criminal behavior.

38 The bill further provides for annual appropriations to the
39 Department of Law and Public Safety for payment of the salary
40 costs of the Director of the Division on Violence Prevention and
41 Intervention, and to each county for the salary costs of county
42 violence prevention and intervention coordinators.

43 This bill implements one of the recommendations of New
44 Jersey's independent Study Commission on Violence in its report
45 issued in October 2015.