

ASSEMBLY, No. 5056

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED NOVEMBER 19, 2020

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman GORDON M. JOHNSON

District 37 (Bergen)

Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

SYNOPSIS

Requires those holding elective public office to undergo diversity and anti-bias training.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/19/2020)

1 AN ACT concerning diversity and anti-bias training for those
2 holding elective public office and supplementing various
3 sections of statutory law.

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

7
8 1. The Legislature shall provide diversity and anti-bias training
9 for its members. Each member of the Legislature shall take the
10 training once per term of office either in-person or online. A
11 certificate of completion shall be submitted to the Legislative
12 Counsel. The certificate of completion shall be public information.

13
14 2. Every county shall provide diversity and anti-bias training
15 for the members of its governing body holding elective public
16 office, all constitutional officers, the county executive in counties
17 that have adopted the county executive plan of the "Optional
18 County Charter Law," P.L.1972, c.154 (C.40:41A-1 et seq.), and
19 the register of deeds and mortgages in counties that have an
20 established elective office of register of deeds and mortgages. Each
21 person shall take the training once per term of office either in-
22 person or online. A certification of completion shall be submitted to
23 the clerk of the board of chosen freeholders. The certificate of
24 completion shall be public information.

25 For purposes of this section, "constitutional officer" includes
26 county clerks, surrogates, and sheriffs.

27
28 3. Every municipality shall provide diversity and anti-bias
29 training for the members of its governing body holding elective
30 public office. Each member shall take the training once per term of
31 office either in-person or online. A certificate of completion shall
32 be submitted to the municipal clerk. The certificate of completion
33 shall be public information.

34 For purposes of this section, "municipality" includes any city,
35 town, township, village, or borough.

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37 4. Every school district shall provide diversity and anti-bias
38 training for the members of its governing body holding elective
39 public office. Each member shall take the training once per term of
40 office either in-person or online. A certification of completion shall
41 be submitted to the Department of Education. The certificate of
42 completion shall be public information.

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44 5. Every fire district shall provide diversity and anti-bias
45 training for the members of its governing body holding elective
46 public office. Each member shall take the training once per term of
47 office either in-person or online. A certificate of completion shall
48 be submitted to the municipal clerk. The certificate of completion
49 shall be public information.

1 6. a. The Division on Civil Rights shall develop diversity and
2 anti-bias training materials for both in-person and online instruction
3 required in accordance with sections 1 through 5, inclusive, of
4 P.L. , c. (C.)(pending before the Legislature as this bill). The
5 training materials shall be designed to promote positive interactions
6 with, and outreach to, constituents against whom practices of
7 discrimination are made unlawful pursuant to the “Law Against
8 Discrimination,” P.L.1945, c.169 (C.10:5-1 et seq.).

9 b. The division shall make the training materials available to
10 the Legislature and the governing bodies of counties,
11 municipalities, school districts, and fire districts.

12 c. The division shall periodically assess the training materials
13 and update them as needed.
14

15 7. Sections 1 through 5 of this act shall take effect on the first
16 day of the fourth month following enactment and section 6 shall
17 take effect immediately. The Legislature, counties, municipalities,
18 school districts, and fire districts may take anticipatory action in
19 advance of that date as may be necessary for the timely
20 implementation of this act.
21

22 23 STATEMENT 24

25 This bill would require diversity and anti-bias training for
26 elected members of the Legislature and the governing bodies of
27 counties, municipalities, school districts, and fire districts. Training
28 would also be required for all constitutional officers including
29 county clerks, surrogates, and sheriffs. In addition, county
30 executives and registers of deeds and mortgages would be required
31 to take the training in counties that have established and hold
32 elections for those positions.

33 The training would have to be completed at least once per term
34 of office either in-person or online. Once the training has been
35 completed, a certificate of completion will be sent to the Legislative
36 Counsel, the clerk for the board of chosen freeholders, the
37 municipal clerk, or the Department of Education. Such certificates
38 of completion will be considered public information.

39 Training materials would be developed by the Division on Civil
40 Rights and made available to members of the Legislature and the
41 governing bodies of counties, municipalities, school districts, and
42 fire districts.

43 In discharging their official duties, those who hold elective
44 public office impact people of all backgrounds and cultures. In
45 conducting their important work, it is critically important for them
46 to understand the diverse backgrounds of the people they serve
47 while eliminating any internal biases they may have.