

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
ASSEMBLY, No. 5340
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

DATED: FEBRUARY 10, 2021

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Establishes Office of Statewide Mobility Manager to assist individuals with autism and their families with transportation and mobility needs.

Type of Impact: Increased annual State General Fund expenditure.

Agencies Affected: Department of Transportation.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Annual</u>
State Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services finds that the bill will result in an indeterminate increase in annual State costs. The primary fiscal impact of the bill is the establishment of a new office in the Department of Transportation (DOT). Uncertainty about the amount of staff and resources that the DOT will determine are necessary to effectuate the mission of the office prevents a discreet cost estimate. There is also a lack of information about existing DOT initiatives that may partially fulfill the mission of the new office, which may simply require a reorganization of DOT activity, rather than new investment in staff and resources.
- The lower end annual cost of the new Office of Statewide Mobility Manager would likely be \$200,000 to \$300,000 for an office with a single new staff member and would likely increase based on the staffing level needed.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill establishes the Office of Statewide Mobility Manager to provide assistance with transportation services and trip-planning guidance for adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and their guardians, families, caregivers, and service providers. The bill specifically tasks the office with:

(1) being informed on and knowledgeable of the laws and practices concerning public transportation, private transportation, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, with a specific focus on how the laws and practices impact adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder;

- (2) identifying and helping secure feasible transportation alternatives for adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and their guardians, families, caregivers, and service providers;
- (3) providing uniform information on transportation services and trip-planning guidance for all New Jersey residents regardless of location;
- (4) assisting the State and counties with coordination strategies, including but not limited to linking regions and connecting people with existing transit services; and
- (5) taking any other action to fulfill the purposes of the office.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS finds that the bill will result in an indeterminate increase in annual State Costs. The primary fiscal impact of the bill is the establishment of a new Office of Statewide Mobility Manager in DOT. While the bill lays out a clear set of responsibilities for the new office, the DOT will have discretion in the amount of resources it deploys to fulfill those responsibilities. Presumably the new office, at a minimum, will require one professional who will hold the title of Statewide Mobility Manager. Beyond that, the amount of staff that might report to that individual is unclear. Further, information is not available about the extent of existing DOT mobility initiatives that may partially fulfill the mission of the new office. The DOT, New Jersey Transit, and the Department of Human Services all engage in work concerning Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant transportation and to some extent work on issues that would be covered under the new Office of Statewide Mobility Manager. It is unclear to what extent those existing efforts can be reorganized or allocated to the new office, in lieu of new expenditures on DOT staff and resources. For these reasons the magnitude of the increase in State cost is indeterminate.

Despite that indeterminacy, it would appear at a minimum that the bill would require the hiring of at least one new staff member who would be given the title of Statewide Mobility Manager. As the head of a new office, that person would likely be an experienced transportation professional with an expected salary of \$80,000 to \$120,000 per year, and would likely incur an additional fringe benefit cost of \$40,000 to \$60,000 per year, for a total annual employment cost of \$120,000 to \$180,000 per year. That individual will also likely need a new computer and office equipment for an initial cost of \$10,000 to \$20,000. The DOT headquarters is a large building and they likely have sufficient existing office space to house the office, so it is unlikely that new office space would need to be leased. Employees that work underneath the Statewide Mobility Manager would have lower employment costs depending upon their job descriptions but would have comparable initial computer and office equipment needs. The planning activities and local government coordination responsibilities of the office will likely lead to additional annual support costs, notably for travel expenses and possibly for the purchase of software and the cost of developing travel information materials. The cost of those items would again depend on the activities and the decisions of the future Statewide Mobility Manager.

Therefore, the lower range of the annual cost for the new Office of Statewide Mobility Manager would likely be \$200,000 to \$300,000 for an office with only one new staff member and would increase based on additional staffing level.

Section: Authorities, Utilities, Transportation and Communications

*Analyst: Patrick Brennan
Principal Fiscal Analyst*

*Approved: Thomas Koenig
Assistant Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).