

ASSEMBLY, No. 5788

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 1, 2021

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Assemblywoman VERLINA REYNOLDS-JACKSON

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

District 37 (Bergen)

SYNOPSIS

Requires certain law enforcement officers be periodically vetted for evidence of personal bias.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/21/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning law enforcement officers and supplementing
2 Title 40A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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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. a. A State, county, or municipal police department or force,
8 as applicable, shall conduct a personal bias check of a law
9 enforcement officer employed by a State or local unit. The personal
10 bias check shall be conducted upon hiring the law enforcement
11 officer and every five years thereafter. The personal bias check
12 shall include, but not be limited to:

13 (1) a review of any publicly accessible information pertaining to
14 the law enforcement officer that demonstrates:

15 (a) evidence of personal bias or prejudice held by the law
16 enforcement officer against a person or group by reason of the
17 person's or group's race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual
18 orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or
19 ethnicity; and

20 (b) evidence of involvement or affiliation by the law
21 enforcement officer with an extremist group; and

22 (2) the administration of a test, developed in consultation with
23 the appropriate testing professional, that is designed to identify bias,
24 including, but not limited to, explicit and implicit bias against a
25 person or group by reason of the person's or group's race, color,
26 religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or
27 expression, national origin, or ethnicity.

28 b. As used in this section:

29 "Extremist group" means a group that utilizes the unlawful use
30 or threat of force in furtherance of an ideological agenda derived
31 from bias against a person or group or anti-government or anti-
32 authority sentiment, including opposition to perceived economic,
33 social, or racial hierarchies, or perceived government overreach,
34 negligence, or illegitimacy.

35 "Law enforcement officer" means a person whose public duties
36 include the power to act as an officer for the detection,
37 apprehension, arrest, and conviction of offenders against the laws of
38 this State.

39 c. The Attorney General shall promulgate guidelines and
40 procedures to effectuate the provisions of this section.

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42 2. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month
43 next following enactment, but the Attorney General may take any
44 anticipatory administrative action necessary to implement the
45 provisions of this act.

STATEMENT

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This bill requires certain law enforcement officers to be periodically vetted for evidence of personal bias.

Under the bill, a State, county, or municipal police department or force, as applicable, is required to conduct a personal bias check of a law enforcement officer employed by that State or local unit. The personal bias check is to be conducted upon hiring the law enforcement officer and every five years thereafter.

The personal bias check is required to include, but not be limited to, a review of any publicly accessible information pertaining to the law enforcement officer that demonstrates: (1) evidence of personal bias or prejudice held by the law enforcement officer against a person or group by reason of the person's or group's race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity; and (2) evidence of involvement or affiliation by the law enforcement officer with an extremist group.

The personal bias check is also required to include the administration of a test, developed in consultation with the appropriate testing professional, that is designed to identify bias, including, but not limited to, explicit and implicit bias against a person or group by reason of the person or group's race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, or ethnicity.

The bill defines "extremist group" to mean a group that utilizes the unlawful use or threat of force in furtherance of an ideological agenda derived from bias against a person or group or anti-government or anti-authority sentiment, including opposition to perceived economic, social, or racial hierarchies, or perceived government overreach, negligence, or illegitimacy.