

P.L. 2020, CHAPTER 58, *approved July 16, 2020*
Senate, No. 973

1 **AN ACT** concerning under-represented participants in
2 apprenticeships and supplementing P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-1
3 et seq.).
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5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:
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8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that women, minorities,
9 and persons with disabilities are under-represented in the skilled
10 trades and apprenticeship programs, despite the fact that these
11 groups represent a large and growing portion of the workforce. As
12 apprenticeship programs often lead to high paying jobs in growing
13 industries, women, minorities, and persons with disabilities should
14 be provided better access and support in benefitting from them.

15 Although apprenticeships can benefit these groups, sometimes
16 women, minorities, and persons with disabilities begin the
17 programs, but leave before completion. One reason for this may be
18 that the groups are under-represented. When they encounter
19 harassment and discrimination or other difficulties, they may not
20 have a trusted support network on which they can depend.

21 For example, while all participants in federally-registered
22 apprenticeship programs are required to receive a mentor, it is
23 unlikely that the mentor would come from the same under-
24 represented group as the participant. Participants who are not from
25 under-represented groups would not face this dilemma.

26 It is therefore an appropriate public purpose to begin, in the
27 Department of Labor and Workforce Development, a peer-to-peer
28 mentoring program for women, minorities, and persons with
29 disabilities.
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31 2. a. The Commissioner of Labor and Workforce
32 Development, in consultation with the Commissioner of Education
33 and the Chief Diversity Officer of New Jersey, shall establish a
34 peer-to-peer Statewide apprenticeship mentoring program for
35 women, minorities, and persons with disabilities. The purpose of
36 the mentoring program is to provide mentoring and support services
37 to women, minorities, and persons with disabilities throughout the
38 State, as well as to establish a network of peers involved in
39 apprenticeship groups among those groups.

40 b. The Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development
41 shall analyze which groups of people are under-represented in

1 industries throughout the State, and then form employee resource
2 groups for apprentices involved in those industries.

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4 3. This act shall take effect on the 30th day next following
5 enactment.

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STATEMENT

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9 This bill requires the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce
10 Development, in consultation with the Commissioner of Education
11 and the Chief Diversity Officer of New Jersey, to establish a peer-
12 to-peer Statewide apprenticeship mentoring program for women,
13 minorities, and persons with disabilities. The purpose of the
14 mentoring program is to provide mentoring and support services to
15 women, minorities, and persons with disabilities throughout the
16 State, as well as to establish a network of peers involved in
17 apprenticeship groups among those groups.

18 The bill also requires the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce
19 Development to analyze which groups of people are under-
20 represented in industries throughout the State, and then form
21 employee resource groups for apprentices involved in those
22 industries.

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27 Requires Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development to
28 establish apprenticeship mentoring program for women, minorities,
29 and persons with disabilities.