

SENATE, No. 1013

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 30, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator LORETTA WEINBERG
District 37 (Bergen)

SYNOPSIS

Directs Commissioner of Health to establish public awareness campaign concerning importance of vaccinations.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT requiring the establishment of a public awareness
2 campaign concerning the importance of vaccinations and
3 supplementing Title 26 of the Revised Statutes.

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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:

9 a. Vaccines have aided in reducing the burden of widespread
10 and often fatal diseases, enabling individuals to lead longer and
11 healthier lives while reducing health care costs;

12 b. Despite the importance of immunizations across the lifespan,
13 from infancy through childhood, adolescence, and adulthood, there
14 persists in the public a general lack of awareness regarding
15 vaccines, and a misperception that immunizations are unnecessary
16 and pose a greater risk than the diseases they prevent;

17 c. Vaccine-preventable diseases, including diseases such as
18 influenza and pneumonia, are a critical public health issue in New
19 Jersey;

20 d. One way to potentially reduce vaccine-preventable diseases
21 is increased compliance rates for immunization, supported through
22 education and public awareness; and

23 e. Recent outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, such as
24 the 33 cases of measles reported in the State by the Department of
25 Health, demonstrate the continuous commitment needed by
26 government health agencies, in partnership with health care
27 providers, in helping the public understand the importance of
28 immunization.

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30 2. a. The Commissioner of Health, in consultation with the
31 Commissioner of Human Services and the Commissioner of
32 Children and Families, shall develop, coordinate, implement, and
33 oversee a comprehensive public awareness campaign to educate the
34 public on the importance of vaccinations. The goal of the campaign
35 is to encourage New Jersey residents to pursue a lifetime of
36 protection from vaccine-preventable diseases through the use of
37 immunizations. To the extent possible, the Commissioner shall
38 maximize the resources of the department's Vaccine Preventable
39 Disease Program to effectuate the goal of the campaign. The
40 campaign, at a minimum, shall provide the following information:

41 (1) the immunization schedules for babies and infants, pre-teens
42 and teens, adults, pregnant women, and senior citizens, as
43 recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

44 (2) a list of vaccine-preventable diseases, describing such
45 factors as each disease's incubation period, method of transmission,
46 and symptoms;

47 (3) data regarding the immunization coverage rates of New
48 Jersey residents; and

1 (4) scientific evidence demonstrating the positive health
2 outcomes associated with immunizations for the individual and the
3 public at large.

4 b. No later than 90 days after the effective date of this act, the
5 commissioner shall:

6 (1) provide for the development of printed and digital
7 educational materials as outlined in subsection a. of this section, in
8 English, Spanish, and any other language that the commissioner
9 determines is the first language of a significant number of citizens
10 in the State; and

11 (2) disseminate the educational materials to relevant entities,
12 including, but not limited to, local health agencies and clinics,
13 physicians, health care facilities, pharmacies, libraries, child care
14 facilities, boards of education, and community-based outreach
15 programs and organizations. The commissioner shall also post such
16 information in an easily accessible location of the department's
17 Internet website.

18 c. The commissioner shall report to the Governor, and to the
19 Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1),
20 no later than 18 months after the effective date of this act, on the
21 activities and accomplishments of the public awareness campaign.

22
23 3. The Commissioner of Health, pursuant to the
24 "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-
25 1 et seq.), shall adopt rules and regulations to effectuate the
26 purposes of this act.

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28 4. This act shall take effect immediately.
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31 STATEMENT

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33 This bill requires the Commissioner of Health, in consultation
34 with the Commissioner of Human Services and the Commissioner
35 of Children and Families, to develop, coordinate, implement, and
36 oversee a comprehensive public awareness campaign to educate the
37 public on the importance of vaccinations. The goal of the campaign
38 is to encourage New Jersey residents to pursue a lifetime of
39 protection from vaccine-preventable diseases through the use of
40 immunizations. To the extent possible, the bill directs the
41 commissioner to maximize existing resources within the
42 department's Vaccine Preventable Disease Program to effectuate
43 the goal of the campaign.

44 Under the bill, the campaign, at a minimum, is required to
45 provide the following information:

46 (1) the immunization schedules for babies and infants, pre-teens
47 and teens, adults, pregnant women, and senior citizens, as
48 recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;

1 (2) a list of vaccine-preventable diseases, describing such
2 factors as each disease's incubation period, method of transmission,
3 and symptoms;

4 (3) data regarding the immunization coverage rates of New
5 Jersey residents; and

6 (4) scientific evidence demonstrating the positive health
7 outcomes associated with immunizations for the individual and the
8 public at large.

9 No later than 90 days after the effective date of this act, the
10 commissioner is directed to: 1) provide for the development of
11 printed and digital educational materials as outlined under the bill,
12 in English, Spanish, and any other language that the commissioner
13 determines is the first language of a significant number of citizens
14 in the State; and 2) disseminate the educational materials to relevant
15 entities, including, but not limited to, local health agencies and
16 clinics, physicians, health care facilities, pharmacies, libraries, child
17 care facilities, boards of education, and community-based outreach
18 programs and organizations. In addition, the commissioner is
19 directed to post such information in an easily accessible location of
20 the department's Internet website. Finally, the bill requires the
21 commissioner to report to the Governor and the Legislature, no later
22 than 18 months after the effective date of the bill, on the activities
23 and accomplishments of the public awareness campaign.