

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE
SENATE, No. 1251
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JULY 22, 2020

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Requires issuance of one free copy of birth certificate to military veteran.

Type of Impact: Decrease in State revenue.

Agencies Affected: Department of Health, Office of Vital Statistics.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Annual</u>
State Revenue Decrease	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) estimates that this bill would result in an indeterminate decrease in State revenue due to the establishment of a policy that would provide for the issuance of one free birth certificate to a military veteran.
- The Office of Vital Statistics in the Department of Health (DOH) currently charges a \$25 fee to issue an initial certificate of birth. The number of individuals who are military veterans and request a birth certificate from the Office each year is not available; therefore, the OLS cannot quantify the fiscal impact of this bill. However, each certificate which is issued gratis pursuant to this bill will result in \$25 of reduced revenue for the General Fund.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill requires that the State Registrar of Vital Statistics in the DOH is to issue one free copy of a birth certificate to a military veteran. Under the bill, a current or former member of the Armed Forces of the United States or the National Guard is to be eligible to receive one certified copy of his or her birth certificate upon request. Additional copies of the birth certificate are to be subject to the regular statutory fee.

As used in the bill, “veteran” means any individual who has been discharged or released from service in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States, or any discharged member of the American Merchant Marine who served during World War II and is declared by the United States

Department of Defense to be eligible for federal veterans' benefits. "Veteran" is not to include an individual discharged or released under dishonorable circumstances.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS estimates that this bill would result in an indeterminate decrease in State revenue due to the establishment of a policy that would provide for the issuance of one free birth certificate to a military veteran. The Office of Vital Statistics in the DOH currently charges a \$25 fee to issue an initial certificate of birth. The number of individuals who are military veterans and request a birth certificate from the Office each year is not available; therefore, the OLS cannot quantify the fiscal impact of this bill. However, each certificate which is issued gratis pursuant to this bill will result in \$25 of reduced revenue for the General Fund.

For reference, the United States Census Bureau estimated in 2019 that there are 333,835 veterans living in New Jersey. The OLS cannot determine how many of those veterans were born in the State, and how many additional veterans live out-of-State but were born in New Jersey.

The OLS assumes that, in the absence of the bill, military veterans would purchase birth certificates as needed. Therefore, this bill will not increase the number of military veterans ordering birth certificates and will have no impact administrative costs.

Section: *Human Services*
Analyst: *Sarah Schmidt*
 Senior Research Analyst
Approved: *Frank W. Haines III*
 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.).