

SENATE, No. 1316

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 10, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

SYNOPSIS

Requires hotels to upgrade phone systems to allow guests to dial 9-1-1 without first dialing any other digit.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** concerning access to 9-1-1 services and supplementing
2 Title 29 of the Revised Statutes.

3
4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. Each owner of a hotel as defined under R.S.29:2-1 shall, within
8 90 days of the effective date of this act, convert the hotel's telephone
9 system to a dial tone first system, which shall allow a person making a
10 call from a hotel telephone to dial the digits "9-1-1," without first
11 having to dial any other digit in order to reach an outside telephone
12 line. Instructions on how to access 9-1-1 shall be prominently
13 displayed on each telephone provided in a hotel guest room.

14 The provisions of this section shall be operable to the extent that
15 the provisions are not inconsistent with or preempted by federal law.

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17 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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22 This bill requires each hotel telephone system in the State to be
23 converted to a dial tone first system, which would allow a person
24 making a call from a telephone in a hotel guest room to dial 9-1-1
25 without first dialing any other digit. The bill requires hotels to
26 convert their telephones to a dial tone first system within 90 days of
27 the bill's effective date.

28 The bill also requires instructions on how to access 9-1-1 to be
29 prominently displayed on each telephone in the guest room of a hotel.

30 Under the bill, a "hotel" is defined as any hotel, inn, boarding
31 house, motel, or other establishment whose proprietor offers and
32 accepts payment for rooms, sleeping accommodations, or board and
33 lodging, and retains the right of access to, and control of, the premises
34 which are let.

35 The bill clarifies that its provisions are operable to the extent that
36 they are not inconsistent with or preempted by federal law.

37 This bill is in response to a tragic incident in Texas where Kari
38 Rene Hunt was stabbed to death in her motel room by her estranged
39 husband. Ms. Hunt's nine-year old daughter attempted to dial 9-1-1
40 from the motel room, but was unaware that she had to first dial "9" to
41 reach an outside line. The incident has brought national awareness of
42 the need for hotels to have updated phone systems so that hotel guests
43 can easily access 9-1-1 during an emergency.