

SENATE, No. 1642

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator NILSA CRUZ-PEREZ

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER

District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

SYNOPSIS

Prohibits emergency homeless shelters from conditioning provision of shelter on enrollment in certain programs.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/5/2020)

1 AN ACT concerning emergency shelters for the homeless and
2 amending P.L.2013, c.204.

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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. Section 2 of P.L.2013, c.204 (C.55:13C-2.2) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 2. a. Except as provided in subsection b. of this section, an
10 emergency shelter for the homeless shall not refuse to provide
11 shelter, or food and shelter, for a minimum of 72 hours, to an
12 individual or family seeking these services, unless the shelter is at
13 its licensed capacity or the basis for refusal is otherwise authorized
14 by law or regulation.

15 b. In the event of an emergency condition, an emergency
16 shelter for the homeless, which has been authorized by a public
17 officer of a municipality or the Department of Community Affairs
18 to provide shelter, or food and shelter, to a specified number of
19 individuals in excess of its licensed capacity because of emergency
20 conditions, shall not refuse to provide shelter, or food and shelter,
21 for a minimum of 24 hours from the commencement of the
22 emergency condition or for the duration of the emergency
23 condition, whichever is longer, to an individual or family seeking
24 these services, unless the shelter is at its licensed capacity plus any
25 authorized excess capacity or the basis for refusal is otherwise
26 authorized by law or regulation.

27 c. (1) Except as provided in paragraph (3) of this subsection,
28 an emergency shelter for the homeless shall not require an
29 individual seeking shelter to be enrolled in a local, State, federal, or
30 private assistance program, or to be receiving any other services or
31 benefits as a condition of receiving shelter for a minimum of 72
32 hours, in accordance with subsection a. of this section.

33 (2) Following the initial 72 hours, an emergency shelter for the
34 homeless may require an individual to commence the application
35 process for programs, assistance, or other services or benefits, as a
36 condition of continued provision of shelter. An individual in
37 compliance with this requirement shall be provided with shelter for
38 a period of no less than 90 days.

39 (3) Nothing in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection shall
40 require an emergency shelter for the homeless to exceed its licensed
41 capacity, plus any authorized excess capacity, or prohibit an
42 emergency shelter for the homeless from refusing to provide shelter
43 if the refusal is otherwise authorized by law or regulation.

44 (cf: P.L.2013, c.204, s.2)

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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6 This bill prohibits emergency shelters for the homeless from
7 conditioning the provision of shelter on a person's enrollment in
8 certain programs.

9 Under the provision of the bill, an emergency shelter for the
10 homeless is required to provide shelter to a person for a minimum
11 of 72 hours, regardless of whether the person is enrolled in a local,
12 State, federal, or private assistance program, or is receiving any
13 other services or benefits.

14 The bill provides that following the initial 72 hours, an
15 emergency homeless shelter may require an individual to apply for
16 programs, assistance, or other services or benefits, as a condition of
17 continued provision of shelter. An individual in compliance with
18 this requirement would have to be provided with shelter for a period
19 of no less than 90 days.

20 The bill further provides that an emergency homeless shelter is
21 not required to exceed its licensed capacity, plus any authorized
22 excess capacity, in order to comply with these requirements.
23 Further, the bill does not prohibit a shelter from refusing to provide
24 shelter if the refusal is otherwise authorized by law or regulation.