SENATE, No. 1961

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 25, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator NILSA CRUZ-PEREZ
District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

SYNOPSIS

Increases reporting requirements for the NJ Basic Skills Training Program for Economic Growth.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning the basic skills training and amending P.L.2001, c.152.

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

1. Section 1 of P.L.2001, c.152 (C.34:15D-21) is amended to read as follows:

1. a. A restricted, nonlapsing, revolving "Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills," to be managed and invested by the State Treasurer, is hereby established in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development to provide basic skills training. All moneys appropriated to the fund, all interest accumulated on balances in the fund and all cash received for the fund from any other source shall be allocated by the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development as follows:

(1) 24% shall be deposited in an account reserved to support basic skills training delivered by the State's One Stop Career Centers to qualified displaced, disadvantaged and employed workers pursuant to Employability Development Plans developed pursuant to section 7 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-7);

(2) 28% shall be deposited in an account reserved for Workforce Investment Boards to provide grants for basic skills training for qualified displaced, disadvantaged and employed workers pursuant to Employability Development Plans developed pursuant to section 7 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-7) and for other individuals with learning disabilities or otherwise in need of vocational rehabilitation services;

(3) 25% shall be deposited in an account reserved for grants to consortia including one or more of any of the following: eligible individual employers, employer organizations, labor organizations, community-based organizations or educational institutions to provide basic skills training to qualified displaced, disadvantaged or employed workers or to other individuals seeking to enter apprenticeship training;

(4) 13% shall be deposited in an account reserved for a grant to the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development, a part of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, to provide basic skills training to qualified displaced, disadvantaged or employed workers. The New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development may request additional funds, beyond the amount provided for in this paragraph, from the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, which funds shall be provided in connection with paragraph (3) of this subsection, at the discretion of

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 <u>thus</u> is new matter.

the commissioner and without any special preference over any other applicant seeking funds in connection with paragraph (3) of this subsection, for the purpose of providing basic skills training to qualified displaced, disadvantaged or employed workers. Any request for those additional funds shall only be authorized after a determination by the commissioner that the funds provided in connection with this paragraph have been encumbered and that there is a demand for additional funds to provide basic skills training; and

(5) 10% shall be deposited in an account to be used, at the discretion of the commissioner, for any of the purposes indicated in this subsection a. and any administrative costs incurred by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development in connection with the fund.

b. Any grant provided in connection with paragraph (3) of subsection a. of this section directly to an employer or to an employer through a consortium shall be regarded as a customized training grant and shall be administered by the Office of Customized Training and the employer and consortium shall comply with all requirements of section 5 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-5), except that any grants provided directly or indirectly to an employer for use in connection with any program which includes apprenticeship training or activities or preparation for entry into apprenticeship training shall be exempt from the requirement of this subsection b. to be administered by the Office of Customized Training and be subject to the requirements of section 5 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-5), if it is approved by the Apprenticeship Policy Committee, as defined in section 3 of P.L.1993, c.268 (C.34:15E-3), and the employer complies with the provisions of subsection e. of section 5 of P.L.1993, c.268 (C.34:15E-5). Any grant provided in connection with paragraph (2) of subsection a. of this section directly to an individual shall be regarded as an individual training grant and shall be subject to the requirements of subsections a., c. and d. of section 6 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-6).

Also, any funds provided in connection with paragraph (4) of subsection a. of this section shall be provided to the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development by the Office of Customized Training, and shall comply with the following requirements:

(1) The New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development shall work with all the community colleges throughout the State of New Jersey to deliver basic skills training in the most effective and efficient manner possible at any of their 63 campuses or at any appropriate business facility;

(2) There shall be no charge to the employer sending employees to the training, but the employer shall pay employees regular wages

for the hours the training takes place, except that any waiver of this requirement to pay employees regular wages, for the hours of training, authorized by the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development, may, at the discretion of the commissioner, be offered to the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development on the same basis as any other grant recipient;

(3) The employers sending their employees to this training shall not be asked to provide any paperwork or complete any financial disclosure forms, including a tax clearance certificate as provided in section 1 of P.L.2007, c.101 (C.54:50-39), except that employers shall provide the employees participating in the training with the information that the employees need to comply with paragraph (4) of this subsection, and shall provide the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development with the information the employer has regarding its participating employees that the consortium needs to produce the annual report required pursuant to paragraph (7) of this subsection;

(4) The employees being trained shall provide the Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) of their employer and the employer's contact information at the beginning of the training and shall agree to provide the information regarding their employment status and wage rates that the consortium needs to produce the annual report required pursuant to paragraph (7) of this section;

(5) The mean class size for training under this subsection shall be 10, but the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development may aggregate employees from multiple employers in a single training to reach that mean of 10;

(6) The training provided under this subsection shall be basic skills training, but the apportionment of classes in the different areas of basic skills as defined by subsection h. of this section may be determined by the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development in consultation with representatives of the business community;

(7) The New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development shall file an annual report by September 1 of each year with the New Jersey Legislature and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development containing the total number of workers trained, the total funds expended on training, the number of workers trained in each area of basic skills training, the number of businesses with employees trained, the number of classes held in each area of basic skills training, the number of classes held at each community college, the wage ranges of the workers trained, the job titles of the workers trained and the results of the pre-training and post-training assessments. The report shall also include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the training program and how it can be

improved in the following year. The report shall also include a pre-training and post-training analysis of the workers' wages and employment status. The analysis shall compare the workers' employment status prior to training with the workers' employment status during the first fiscal year after the training ends, the second fiscal year after the training ends, and the third fiscal year after the training ends. The analysis shall also compare the wage rates paid to the workers prior to the training to wage rates paid during the first fiscal year after the training ends, the second fiscal year after the training ends, and the third fiscal year after the training ends. The report shall supplant all requirements for any other reporting that the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development may be asked to complete with respect to the funds it receives through paragraph (4) of subsection a. of this section; and

(8) The New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development shall work with the business community to promote this program to businesses across the State, including chambers of commerce and Statewide associations, such as the New Jersey Business and Industry Association, and shall seek out, and work with, State, regional, and county organizations that are dedicated to the economic empowerment of segments of society by race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, including, but not limited to the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey and the Statewide Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, and any other appropriate business organizations.

c. Any employment and training services funded by the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills shall be provided in a manner which complies with the provisions of subsections b., c., f., g., h. and i. of section 4 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-4), to the extent that those subsections pertain to remedial education. Any service provider receiving moneys from the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills shall be subject to the provisions of section 8 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-8) and section 8 of P.L.1992, c.44 (C.34:15D-19).

d. All staff located at any One Stop Career Center supported by funds provided from the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills shall be hired and employed by the State pursuant to Title 11A, Civil Service, of the New Jersey Statutes.

e. Beginning July 1, 2002, and for any subsequent fiscal year, if the unexpended cash balance in any of the accounts indicated in subsection a. of this section, less any amount awarded in grants but not yet disbursed from the account, is determined to exceed 20% of the amount of contributions collected for deposit in the account pursuant to this subsection during the fiscal year then ended, the excess shall be regarded as an unemployment compensation contribution and deposited into the unemployment compensation

fund within seven business days of the date that the determination is made.

f. The Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development shall establish standards of performance for providers of basic skills training pursuant to this act. The standards shall include, but not be limited to, standards for the curriculum or training to be furnished, qualifications for persons who will provide the training under the act, and standards for establishing what constitutes successful completion of the training program. The commissioner shall establish means of determining the ability of enrollees to gain or maintain employment following the successful completion of a training program established pursuant to this section. In the event that the commissioner determines that a provider has not conducted its training program in accordance with the standards of performance, he may take that action necessary to correct the deficiencies of the provider, or terminate the contract with the provider of basic skills services if the provider fails to respond to remedial action.

g. The State Employment and Training Commission shall review and evaluate the operations of programs supported by the Supplemental Workforce Fund for Basic Skills established pursuant to this section, with special consideration to how those programs assist in the implementation of the goals of the Strategic Five-Year State Plan for New Jersey's Workforce Investment System, and shall consult with the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development regarding its findings.

h. For the purpose of this section:

"Basic skills training" means basic mathematics, reading comprehension, basic computer literacy, English proficiency and work-readiness skills and shall be regarded as a form of "remedial education" for the purposes of section 3 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-3);

"One Stop Career Center" means one of the centers established in local areas to coordinate a variety of State and local programs providing employment and training services, including job placement services, or any other similar State or local government-sponsored center providing employment and training services as may be developed at any later time; and

"Qualified disadvantaged worker," "qualified displaced worker," "qualified employed worker," and "employment and training services" have the meanings given to them by section 3 of P.L.1992, c.43 (C.34:15D-3).

(cf: P.L.2017, c.52, s.1)

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill amends the reporting requirements for the New Jersey Basic Skills Training Program for Economic Growth to include further analysis of the training.

Specifically, this bill requires the New Jersey Community College Consortium for Workforce and Economic Development to include in the annual report an analysis of the effect of the training on workers' wages and employment and to determine the long term effectiveness of the training.

Current law requires the consortium to produce an annual report that contains: the total number of workers trained; the total funds expended on training; the number of workers trained in each area of training; the number of businesses with employees trained; the number of classes held in each area of training; the number of classes held at each community college; the wage range of the workers trained; the job titles of the workers trained; and the results of the pre-training and post-training assessments. The report must also include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the training program and how it can be improved in the following year.

All of this information, currently required, is necessary and useful to policy makers and the business community, but does not provide sufficient information for an effective analysis of the impact of the training on the worker's wages and employment status. This bill facilitates the analysis of that impact by requiring the collection, and reporting by the consortium, of information regarding worker employment status and wage rates prior to the training compared to the status and rates during the first, second and third fiscal year after the training ends. The analysis will assist the business community and policy makers in determining the long term effectiveness of training.

The bill also requires employees trained under the bill to agree to provide the information regarding their employment status and wage rates that the consortium needs to produce the annual report required by the bill.