SENATE, No. 2238

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:
Senator JAMES BEACH
District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

SYNOPSIS

Requires New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association to require criminal history records check for person to serve as official at athletic events sanctioned by association.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

AN ACT concerning criminal history record checks for certain sports officials and supplementing chapter 11 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. a. As used in this section:

"Criminal history records check" means a determination of whether a person has a criminal record by cross-referencing that person's name and fingerprints with those on file with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Identification Division, and the State Bureau of Identification in the Division of State Police.

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Education.

b. The New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association shall request through the commissioner, that the State Bureau of Identification in the Division of State Police conduct a criminal history records check on a prospective or current official of any interscholastic athletics meet, game, or tournament sanctioned by the association. In conducting the criminal history records check, the State Bureau of Identification shall examine its own files and arrange for a similar examination by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Identification Division.

c. A prospective or current official shall submit his name, address, fingerprints, and written consent to the association. The association shall supply this documentation to the commissioner who shall coordinate the criminal history records check.

d. The State Bureau of Identification shall conduct the criminal history records check upon the commissioner's receipt of the written consent to the check of the prospective or current official. The prospective or current official shall bear the cost for the criminal history records check, including all costs for administering and processing the check.

e. The commissioner is authorized to exchange fingerprint data with and receive criminal history record information from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the State Bureau of Identification for use in making the determination required by this section.

f. A prospective or current official shall be disqualified from serving as an official at any interscholastic athletics meet, game, or tournament sanctioned by the association if the person's criminal history records check reveals a record of conviction of any crime or offense enumerated in section 1 of PL.1986, c.116 (C.18A:6-7.1).

g. Following qualification to serve as an official pursuant to this section, the State Bureau of Identification shall immediately forward to the commissioner any information which the bureau receives on a charge pending against the official. If the charge is for one of the crimes or offenses enumerated in section 1 of P.L.1986,

c.116 (C.18A:6-7.1), the commissioner shall notify the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association, and the association shall take appropriate action. If the pending charge results in conviction, the person shall be disqualified from continuing to serve as an official.

h. A person serving as an official for interscholastic athletics meets, games, or tournaments sanctioned by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association on the effective date of this section shall comply with the criminal history record investigation requirements of this section within 60 days of the effective date of this section.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill requires that a criminal history records check be conducted on any person who serves as an official for an interscholastic athletics meet, game, or tournament sanctioned by the New Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA). Under the bill's provisions, the association is to request the check through the Commissioner of Education. A prospective or current official will submit his name, address, and fingerprints to the NJSIAA which will then forward this documentation to the commissioner. The bill authorizes the commissioner to exchange fingerprint data with and receive criminal history record information from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the State Bureau of Identification in the Division of State Police.

In conducting the check, the State Bureau of Identification will examine its own files and will arrange for a similar examination by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Identification Division. A prospective or current official will be disqualified from serving as an official for any interscholastic athletic events sanctioned by the NJSIAA if the person's criminal history record information reveals a record of conviction for a disqualifying crime or offense. The bill incorporates by reference the list of disqualifying crimes and offenses applicable to prospective school employees.

Following qualification to serve as an official, the State Bureau of Identification will immediately forward to the commissioner any information which the bureau receives on a charge pending against the official. If the charge is for a disqualifying crime or offense, the commissioner will notify the NJSIAA, and the association will take appropriate action. If the pending charge results in conviction, the person will be disqualified from continuing to serve as an official.