

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 2487

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 14, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator RONALD L. RICE

District 28 (Essex)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “2020 New Jersey Burial Assistance Program;” appropriates \$20 million.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee on March 9, 2021, with amendments.



1 AN ACT establishing the “2020 New Jersey Burial Assistance
 2 Program¹” ¹“supplementing chapter 13 of Title 26 of the
 3 Revised Statutes”¹ and making a \$20 million appropriation.

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

7
 8 1. a. There is established in the Department of Human Services
 9 the “2020 New Jersey Burial Assistance Program” for the purpose of
 10 providing financial assistance to individuals to cover eligible funeral
 11 expenses related to ¹“COVID-19 coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-
 12 19)”¹ deaths during the COVID-19 ¹“crisis” pandemic¹.

13 b. The Commissioner of Human Services shall administer this
 14 program and adopt, pursuant to the “Administrative Procedure Act,”
 15 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1), rules and regulations to implement this
 16 program. The commissioner shall determine eligible funeral expenses,
 17 establish a maximum amount of assistance per applicant, and devise a
 18 formula for the distribution of an amount of program funds to each
 19 applicant based on household income and need.

20 c. In order to qualify for this program, an applicant shall comply
 21 with the following conditions of eligibility:

22 (1) the applicant is a New Jersey resident;

23 (2) the applicant is filing for a death that a state, local, territorial,
 24 or tribal (SLTT) government licensed medical official has attributed to
 25 COVID-19;

26 (3) the applicant incurred or will incur eligible funeral expenses,
 27 not covered by other sources such as burial insurance or financial
 28 assistance from voluntary agencies, applicable government programs,
 29 or other entities; and

30 (4) the applicant¹ ¹“will provide” ¹provides¹ to the Department of
 31 Human Services the following documentation:

32 (a) an official death certificate or a signed statement from a SLTT
 33 government licensed medical officer attributing the death to COVID-
 34 19;

35 (b) an itemized funeral bill, any funeral receipts, and a funeral
 36 contract signed by the funeral director, indicating the applicant
 37 incurred or will incur eligible funeral expenses;

38 (c) documentation of burial insurance and any forms of funeral
 39 assistance received from voluntary agencies, government agencies,
 40 charities, or other entities;

41 (d) information and documentation regarding the applicant’s
 42 available household assets and income as of the date of the death; and

43 (e) proof of New Jersey residency.

44 d. ¹“As used in this section:

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.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Senate SHH committee amendments adopted March 9, 2021.

1 “COVID-19” means the coronavirus disease 2019, which is a
2 highly infectious disease that causes respiratory illness.

3 “COVID-19 crisis” means the duration of the public health
4 emergency and state of emergency, as declared by the Governor in
5 Executive Order 103 of 2020.

6 e. ¹ The commissioner shall identify amounts of federal
7 government assistance provided to this State for COVID-19
8 emergency relief, which can be allocated to this program.

9
10 2. There is appropriated to the Department of Human Services
11 the sum of \$20 million to be credited to the “2020 New Jersey
12 Burial Assistance Program” to effectuate the provisions of P.L. ,
13 c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill). The
14 amounts appropriated herein shall be funded first from assistance
15 provided from the federal government to the extent not prohibited
16 by federal law. The remaining amounts necessary to fund this
17 program are appropriated from the General Fund.

18
19 3. This act shall take effect immediately and shall expire one
20 year following the ¹ [rescission of Executive Order No. 103 of 2020
21 by the Governor.] end of both the state of emergency and public
22 health emergency declared in response to the coronavirus disease
23 2019 pandemic¹ .