

**SENATE, No. 2568**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**  
**219th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED JUNE 15, 2020

**Sponsored by:**  
**Senator RONALD L. RICE**  
**District 28 (Essex)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Consolidates ethics training for members of Legislature.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



1 AN ACT consolidating ethics training for members of the Legislature  
2 and amending P.L.2005, c.382 and P.L.2003, c.255.

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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.2005, c.382 (C.52:13D-21.1) is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 2. A State officer or employee or a special State officer or  
10 employee in a State agency in the Executive Branch shall complete a  
11 training program on ethical standards provided by the State Ethics  
12 Commission at such times and intervals as the commission shall  
13 require pursuant to subsection (e) of section 10 of P.L.1971, c.182  
14 (C.52:13D-21). At a minimum, an officer or employee shall complete  
15 annually, and acknowledge his or her completion of, a briefing on the  
16 ethics standards applicable to such employee or officer pursuant to  
17 the laws, regulations, codes, orders, procedures, advisory opinions or  
18 rulings of this State. The format and content of the program and  
19 briefing shall be determined by the training officer of the State Ethics  
20 Commission and approved by the commission as provided in  
21 subsection (e) of section 10 of P.L.1971, c.182 (C.52:13D-21).

22 A member of the Legislature who, because of service on a public  
23 entity, is required to complete a training program on ethical standards  
24 provided by the State Ethics Commission shall not be required to  
25 complete more than one such program each calendar year regardless  
26 of the number of public entities on which the member serves.

27 (cf: P.L.2005, c.382, s.2)

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29 2. Section 4 of P.L.2003, c.255 (C.52:13D-28) is amended to  
30 read as follows:

31 4. The Legislature shall provide an online tutorial on legislative  
32 ethics for its members and State officers or employees and special  
33 State officers or employees in the Legislative Branch of government.  
34 Each member of the Legislature and officer or employee in the  
35 Legislative Branch shall take the tutorial no later than April 1 of  
36 every even-numbered year. Each Executive Director shall submit a  
37 certification to the Ethics Counsel for himself or herself and for his  
38 or her respective staff members that they have completed the online  
39 tutorial. Each member of the Legislature shall submit to the Ethics  
40 Counsel a certification that he or she and his or her district office  
41 staff members have completed the online tutorial. The certification  
42 shall be public information. Failure to take the tutorial and file the  
43 certification shall be reported by the Ethics Counsel to the joint  
44 committee.

**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 In addition to the tutorial, all officers and employees in the  
2 Legislative Branch shall participate in annual ethics training as  
3 directed by their Executive Directors [and all members of the  
4 Legislature shall participate in annual ethics training as directed by  
5 the President of the Senate for members of the Senate and by the  
6 Speaker of the General Assembly for members of the General  
7 Assembly]. The Executive Directors [, the President of the Senate,  
8 and the Speaker of the General Assembly] shall also direct the  
9 process by which completion of the training is verified. Such  
10 verification shall be filed with the Ethics Counsel. The verification  
11 shall be public information. Failure to participate in the training and  
12 file the verification shall be reported by the Ethics Counsel to the  
13 joint committee.

14 Each member of the Legislature shall consult with the Ethics  
15 Counsel each year regarding the requirements of the New Jersey  
16 Conflicts of Interest Law and the Legislative Code of Ethics and any  
17 other applicable law, rule or standard of conduct relating to the area  
18 of ethics. The assistance of the Ethics Counsel to members of the  
19 Legislature is subject to the attorney-client privilege. This assistance  
20 is intended as a service to the members of the Legislature and may  
21 not be deemed to diminish a member's personal responsibility for  
22 adherence to applicable laws, code provisions, rules and other  
23 standards of conduct. No privileged information provided to the  
24 Ethics Counsel by members of the Legislature or officers or  
25 employees in the Legislative Branch shall be used or admitted into  
26 evidence in any proceeding against them; but this shall not prohibit  
27 proceedings against them from evidence independently derived.

28 (cf: P.L.2008, c.16, s.2)

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30 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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#### STATEMENT

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35 This bill provides that a member of the Legislature who, because  
36 of service on a public entity, is required to complete a training  
37 program on ethical standards provided by the State Ethics  
38 Commission will not be required to complete more than one such  
39 program each calendar year regardless of the number of public  
40 entities on which the member serves.

41 This bill also eliminates the requirement that a member of the  
42 Legislature participate in annual legislative ethics training. Ethics  
43 training for members would continue under existing provisions of  
44 law that require a member to consult annually with the legislative  
45 Ethics Counsel and to complete an online tutorial on legislative ethics  
46 biennially.