

SENATE, No. 2745

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JULY 28, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator M. TERESA RUIZ

District 29 (Essex)

Senator STEPHEN M. SWEENEY

District 3 (Cumberland, Gloucester and Salem)

SYNOPSIS

Requires members, officers, and employees of Legislature to undergo implicit bias and cultural competency training.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 **AN ACT** concerning implicit bias and cultural competency training
2 for members, officers, and employees of the Legislature and
3 supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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

7
8 1. The Legislature shall provide an online tutorial on implicit
9 bias and cultural competency for its members and State officers or
10 employees and special State officers or employees in the Legislative
11 Branch of government. Each member of the Legislature and officer
12 or employee in the Legislative Branch shall take the tutorial no later
13 than April 1 of every even-numbered year. Each Executive Director
14 shall submit a certification to the Legislative Counsel for himself or
15 herself and for his or her respective staff members that they have
16 completed the online tutorial. Each member of the Legislature shall
17 submit to the Legislative Counsel a certification that he or she and
18 his or her district office staff members have completed the online
19 tutorial. The certification shall be public information.

20 In addition to the tutorial, all officers and employees in the
21 Legislative Branch shall participate in annual implicit bias and
22 cultural competency training as directed by their Executive Directors
23 and all members of the Legislature shall participate in annual implicit
24 bias and cultural competency training as directed by the President of
25 the Senate for members of the Senate and by the Speaker of the
26 General Assembly for members of the General Assembly. The
27 Executive Directors, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of
28 the General Assembly shall also direct the process by which
29 completion of the training is verified. Such verification shall be filed
30 with the Legislative Counsel. The verification shall be public
31 information.

32 “Implicit bias” means a bias in judgment or behavior that results
33 from subtle cognitive processes, including implicit prejudice and
34 implicit stereotypes that often operate at a level below conscious
35 awareness and without intentional control.

36 “Implicit stereotypes” means the unconscious attributions of
37 particular qualities to a member of a certain social group, influenced
38 by experience, and based on learned associations between various
39 qualities and social categories, including race and gender.

40 “Cultural competency” means the ability to understand,
41 appreciate, and interact with people from different cultures or belief
42 systems.

43
44 2. This act shall take effect on January 1, 2021 but the
45 Legislature may take any anticipatory action in advance of that date
46 as may be necessary for the timely implementation of this act.

STATEMENT

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3 This bill requires implicit bias and cultural competency training
4 for members, officers, and employees of the Legislature. Implicit
5 bias is a bias in judgment or behavior that results from subtle
6 cognitive processes, including implicit prejudice and implicit
7 stereotypes, that often operate at a level below conscious awareness
8 and without intentional control. Cultural competency is the ability to
9 understand, appreciate, and interact with people from different
10 cultures or belief systems.
11 An online tutorial must be completed by April 1 of every even-
12 numbered year and training must be done annually. Successful
13 completion of both the online tutorial and the annual training must
14 be communicated to the Legislative Counsel and such
15 communications will be considered public information.
16 Every day, the Legislature creates laws that impact people of all
17 backgrounds and cultures. In doing this important work, it is critical
18 for all members, officers, and employees of the Legislature to
19 understand their own biases as well as cultures and belief systems
20 different from their own.