

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 3127

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

DATED: JANUARY 3, 2022

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:

Requires institutions of higher education to provide students with access to mental health care programs and services and to establish a hotline to provide information concerning the availability of those services.
- Type of Impact:

Potential expenditure increase to public institutions of higher education.
- Agencies Affected:

Public institutions of higher education.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Beginning in Academic Year 2021-2022</u>
Potential Cost Increase to Public Institutions of Higher Education	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that the bill may result in indeterminate increased costs borne by institutions of higher education. An institution would incur costs to the extent that it does not already meet the requirements of the bill.
- An institution may incur increased costs related to hiring additional staff to provide mental health care programs and services and to operate a mental health hotline in the event that the institution does not provide each student with the hotline number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, the NJ Hopeline, or any 24/7 mental health hotline deemed appropriate by the Secretary of Higher Education.

BILL DESCRIPTION

This bill requires public and independent institutions of higher education to ensure that all on-campus students have access to campus-based mental health care programs and services; provide assistance and referrals to mental health support services to any student unable to access on-

campus services; and provide each newly-enrolled student with information concerning the location and availability of those programs and services.

The bill also requires public and independent institutions of higher education to establish and maintain, on a 24-hour basis, a toll-free telephone hotline for students that would receive and respond to calls from students seeking counseling for depression, anxiety, stress, or other psychological or emotional tension, trauma, or disorder. Under the bill, an institution may satisfy the hotline requirement by providing each student with the hotline number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, the NJ Hopeline, or any 24/7 mental health hotline deemed appropriate by the Secretary of Higher Education.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concludes that this bill may result in indeterminate increased costs borne by institutions of higher education. An institution would incur costs to the extent that the institution does not already meet the requirements of the bill.

An institution may incur increased staffing and facilities costs to provide mental health care programs and services and to operate a mental health hotline in the event that the institution does not provide each student with the hotline number for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, the NJ Hopeline, or any 24/7 mental health hotline deemed appropriate by the Secretary of Higher Education. The OLS does not have the informational basis to predict costs that may be incurred as it is unaware of the extent to which institutions currently provide mental health programs, services, and supports in compliance with the bill.

Section: Education

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This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).