

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 3659

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED APRIL 26, 2021

Sponsored by:

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District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Senator NELLIE POU

District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

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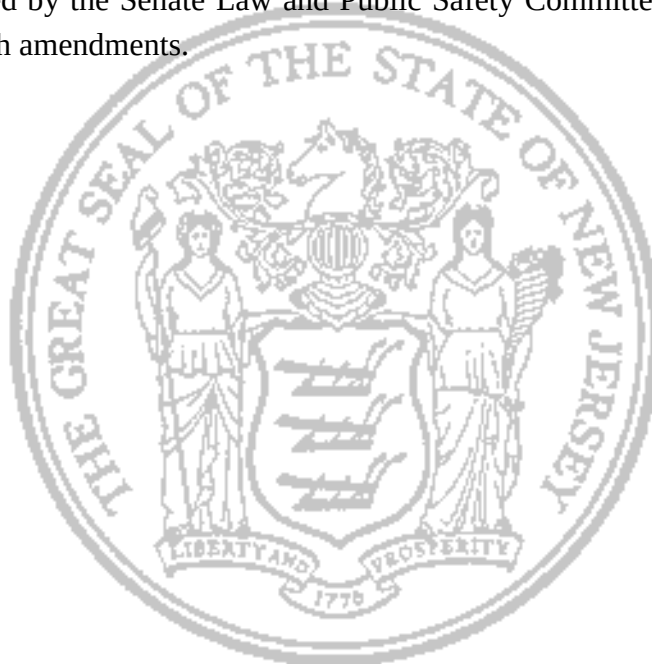
Senators Lagana, Diegnan and O'Scanlon

SYNOPSIS

Establishes permanent unit in Office of Emergency Management to address access and functional needs of residents related to disasters and emergencies.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Law and Public Safety Committee on December 16, 2021, with amendments.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/16/2021)

1 AN ACT concerning the provision of disaster and emergency related
2 assistance to State residents with access and functional needs and
3 supplementing chapter 9 of Appendix A.

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

7
8 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

9 a. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought devastation to the
10 State of New Jersey, with hundreds of thousands of positive cases,
11 high levels of hospitalization, and a tragic number of deaths.

12 b. The pandemic has had profound economic impacts across
13 the State, including ¹**[to]** ¹on government entities, non-profit
14 organizations, businesses of every size across all industries,
15 families, and individuals.

16 c. ¹**[Heavily affected have been residents]** Residents¹ of New
17 Jersey with disabilities, older adults, and other at-risk groups, many
18 of whom are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19¹**[,]**¹ as well as
19 the consequences of other types of emergencies and disasters ¹,
20 have been heavily affected¹.

21 d. In 2018, the CDC estimated that 24.6% of New Jersey adult
22 residents had a disability, which is a sizeable portion of the State's
23 population.

24 e. The economic impact on people with disabilities and their
25 families, as well as the burden on individual health from the
26 pandemic are an existential threat to the ¹**[Disability]** disability¹
27 community.

28 f. Protection of the State's vulnerable populations from the
29 COVID-19 pandemic and other disasters or emergencies that may
30 take place in the future is a matter of urgency.

31 g. It is therefore in the public interest for the State to engage in
32 comprehensive planning and coordination within the northern,
33 central, and southern regions of the State to support residents with
34 access and functional needs.

35
36 2. a. The State Office of Emergency Management shall
37 establish a unit in the office to serve the needs of State residents
38 with access and functional needs. The unit's responsibilities shall
39 include:

40 (1) determining the needs of residents with access and
41 functional needs¹**[,]**¹ before, during, and after disasters and
42 emergencies;

43 (2) determining the Statewide availability of relevant resources
44 and assistance;

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 SLP committee amendments adopted December 16, 2021.

- 1 (3) assessing and addressing the ability of residents with access
2 and functional needs to access available resources and assistance;
3 and
- 4 (4) coordinating with county and local offices of emergency
5 management and relevant resource providers to determine, expand,
6 and implement best practices to be utilized in support of residents
7 with access and functional needs.
- 8 b. The unit shall consist of one full-time supervisor and a staff
9 of three full-time planners to assist with the needs of the ¹‘[South,
10 Central, and North Jersey regions] northern, central, and southern
11 regions of the State¹ in serving State residents with access and
12 functional needs.
- 13 c. For the purposes of this section, a “resident with access and
14 functional needs” means:
- 15 (1) a person with a disability;
16 (2) an older adult;
17 (3) a person with limited English proficiency;
18 (4) a person with limited access to transportation that would
19 enable the person to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and
20 mitigate the effects of a disaster or emergency; ¹‘[and] or¹
- 21 (5) a person with limited access to financial resources that
22 would enable person to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and
23 mitigate the effects of a disaster or emergency.
24
- 25 3. This act shall take effect on the first day of the fourth month
26 next following the date of enactment, except that the State Office of
27 Emergency Management shall take any anticipatory action in
28 advance as shall be necessary for the implantation of this act.