

**ASSEMBLY, No. 684**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**220th LEGISLATURE**

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2022 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman Atkins**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires Homelessness Prevention Program agencies to remain open during public health emergency and mandates funding of additional agencies in certain counties.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/13/2022)**

1    **AN ACT** concerning Homelessness Prevention Program agencies  
2       and supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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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. As used in P.L.     , c.     (C.     ) (pending before the  
8       Legislature as this bill):

9       “Agency” means a non-profit organization in this State that is  
10      responsible for administering the program in a county.

11      “Commissioner” means the Commissioner of Community  
12      Affairs.

13      “Department” means the Department of Community Affairs.

14      “Populous county” means any county with a population of  
15      400,000 or more, according to the most recent federal decennial  
16      census.

17      “Program” means the “Homelessness Prevention Program”  
18      established under chapter 41 of Title 5 of the New Jersey  
19      Administrative Code by the department in order to implement  
20      pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1984, c.180 (C.52:27D-280 et al.).

21      “Public health emergency” means an occurrence or imminent  
22      threat of an occurrence that:

23       a. is caused or is reasonably believed to be caused by any of  
24       the following: (1) bioterrorism or an accidental release of one or  
25       more biological agents; (2) the appearance of a novel or previously  
26       controlled or eradicated biological agent; (3) a natural disaster; (4) a  
27       chemical attack or accidental release of toxic chemicals; or (5) a  
28       nuclear attack or nuclear accident;

29       b. poses a high probability of any of the following harms: (1) a  
30       large number of deaths, illness, or injury in the affected population;  
31       (2) a large number of serious or long-term impairments in the  
32       affected population; or (3) exposure to a biological agent or  
33       chemical that poses a significant risk of substantial future harm to a  
34       large number of people in the affected population, and

35       c. has been declared a public health emergency by the Governor  
36       pursuant to the “Emergency Health Powers Act,” P.L.2005, c.222  
37       (C.26:13-1 et seq.)

38  
39      2. a. The department shall, at all times, provide funding to  
40      support operations of at least two agencies in each populous county  
41      to help manage and implement the program within such a populous  
42      county.

43       b. (1) The commissioner shall require that an agency remain  
44       open and available in order to serve New Jersey residents  
45       throughout the duration of a public health emergency.

46       (2) To the extent permitted by federal law, the funding provided  
47       to initially establish an additional agency within a populous county  
48       pursuant to subsection a. of this section, shall be paid by the

1 department from the monies received by the State under the federal  
2 “Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act,” Pub.L.116-  
3 136, or any other financial assistance provided by the federal  
4 government to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. If  
5 federal funding is not available to satisfy the full amount of  
6 establishing a second additional agency within a populous county,  
7 then the commissioner may notify the State Treasurer and the Joint  
8 Budget Oversight Committee of the Legislature of the deficiency  
9 and may request that the Legislature appropriate a portion of the  
10 remainder from the General Fund, or other available State funding  
11 sources, for the purposes of the program.

12  
13 3. The commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations in  
14 accordance with the “Administrative Procedures Act,” P.L.1968,  
15 c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) to effectuate the provisions of  
16 P.L. , c. (C. ) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

17  
18 4. This act shall take effect immediately.  
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20

#### 21 STATEMENT

22  
23 This bill requires that at least two Homelessness Prevention  
24 Program (HPP) agencies operate in certain populous counties and  
25 that all HPP agencies remain open during public health  
26 emergencies. Under the bill, “populous county” means any county  
27 with a population of 400,000 or more, according to the most recent  
28 federal decennial census.

29 The bill specifically requires the Department of Community  
30 Affairs to provide funding to ensure that at least two agencies are  
31 established in populous counties to help manage and implement the  
32 HPP within that populous county.

33 Under the bill, to the extent permitted by federal law, the funding  
34 provided to an additional agency within a populous county are to be  
35 paid from the monies received by the State under the federal  
36 “Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act,” Pub.L.116-  
37 136, or any other financial assistance provided by the federal  
38 government to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. If  
39 federal funding is not available to satisfy the full amount of  
40 establishing a second agency within a populous county, then the  
41 Commissioner of Community Affairs is permitted notify the State  
42 Treasurer and the Joint Budget Oversight Committee of the  
43 Legislature of the deficiency and to request that the Legislature  
44 appropriate a portion of the remainder from the General Fund, or  
45 other available State funding sources.