

ASSEMBLY, No. 3211

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 7, 2022

Sponsored by:

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District 29 (Essex)

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District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywomen Reynolds-Jackson, Eulner, Piperno and Carter

SYNOPSIS

Establishes “New Jersey Feminine Hygiene Products for the Homeless Act.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/9/2022)

1 AN ACT concerning feminine hygiene products and emergency
2 shelters for the homeless and supplementing P.L.1985, c.48
3 (C.55:13C-1 et seq.).
4

5 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
6 of New Jersey:
7

8 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “New Jersey
9 Feminine Hygiene Products for the Homeless Act.”
10

11 2. The Legislature finds and declares that:

12 a. Period inequity is a chronic problem due to the fact that the
13 cost of feminine hygiene products, including sales tax, is the same
14 for women of all socioeconomic groups;

15 b. This unfortunately leads to hardships and disparities relative
16 to feminine hygiene and women’s health in under-served
17 communities, including for people with disabilities, minorities, and
18 people experiencing homelessness;

19 c. Women typically have their menstrual cycles every 28 days
20 starting in their pre-teen years and lasting through menopause,
21 which means they need to buy feminine hygiene products every
22 month of the year over the span of several decades;

23 d. The average menstrual cycle can last from between five to
24 seven days, often requiring the purchase of multiple packages of
25 feminine hygiene products for one cycle;

26 e. The combination of these factors can lead to astronomical,
27 recurring costs for women in their menstruating years;

28 f. New Jersey has exempted feminine hygiene products, such
29 as sanitary napkins and tampons, from the tax imposed under the
30 Sales and Use Tax Act. In doing so, the State has recognized that it
31 is financially burdensome for women to continue to purchase these
32 products;

33 g. Many women and girls within New Jersey find themselves in
34 need of temporary housing assistance within emergency shelters for
35 the homeless; and the Department of Community Affairs, in
36 conjunction with the Departments of Human Services and Health,
37 has recognized this growing need by creating the Homelessness
38 Prevention Program and the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid
39 Re-Housing Program;

40 h. Women and girls who find themselves homeless still need
41 feminine hygiene and sanitation products to the same extent as all
42 other women;

43 i. Women and girls experiencing homelessness should not be
44 burdened with the costs of feminine hygiene products while already
45 experiencing financial and economic hardships resulting in them
46 being unable to afford basic shelter; and

47 j. It is therefore necessary and important to create this “New
48 Jersey Feminine Hygiene Products for the Homeless Act” to combat

1 period inequity and assist women and girls residing in emergency
2 shelters for the homeless.

3
4 3. Each emergency shelter for the homeless that serves female
5 residents shall, subject to the availability of funds in the shelter's
6 general budget, make feminine hygiene products, including, but not
7 limited to, sanitary napkins, tampons, and panty liners, available
8 free of charge to females residing in the emergency shelter for the
9 homeless. A homeless shelter's obligation to satisfy the
10 requirement of this section is contingent upon the availability of
11 additional funds in the homeless shelter's budget that would permit
12 the homeless shelter to both purchase feminine hygiene products as
13 required by this section and continue its normal course of
14 operations.

15
16 4. The Department of Community Affairs shall adopt rules and
17 regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"
18 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), necessary to implement the
19 provisions of this act.

20
21 5. This act shall take effect on the 30th day following
22 enactment.

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25 STATEMENT

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27 This act, which is designated as the "New Jersey Feminine
28 Hygiene Products for the Homeless Act," provides that emergency
29 shelters for the homeless that provide services to female residents
30 will be required, within the limits of available funds, to make
31 feminine hygiene products, including, but not limited to, sanitary
32 napkins, tampons, and panty liners, available free of charge to
33 females residing in the shelter. It is the sponsor's intent that women
34 and girls who are homeless not be burdened with the costs of
35 feminine hygiene products while already experiencing financial and
36 economic hardships.