

# SENATE, No. 545

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2022 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**Senator NELLIE POU**

**District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires DOC to provide prenatal and post-partum education and services for certain inmates.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 AN ACT concerning education and services for certain pregnant  
2 inmates and supplementing Title 30 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. a. Every female inmate 60 years of age and under shall be  
8 tested for pregnancy upon entering a State correctional facility. Upon  
9 confirmation of pregnancy, the Commissioner of Corrections shall  
10 provide the appropriate prenatal and post-partum services for each  
11 pregnant inmate, including but not limited to the following:

12 (1) prenatal education;

13 (2) prenatal medical evaluation and care;

14 (3) nutritional counseling and supplements as prescribed by a  
15 physician;

16 (4) counseling regarding family planning, birth control, test  
17 results, termination of pregnancy, child placement services, and  
18 religious counseling, if desired by the inmate; and

19 (5) appropriate post-partum education and care.

20 b. A pregnant inmate electing to carry the pregnancy to term  
21 shall be provided ongoing prenatal care and support including  
22 obstetrical services, suitable maternity clothes, reasonable housing  
23 assignments, and appropriate exercise and reduced work schedules,  
24 as deemed medically advisable by the treating physician.

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26 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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#### STATEMENT

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31 This bill requires the Commissioner of Corrections to provide  
32 appropriate prenatal and post-partum services to expectant mothers.

33 Nationwide women represent a small minority of the correction  
34 population; however, at any given time, approximately six to 10  
35 percent of incarcerated women are pregnant (American College of  
36 Obstetricians and Gynecologists, 2011). Many women first learn of  
37 their pregnancy upon entry to a correctional facility. At the time of  
38 their arrest and incarceration, many of these expectant mothers lack  
39 prenatal care and need considerable support to improve the clinical  
40 outcomes of their pregnancy. Incarcerated women tend to have  
41 complicated and high-risk pregnancies due to increased rates of  
42 substance use disorders and psychological distress.

43 This bill provides that incarcerated expectant mothers are required  
44 to receive prenatal education; prenatal medical evaluation and care;  
45 nutritional counseling and supplements; counseling regarding family  
46 planning, birth control, test results, termination of pregnancy, child  
47 placement services, and religious counseling, if desired; and post-  
48 partum education and care.