

SENATE, No. 3760

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 8, 2023

Sponsored by:
Senator JOSEPH P. CRYAN
District 20 (Union)

SYNOPSIS

Authorizes State employees to take administrative leave days in observance of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha; requires school districts to permit students excused absences for observance of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, amending
2 N.J.S.11A:6-6, and supplementing chapter 36 of Title 18A of the
3 New Jersey Statutes.

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

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8 1. N.J.S.11A:6-6 is amended to read as follows:

9 11A:6-6. State administrative leave. Administrative leave for
10 personal reasons including religious observances for full-time State
11 employees or those employees of Rutgers, The State University,
12 New Jersey Institute of Technology, Rowan University, Montclair
13 State University, and Kean University who perform services similar
14 to those performed by employees of the New Jersey State colleges
15 who are in the career service shall be three working days per
16 calendar year. Administrative leave shall not be cumulative and any
17 administrative leave unused by an employee at the end of any year
18 shall be cancelled. One additional day of administrative leave per
19 calendar year shall be granted to an employee pursuant to this
20 section if that employee is absent from work in observance of Eid
21 al-Fitr. One additional day of administrative leave per calendar year
22 shall be granted to an employee pursuant to this section if that
23 employee is absent from work in observance of or Eid al-Adha.
24 (cf: P.L.2021, c.282, s.34)

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26 2. (New section) a. Any student of a public school who is absent
27 from school on the day designated and known as Eid al-Fitr or the
28 day designated and known as Eid al-Adha, due to the observance of
29 those religious holidays, shall have the absence for those reasons
30 recorded as an excused absence.

31 b. In accordance with N.J.S.18A:36-15, a student absence
32 because of the observance of Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha shall be
33 recorded as an excused absence on the student's attendance record
34 or on that of any group or class of which the student is a member.
35 Any transcript or application or employment form or any similar
36 form on which information concerning a pupil's attendance record
37 is requested shall show, with respect to school absences, only
38 absences other than absences excused because of the observance of
39 Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, or of any other religious holidays or
40 because of any other reasons provided by law.

41 c. In accordance with N.J.S.18A:36-14, a student who is absent
42 from school due to the observance of Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha
43 shall not by reason of such absence be deprived of any award or of
44 eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award, or of the right
45 to take an alternate test or examination, for any which the student
46 missed by reason of such absence, if a written excuse signed by a

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.

1 parent or guardian of the student be presented to the proper school
2 authority.

3 d. The rules relative to absences for religious holidays
4 prescribed by the Commissioner of Education and approved by the
5 State Board of Education pursuant to N.J.S.18A:36-16 shall ensure
6 that absence from school due to the observance of Eid al-Fitr or Eid
7 al-Adha is an excused absence. The list of holidays on which it
8 shall be mandatory to excuse a student, prescribed by the
9 commissioner with the approval of the State board pursuant to
10 N.J.S.18A:36-16, shall include Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

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12 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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15 STATEMENT

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17 This bill provides that full-time State employees would be able
18 to be absent from work for the purposes of observing Eid al-Fitr and
19 Eid al-Adha, without that absence counting toward their
20 administrative leave allotment. The bill also explicitly requires that
21 a student's absence from school due to the observance of Eid al-Fitr
22 or Eid al-Adha will be an excused absence for the purposes of
23 recording attendance.

24 Muslims celebrate two main holidays every lunar year, Eid al-
25 Fitr and Eid al-Adha. Eid al-Fitr, which means "festival of the
26 breaking of the fast," is celebrated first at the conclusion of the
27 Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Muslims in the United States
28 observe this month of sacrifice and contemplation by fasting,
29 reading the Holy Quran, and participating in charity work, worship,
30 and emphasizing self-discipline. Eid al-Adha, the "feast of the
31 sacrifice," is celebrated two months later and commemorates
32 Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son Isaac. Eid al-Adha is the
33 more sacred of the two Eids, and often coincides with the
34 completion of the Hajj pilgrimage, an annual Islamic pilgrimage in
35 the sacred city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

36 Under the bill, one additional day of administrative leave per
37 calendar year would be granted to an employee if that employee is
38 absent from work in observance of Eid al-Fitr. Similarly, one
39 additional day of administrative leave per calendar year would be
40 granted to an employee if that employee is absent from work in
41 observance of or Eid al-Adha.

42 This bill would require a school district to record an excused
43 absence for a student who is absent from school due to the
44 observance of Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-Adha. The bill also provides that
45 a student absence because of the observance of Eid al-Fitr or Eid al-
46 Adha would not be included on any transcript or application or
47 employment form or any similar form on which information
48 concerning a pupil's attendance record is requested. Further, if the

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1 student presents a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian, the
2 bill provides that a student absent from school because of the
3 observance of the two holidays would: (1) not be deprived of any
4 award or eligibility or opportunity to compete for any award due to
5 the absence; and (2) would be given the opportunity to take an
6 alternate test or examination if they miss a test or examination due
7 to the absence from school.