

ASSEMBLY, No. 4578

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 13, 2024

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ALEXANDER "AVI" SCHNALL

District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)

SYNOPSIS

Requires DOH to prepare comprehensive plan to invest in State's public health system.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning the State's public health system.

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3 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
4 of New Jersey:

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6 1. a. Within 18 months of the effective date of this act, the
7 Department of Health shall submit to the Governor and the
8 Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-
9 19.1), a proposal for a comprehensive plan to invest in the State's
10 public health system. The plan shall outline:

11 (1) a summary of existing policies, as well as recommendations
12 for new initiatives, which strengthen public health infrastructure,
13 develop a robust public health workforce, address health equity, and
14 improve public health messaging and trust;

15 (2) clear objectives, actionable steps, and timelines for each
16 recommendation; and

17 (3) identify responsible agencies or entities for the
18 implementation of each recommendation.

19 b. The plan, at a minimum, shall include recommendations for
20 increasing funding, from any applicable source, for existing and
21 new initiatives regarding the following:

22 (1) health care access, culturally specific health programs, and
23 modern information technology systems;

24 (2) building a diverse and resilient healthcare and human
25 services workforce, including the provision of incentives, targeted
26 workforce development programs for displaced workers, and
27 support for targeted improvements;

28 (3) collaborations between State agencies and institutions of
29 higher education that expand relevant educational programs and
30 create stronger pathways into healthcare related degree programs;

31 (4) public school programs that expose students to and foster
32 early interest in healthcare careers;

33 (5) the development and education of teachers and trainers to
34 ensure high quality instruction in healthcare related degree
35 programs;

36 (6) the establishment of clear career ladders in public health
37 roles to provide workers with advancement opportunities and
38 incentives for professional development;

39 (7) training programs, competitive wages, and adequate support
40 for homecare workers that address the critical shortage of caregivers
41 in the State;

42 (8) improved recruitment and deployment of healthcare workers
43 under the licensing and credentialing system, including expanding
44 the scope of practice for each credential type, allowing workers to
45 perform a broader set of responsibilities, and increasing workforce
46 flexibility;

- 1 (9) the expansion of opportunities for interstate collaboration to
2 allow for more flexible and responsive deployment of healthcare
3 professionals during emergencies;
- 4 (10) the development and implementation of policies in direct
5 consultation with affected communities to ensure that interventions
6 are culturally sensitive and appropriate;
- 7 (11) funding strategies for long-term care facilities and home
8 health services that will provide both high quality care and expand
9 capacity to meet the increasing demand for services;
- 10 (12) transparency, accuracy, and empathy in public health
11 messaging strategies; and
- 12 (13) engagement with community leaders to assist in the
13 dissemination of public health messages in a way that is accessible
14 to and resonates with diverse communities.
- 15 c. The department shall develop the plan required pursuant to
16 this section with input from health partners across the State,
17 including local health departments, healthcare providers,
18 community organizations, and academia.

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20 2. This act shall take effect immediately, and shall expire upon
21 the submission of the plan required pursuant to section 1 of this act.
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24 STATEMENT

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26 This bill requires the Department of Health, within 18 months of
27 the effective date of the bill, to submit to the Governor and the
28 Legislature a proposal for a comprehensive plan to invest in the
29 State's public health system. The plan shall outline: a summary of
30 existing policies, as well as recommendations for new initiatives,
31 which strengthen public health infrastructure, develop a robust
32 public health workforce, address health equity, and improve public
33 health messaging and trust; clear objectives, actionable steps, and
34 timelines for each recommendation; and identify responsible
35 agencies or entities for the implementation of each
36 recommendation. The plan is required to be developed with input
37 from health partners across the State, including local health
38 departments, healthcare providers, community organizations, and
39 academia.