

[First Reprint]

**SENATE, No. 3562**

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# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

## **221st LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

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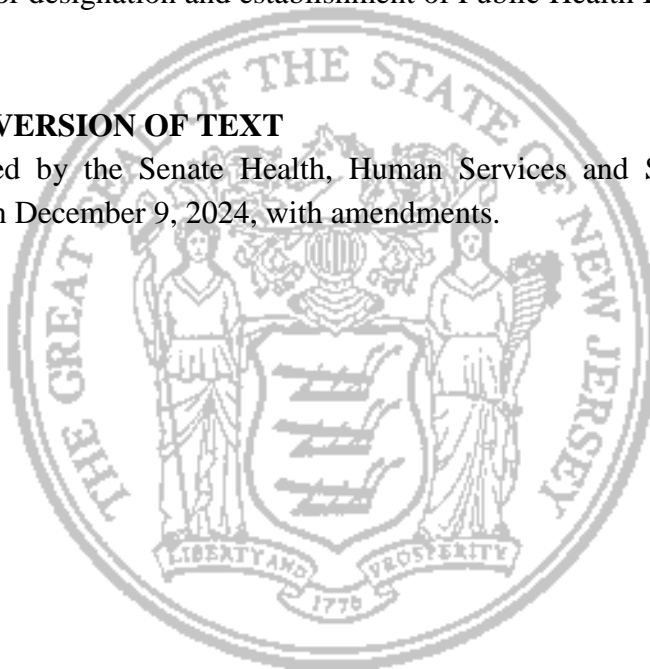
**Senator McKnight**

**SYNOPSIS**

Provides for designation and establishment of Public Health Institute in New Jersey.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As reported by the Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee on December 9, 2024, with amendments.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 3/24/2025)**

1 AN ACT concerning public health and supplementing Title 26 of the  
2 Revised Statutes.

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

6  
7 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

8 a. For over 25 years, New Jersey’s public health leaders have  
9 pursued interest in establishing a public health institute dedicated to  
10 promoting health, well-being, and quality of life for people  
11 throughout New Jersey.

12 b. Public health institutes are typically independent, nonprofit  
13 organizations that collaborate with public and private sector  
14 stakeholders, philanthropists, charitable organizations, and other  
15 agencies to foster public health solutions and systematically  
16 improve the way health agencies and organizations respond to  
17 public health threats and inequities.

18 c. Across the United States, there are currently over 40  
19 designated public health institutes working in partnership with State  
20 and local departments of health to enhance cross-sector initiatives  
21 and bridge gaps between health care and community services.

22 d. These existing public health institutes help states leverage and  
23 diversify the personnel, infrastructure and resources needed to  
24 accelerate solutions to various forms of public health threats  
25 including, but not limited to, communicable disease outbreaks,  
26 chronic and sexually transmitted diseases, substance use epidemics,  
27 issues related to food access and security, and systemic racial  
28 inequities affecting health care.

29 e. The COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the need for a public  
30 health institute in New Jersey that can work with public and private  
31 health care officials and providers to ensure a coordinated, resilient,  
32 equitable response to any public health emergency or state of  
33 emergency.

34 f. In 2022, the Nicholson Foundation and Robert Wood Johnson  
35 Foundation collaborated with a wide range of stakeholders from  
36 public health, healthcare, social services, and community  
37 organizations, and issued a report entitled, “Seizing the Moment:  
38 How a Public Health Institute Would Advance Health Equity in  
39 New Jersey.”

40 g. The report observed that New Jersey’s public health  
41 infrastructure and system has been strained for several decades due  
42 to a lack of funding and insufficient coordination across health and  
43 related sectors, and further noted that the impact of social and  
44 economic determinants of health have caused health inequities  
45 along racial, ethnic, income, and other fault lines

**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.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

<sup>1</sup>Senate SHH committee amendments adopted December 9, 2024.

h. The report recommended the establishment of a public health institute in New Jersey <sup>1</sup> **that can support** centered around<sup>1</sup> efforts to address the root causes of health disparities and inequities.<sup>1</sup> create a more stable, robust, public health infrastructure <sup>1</sup> that systemically advances health equity and quality of life for all<sup>1</sup> , and provide timely and nimble administrative and operational support to New Jersey's public health agencies.

i. In order to support and sustain a relationship between State government and a public health institute, it is necessary to establish a framework by which the New Jersey Department of Health may engage in a public-private partnership with an organization that can serve as the State's "Public Health Institute."

j. The Public Health Institute will actively promote collaborative and community-driven partnerships designed to improve public health systems and services throughout the State.

k. The primary role of the Public Health Institute will be to collaborate with State departments and agencies, as well as private sector health care, academic, philanthropic, business and faith communities, <sup>1</sup> and New Jersey's Regional Health Hubs,<sup>1</sup> to coordinate and implement strategies in areas of policymaking, research and innovation, data collection, workforce development, and community-based interventions and services, to improve the overall state of public health in New Jersey, with a particular focus on eliminating racial disparities and inequities in public health.

2. As used in this act:

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Health.

"Department" means the Department of Health

"Public Health Institute" means an entity designated by the Department of Health as the State's Public Health Institute pursuant to section 3 of P.L. , c. (C. ) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

3. a. The Commissioner of Health shall designate <sup>1</sup> **one or more** <sup>1</sup> a<sup>1</sup> nonprofit <sup>1</sup> **entities** <sup>1</sup> entity<sup>1</sup> to serve as the Public Health Institute pursuant to criteria established by the commissioner in accordance with this act.

b. The purpose and objective of the Public Health Institute shall be to:

(1) coordinate among national, State, and local agencies <sup>1</sup> **as well as** <sup>1</sup> including, but not limited to, local and county health departments, Regional Health Hubs designated pursuant to P.L. 2019, c.517 (C.30:4D-8.16 et seq.), licensed health care facilities, public health-related advocacy and membership organizations, and<sup>1</sup> private organizations, for the purposes of promoting equitable public health services in New Jersey;

1 (2) provide timely and nimble administrative, operational and  
2 fiscal support to public and private health agencies, community-  
3 based organizations, and other strategic partners;

4 (3) develop and implement projects, programs, initiatives, or  
5 services designed to improve public health outcomes, address racial  
6 disparities in public health <sup>1</sup>including the underlying systemic root  
7 causes of health disparities and inequities<sup>1</sup>, and bridge gaps  
8 between public and private sector health care and community  
9 services;

10 (4) promote, support, and fund programs related to workforce  
11 development, education, applied research, policy development, and  
12 other initiatives that advance the purposes of the Public Health  
13 Institute;

14 (5) enter into contracts for the purchase of medical  
15 countermeasures, supplies or therapeutics, or other products or  
16 service agreements as may be necessary to aid the department in  
17 advancing or protecting the public health; and

18 (6) engage in charitable programs dedicated to the purposes and  
19 objectives of the Public Health Institute.

20 c. The commissioner shall establish criteria that an entity must  
21 satisfy to be designated as a Public Health Institute, which criteria  
22 shall include, at a minimum, the following:

23 (1) be a nonprofit organization located in New Jersey which is  
24 exempt from federal taxation pursuant to Section 501(c)(3) of the  
25 federal Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. s.501(c)(3));

26 (2) be recognized by the National Network of Public Health  
27 Institutes or <sup>1</sup>**【another membership or】** any successor<sup>1</sup> accreditation  
28 body for public health institutes;

29 (3) possess the capacity to integrate and coordinate public health  
30 functions on a local, county, and Statewide level;

31 (4) maintain a network of personnel with expertise in the areas  
32 of health care data collection and analysis, health care policy, health  
33 care information systems, and public health research; and

34 (5) any other criteria established by the commissioner.

35 d. An entity designated as the Public Health Institute pursuant to  
36 subsection a. of this section shall enter into an agreement with the  
37 department requiring the entity to:

38 (1) comply with all applicable laws and regulations necessary to  
39 qualify for and maintain its nonprofit status, including, but not  
40 limited to, the “New Jersey Nonprofit Corporation Act,”  
41 N.J.S.15A:1-1 et seq., and section 501(c) of the federal Internal  
42 Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. s.501(c));

43 (2) regularly consult with and give due consideration to the  
44 input and recommendations of the <sup>1</sup>**【department】** Department of  
45 Health and local health departments<sup>1</sup> in carrying out its duties under  
46 this act;

1 (3) develop and submit to the department an operational plan  
2 that includes a mission statement that supports, complements, and  
3 supplements the missions of the department;

4 (4) submit to the department an initial startup plan of certain  
5 issues, projects and action items the Public Health Institute shall  
6 pursue in the first three years of its designation;

7 (5) submit periodic planning documents and progress reports to  
8 the department at such intervals as may be determined by the  
9 commissioner;

10 (6) provide information, assistance, and services as may be  
11 required by the department in order to design, plan, implement or  
12 coordinate any projects, programs, initiatives, or services that  
13 advance the mutual purposes of the department and the Public  
14 Health Institute;

15 (7) report any data collected or maintained by the Public Health  
16 Institute to the department, including data related to public health  
17 projects, programs, initiatives or services, and any other  
18 information that may advance the mutual purposes of the  
19 department and the Public Health Institute, provided that such data  
20 is submitted to the department in a manner consistent with any  
21 applicable State and federal law, rule, regulation, or agreement; and

22 (8) comply with any other requirements as may be determined  
23 by the commissioner.

24 e. The commissioner may, as a condition of a nonprofit entity  
25 maintaining its designation as the Public Health Institute, require  
26 such nonprofit entity to perform such additional tasks or satisfy  
27 additional requirements on a continuing basis.

28 f. The commissioner may <sup>1</sup>["], at any time,<sup>1</sup> rescind <sup>1</sup>["a] the  
29 commissioner's<sup>1</sup> designation of <sup>1</sup>the<sup>1</sup> Public Health Institute <sup>1</sup>["for  
30 any reason"] in accordance with the terms of agreement entered into  
31 pursuant to subsection d. of this section<sup>1</sup>.

32

33 4. There is created in the Department of Health a special, non-  
34 lapsing fund to be known as the Public Health Institute Fund. There  
35 shall be deposited into the fund the amounts made available for the  
36 purposes of the fund and monetary donations or grants that may be  
37 received from any source for the purposes of the fund and any  
38 interest earned thereon. Monies deposited in the fund shall be  
39 dedicated for the support and funding of the establishment and  
40 maintenance of the Public Health Institute and any projects,  
41 programs, initiatives, or services of the Public Health Institute.

42

43 5. The Commissioner of Health may adopt rules and  
44 regulations, pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"  
45 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), as may be necessary to  
46 implement the provisions of this act.

47

48 6. This act shall take effect immediately.