

SENATE, No. 3785

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 10, 2024

Sponsored by:

Senator ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT

District 31 (Hudson)

Senator BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE

District 34 (Essex)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senator McKeon

SYNOPSIS

Creates Office of Nonprofit Ombudsperson in Department of Treasury; appropriates \$329,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/20/2025)

S3785 MCKNIGHT, TIMBERLAKE

2

1 AN ACT creating the Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson in the
2 Department of the Treasury, supplementing Title 52 of the
3 Revised Statutes, amending P.L.2011, c.73, and making an
4 appropriation.

5

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

8

9 1. (New section) As used in sections 2 and 3 of P.L. , c.
10 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill):

11 “Head of the agency” means and includes the individual or group
12 of individuals constituting the highest authority within any agency
13 authorized or required by law to render an adjudication in a
14 contested case, as defined in section 2 of the “Administrative
15 Procedure Act,” P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-2).

16 “Nonprofit information center portal” means the single
17 accessible location on the Department of State’s designated home
18 website to provide information for nonprofit organizations
19 regarding various resources available to assist them in their daily
20 operations, as established pursuant to P.L.2011, c.73 (C.52:16A-110
21 et seq.);

22 “Nonprofit Ombudsperson” means the person appointed by the
23 Governor pursuant to section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
24 before the Legislature as this bill).

25 “Nonprofit organization” means an entity that is exempt from
26 federal income taxation under paragraph (3) of subsection (c) of
27 section 501 of the federal Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26
28 U.S.C. s.501).

29 “State agency” or “agency” means and includes each of the
30 principal departments in the executive branch of the State
31 Government, and all boards, divisions, commissions, agencies,
32 departments, councils, authorities, offices or officers within any
33 such departments now existing or hereafter established and
34 authorized by statute to make, adopt, or promulgate rules or
35 adjudicate contested cases, except the office of the Governor, as
36 defined in section 2 of the “Administrative Procedure Act,”
37 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-2).

38

39 2. (New section) a. There is established in but not of the
40 Department of the Treasury the Office of the Nonprofit
41 Ombudsperson. The purpose of the ombudsperson is to provide
42 information and assistance to, and act as an advocate for, nonprofit
43 organizations interacting with State agencies. For the purpose of
44 complying with Article V, Section IV, paragraph 1 of the New
45 Jersey Constitution, the Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson is
46 hereby allocated within the Department of the Treasury, but

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 notwithstanding its allocation, the office shall be independent of
2 any supervision or control by the Department of the Treasury or any
3 board or officer thereof, or any other cabinet-level department,
4 board, or officer thereof.

5 b. The Governor shall appoint a Nonprofit Ombudsperson, who
6 shall be qualified by training and experience to perform the duties
7 of the office. The ombudsperson shall be a person of recognized
8 judgment, integrity, and objectivity, and shall be skilled in
9 communications, conflict resolution, and professionalism. The
10 ombudsperson shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

11 c. The ombudsperson shall organize and direct the work of the
12 office, including creating and maintaining a website, and the work
13 of such professional and clerical staff as may be necessary to carry
14 out the ombudsperson's duties.

15

16 3. (New section) The ombudsperson shall be responsible for
17 the following duties:

18 a. participating in, monitoring, and reporting on the
19 participating State agencies' compliance with the nonprofit
20 information center portal established in the Department of State
21 pursuant to P.L.2011, c.73 (C.52:16A-110 et seq.) that provides
22 information accessible on the internet for nonprofit organizations
23 regarding various resources available to assist them in their daily
24 operations;

25 b. communicating and consulting regularly with nonprofit
26 organizations, and associations representing nonprofit
27 organizations, that operate in the State, which consultations shall
28 include, but not be limited to, conducting public meetings with
29 these organizations and associations no less than once every six
30 months;

31 c. providing technical assistance to nonprofit organizations to
32 assist them in complying with the regulations of State agencies;

33 d. investigating complaints from nonprofit organizations
34 regarding State agencies, and assisting these nonprofit organizations
35 in seeking a resolution;

36 e. reporting nonprofit organizations' concerns and
37 recommendations to the heads of the agencies; and

38 f. developing and sharing innovative procurement and
39 contracting practices to increase opportunities for nonprofit
40 organizations.

41

42 4. Section 1 of P.L.2011, c.73 (C.52:16A-110) is amended to
43 read as follows:

44 1. a. The Department of State shall maintain in a single
45 accessible location on its designated home website information for
46 nonprofit organizations on the internet regarding various resources
47 available to assist them in their daily operations. The information
48 featured shall be updated at least monthly and include, but not be

S3785 MCKNIGHT, TIMBERLAKE

4

1 limited to, information regarding: (1) available funding sources
2 offered by the Department of State; (2) relevant eligibility criteria
3 applicable to such funding; (3) incorporation and, to the extent
4 applicable, board development; (4) volunteer opportunities
5 available with or through the Department of State; (5) links to the
6 website pages of various departments and State agencies that
7 contain the information that such entities must maintain in
8 accordance with this section; **[and]** (6) a link to the website of the
9 Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson established pursuant to
10 section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature
11 as this bill); and (7) any other information the Secretary of State
12 deems necessary. The website shall be accessible from the
13 Department of State’s designated home webpage.

14 b. Each State department or agency that provides resources to
15 nonprofit organizations shall maintain in a single accessible
16 location on its designated home website information regarding
17 various resources available from or through that department or
18 agency to assist those nonprofit organizations in their daily
19 operations. The information featured shall be updated at least
20 monthly and include, but not be limited to, information regarding:
21 (1) available funding sources offered by the department or agency;
22 (2) relevant eligibility criteria applicable to such funding; (3)
23 volunteer opportunities available with or through the department or
24 agency; and (4) any other information the Secretary of State deems
25 necessary. The website shall be accessible from the designated
26 home website of each such department or agency.

27 c. The Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson, established
28 pursuant to section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the
29 Legislature as this bill), shall monitor and report on compliance
30 with the provisions of P.L.2011, c.73 (C.52:16A-110 et seq.). The
31 Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson shall submit an annual
32 report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2
33 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1) detailing the activities and
34 compliance issues of State agencies with respect to the requirements
35 of P.L.2011, c.73 (C.52:16A-110 et seq.).

36 (cf: P.L.2011, c.73, s.1)

37

38 5. There is appropriated the sum of \$329,000 from the General
39 Fund to the Department of the Treasury to support the costs of
40 establishing and operating the Office of the Nonprofit
41 Ombudsperson established pursuant to P.L. ,c. (C.)
42 (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

43

44 6. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46

This bill creates the Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson in but not of the Department of the Treasury. The purpose of the ombudsperson is to provide information and assistance to, and act as an advocate for, nonprofit organizations interacting with State agencies. The office will be independent of any supervision or control by the Department of the Treasury or any board or officer thereof, or any other cabinet-level department, board, or officer thereof.

Under the bill, the Governor will appoint a Nonprofit Ombudsperson, who is qualified by training and experience to perform the duties of the office, and be a person of recognized judgment, integrity, and objectivity who is skilled in communication, conflict resolution, and professionalism. The ombudsperson will organize and direct the work of the office, including creating and maintaining a website, and serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

The ombudsperson will: 1) participate in, monitor, and report on the participating State agencies' compliance with the nonprofit information center portal established in the Department of State that provides information accessible on the internet for nonprofit organizations regarding various resources available to assist them in their daily operations; 2) communicate and consult regularly with nonprofit organizations operating in the State and associations representing these nonprofit organizations; 3) provide technical assistance to nonprofit organizations to assist in compliance with the regulations of State agencies; 4) investigate complaints from nonprofit organizations about State agencies, and assist these nonprofit organizations in seeking a resolution; 5) report nonprofit organizations' concerns and recommendations to the heads of the various State agencies; and 6) develop and share innovative procurement and contracting practices to increase opportunities for nonprofit organizations.

The bill also amends the law that created the nonprofit information center portal in the Department of State to provide information accessible on the internet for nonprofit organizations. The bill requires the Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson to participate in the nonprofit information center portal and monitor the designated home website of each department and agency participating in the nonprofit information center portal.

The bill requires the Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson to submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature detailing the activities and compliance issues of State agencies with respect to the requirements of the law establishing the nonprofit information center portal.

S3785 MCKNIGHT, TIMBERLAKE

6

1 Finally, the bill appropriates \$329,000 from the General Fund to
2 the Department of the Treasury to support the costs of establishing
3 and operating the Office of the Nonprofit Ombudsperson.