

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
ASSEMBLY, No. 1730

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
222nd LEGISLATURE

ADOPTED OCTOBER 15, 2026

Sponsored by:

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District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)

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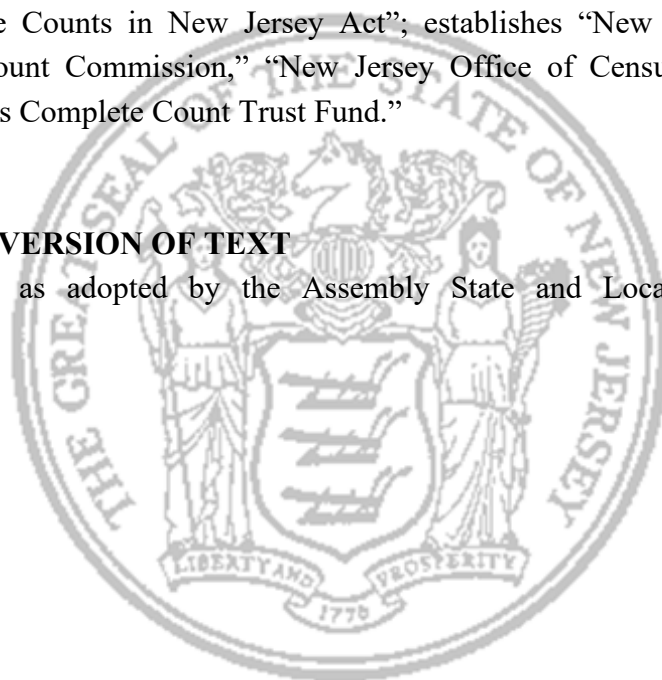
**Assemblyman Sampson, Assemblywomen Morales, Brennan, Haider,
Park, Assemblyman E.Rodriguez, Assemblywomen Donlon, Peterpaul,
Assemblyman Karabinchak and Assemblywoman Drulis**

SYNOPSIS

“Everyone Counts in New Jersey Act”; establishes “New Jersey Census Complete Count Commission,” “New Jersey Office of Census,” and “New Jersey Census Complete Count Trust Fund.”

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Substitute as adopted by the Assembly State and Local Government Committee.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/19/2026)

1 AN ACT establishing the “Everyone Counts in New Jersey Act” for
 2 the purpose of ensuring a complete and accurate count of the
 3 State’s population each federal decennial census and
 4 supplementing chapter 4 of Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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

8
 9 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the “Everyone
 10 Counts in New Jersey Act.”

11
 12 2. a. Within 60 days after the effective date of
 13 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), and
 14 not later than April 1 of the fourth year preceding the conduct of
 15 each federal decennial census thereafter, there shall be created in,
 16 but not of, the Department of State, the “New Jersey Complete
 17 Count Commission.”

18 b. The commission shall consist of 29 members as follows:

- 19 (1) the President of the Senate, or a designee;
- 20 (2) the Speaker of the General Assembly, or a designee;
- 21 (3) the Minority Leader of the Senate, or a designee;
- 22 (4) the Minority Leader of the General Assembly, or a designee;
- 23 (5) two members of the New Jersey Legislative Latino Caucus,
 24 one of whom shall be a member of the Senate and one of whom
 25 shall be a member of the General Assembly, to be appointed by the
 26 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly,
 27 respectively, at the recommendation of the caucus chairperson;
- 28 (6) two members of the New Jersey Legislative Black Caucus,
 29 one of whom shall be a member of the Senate and one of whom
 30 shall be a member of the General Assembly, to be appointed by the
 31 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General Assembly,
 32 respectively, at the recommendation of the caucus chairperson;
- 33 (7) two members of the New Jersey Legislative Asian-American
 34 and Pacific Islander Caucus, one of whom shall be a member of the
 35 Senate and one of whom shall be a member of the General
 36 Assembly, to be appointed by the President of the Senate and the
 37 Speaker of the General Assembly, respectively, at the
 38 recommendation of the caucus chairperson;
- 39 (8) the Governor, or a designee;
- 40 (9) the Secretary of State, or a designee;
- 41 (10) the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and
 42 Workforce Development, or a designee;
- 43 (11) three individuals representing municipalities in this State,
 44 reflecting the geographic diversity of the State, appointed by the
 45 Secretary of State;
- 46 (12) four individuals representing counties in this State,
 47 reflecting the geographic diversity of the State, appointed by the
 48 Governor;

1 (13) four representatives from different organizations
2 representing the interests of communities of color in the State,
3 appointed by the Secretary of State;

4 (14) three representatives from different organizations
5 representing the interests of businesses in the State, including one
6 organization representing minority business interests, appointed by
7 the Governor; and

8 (15) two individuals representing community-based,
9 philanthropic, non-profit, educational, civic, and faith-based
10 organizations, appointed by the Secretary of State.

11 c. No more than 16 of the members appointed to the
12 commission shall be of the same political party, as determined by
13 the member's political party affiliation during the one year
14 preceding the member's appointment to the commission.

15 d. All appointments to the commission shall be made within 90
16 days after the day on which the commission is established for the
17 next federal decennial census. Vacancies in the membership of the
18 commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original
19 appointments were made. Members of the commission shall serve
20 without compensation but shall be entitled to reimbursement for any
21 actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their
22 duties, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made
23 available to the commission for its purposes.

24
25 3. a. The commission shall organize within 30 days after the
26 appointment of its members. The Secretary of State shall serve as
27 chairperson of the commission. The commission shall select a vice
28 chairperson from among its members. The commission may also
29 appoint a secretary, a director, and an assistant director, who need
30 not be a member of the commission. The director and assistant
31 director may be compensated from funds made available to the
32 commission for this purpose.

33 b. The commission shall meet at the call of the chairperson, or
34 upon the request of any 15 members of the commission, who shall
35 constitute a quorum.

36 c. To assist in carrying out its duties, the commission may
37 create and appoint subcommittees as it deems appropriate and shall
38 solicit participation from relevant experts and practitioners involved
39 in federal census issues.

40 d. Each commission shall expire on December 31 of the year in
41 which the federal decennial census occurs.

42
43 4. The commission shall coordinate with the New Jersey Office
44 of the Census, established pursuant to section 7 of
45 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), to
46 accomplish its obligations and objectives. The Department of State
47 shall provide the staff services necessary to support the functions of
48 the commission. The commission shall be entitled to call to its
49 assistance and avail itself of the services of the employees of any

1 other State department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it
2 may require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

3
4 5. a. The commission shall develop, recommend, and assist in
5 the administration of a census outreach strategy to encourage full
6 participation in the federal decennial census of population required
7 by section 141 of Title 13 of the United States Code. The census
8 outreach strategy shall be designed to ensure an accurate and
9 complete count of all persons in New Jersey.

10 b. The census outreach strategy shall include, but not be limited
11 to, the following:

12 (1) State agency initiatives to encourage participation in the
13 census of population;

14 (2) the establishment and support of school-based outreach
15 programs;

16 (3) partnerships with non-profit, community-based organizations;

17 (4) a multilingual and multicultural multi-media campaign, in
18 accordance with the provisions of P.L.2023, c.263 (C.52:14-40 et
19 seq.), which shall include information on the importance of
20 completing the next census survey and may be widely disseminated
21 throughout the State through print, audio, television, the Internet,
22 and social media;

23 (5) at least three public hearings, one in each of the northern,
24 central, and southern regions of the State, to receive testimony from
25 the public, elected officials, experts, and others on ways to ensure a
26 full census count of the population in this State for the next federal
27 decennial census; and

28 (6) a plan to ensure that hard-to-count and historically
29 undercounted populations, such as African Americans, Hispanics or
30 Latinos, Asian Americans, Middle Eastern and North African
31 persons, non-native English speakers, persons who are indigent,
32 persons who are homeless, college students, children under five
33 years of age, men between the ages of 18 and 49, the elderly,
34 persons displaced by natural disasters, persons who are
35 incarcerated, and members of the LGBTQ+ community are counted,
36 and that immigrant populations in this State understand the
37 confidentiality of the census survey and the importance of
38 completing the federal decennial census regardless of citizenship
39 status.

40 c. The outreach strategy shall be coordinated through the
41 Office of the Secretary of State, which shall provide administrative
42 support to the commission and coordinate with all State agencies
43 and constitutional officers, as well as units of local government, to
44 identify effective methods of outreach to New Jersey's population
45 and to provide resources to ensure that the outreach strategy is
46 successful and that all New Jersey residents are counted. All State
47 agencies shall provide the Office of the Secretary of State with the
48 information for that agency's designated census coordinator,
49 cooperate with the commission, and provide support to the
50 commission. For the purposes of this subsection, "State agencies"

1 means any executive agency or department directly responsible to
2 the Governor.

3 Other entities of government, including other constitutional
4 officers, the offices of the legislative and judicial branches, and
5 units of local government, shall cooperate and provide all
6 reasonable assistance to the commission.

7
8 6. The commission shall submit an interim report to the
9 Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991,
10 c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), within eight months of its organizational
11 meeting containing its recommended outreach strategy developed
12 pursuant to section 5 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the
13 Legislature as this bill). Thereafter, the commission shall submit its
14 final report to the Governor, and to the Legislature pursuant to
15 section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), no later than June 30
16 of the second year before the upcoming federal decennial census
17 containing its recommended outreach strategy developed pursuant
18 to section 5 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature
19 as this bill).

20
21 7. a. There is established in the Department of State the “New
22 Jersey Office of the Census.” The Secretary of State shall appoint a
23 director of the office to accomplish the responsibilities set forth in
24 this section. The director shall receive an annual salary determined
25 by the Secretary of State within the limit of funds appropriated to
26 the office for such purposes and shall serve at the pleasure of the
27 Secretary of State.

28 The Secretary of State shall also appoint an official State
29 demographer within the New Jersey Office of the Census to
30 coordinate census preparation efforts, including those listed under
31 paragraph (8) of subsection c. of this section, and publish any
32 follow-up reports for the federal decennial census, the American
33 Community Survey, and any other relevant federal or State survey
34 that may be necessary for demographic and census data collection.

35 b. The Secretary of State shall have the power to assign
36 functions to the office and may appoint staff, agents, and
37 consultants, prescribe the duties of the office, and fix their
38 compensation within the limit of funds appropriated for such
39 purposes. The Secretary of State shall endeavor to obtain the
40 services of experts in the State with expertise and experience in
41 census enumeration, process, education, and promotion.

42 c. The New Jersey Office of the Census shall have the power
43 and responsibility to:

44 (1) promote a government-wide effort to achieve a complete
45 count of New Jersey residents for each federal decennial census;

46 (2) coordinate with the New Jersey Complete Count
47 Commission, as established by section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.)
48 (pending before the Legislature as this bill), to complete the
49 obligations of the commission;

(3) assist in the administration of census outreach efforts to encourage a complete count, including providing staff and consultant assistance to the New Jersey Complete Count Commission, as established by section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), and the administration of State-funded grant programs to support local governments and non-profit organizations that conduct census outreach efforts;

(4) support United States Census Bureau outreach efforts to facilitate quality public data gathering;

(5) provide information in languages accessible to accommodate New Jersey's diverse population in accordance with the provisions of P.L.2023, c.263 (C.52:14-40 et seq.);

(6) liaise with local governments through the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs regarding census efforts and local complete count efforts;

(7) coordinate Census Day events throughout the State;

(8) coordinate with the New Jersey State Data Center and the Office of Research and Information in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the Office of Information Technology, when applicable, to:

(a) participate in the federal Local Update of Census Addresses;

(b) develop and maintain a street address maintenance program;

(c) support federal census operations;

(d) complete demographic analyses; and

(e) conduct research for the promotion of a fair and full count before the next federal decennial census;

(9) develop partnerships with community organizations focused on a complete count, including, but not limited to, philanthropic organizations and foundations dedicated to a full and complete federal census count;

(10) prepare annual population estimates for the State, counties, and local governments;

(11) coordinate and oversee Statewide submissions for census programs, including the Local Update of Census Addresses, Census Question Resolution, annual Boundary and Annexation Survey, Participant Statistical Areas Program, and Building Permit Survey;

(12) convene and maintain a working group of State agency statisticians and university researchers to conduct ongoing research on State demographic data trends and sources;

(13) evaluate the demographic impact of policy proposals;

(14) implement evidence-based policymaking;

(15) for each federal decennial census, develop a timeline, to be published by January 15 of the fifth year before the upcoming census, except that the timeline for the 2030 federal decennial census shall be published by February 15, 2027, to guide the work of the office and of the New Jersey Complete Count Commission, established pursuant to section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), that includes, but is not limited to:

- 1 (a) a review of the previous decade's census numbers and the
- 2 accuracy of such numbers;
- 3 (b) working with localities to correct census numbers as
- 4 appropriate and consistent with applicable law;
- 5 (c) releasing demographic profiles for local governments;
- 6 (d) promoting participation by New Jerseyans in the American
- 7 Community Survey;
- 8 (e) identifying the best practices and shortcomings from the
- 9 previous decade's census efforts;
- 10 (f) educating local governments and stakeholders about the
- 11 United States Census Bureau's Local Update of Census Addresses,
- 12 and assisting with participation in the program;
- 13 (g) review census communications for the upcoming federal
- 14 decennial census;
- 15 (h) developing test programs to gauge residents' awareness of
- 16 the federal decennial census and conducting outreach to hard-to-
- 17 count communities regarding the upcoming federal decennial
- 18 census;
- 19 (i) participating in end-to-end census test;
- 20 (j) reviewing the United States Census Bureau's Local Update of
- 21 Census Addresses results for accuracy;
- 22 (k) developing census messaging and grant programs to support
- 23 efforts of local governments and public interest stakeholders to
- 24 engage in census outreach efforts;
- 25 (l) developing and launching state education and communication
- 26 campaigns;
- 27 (m) providing census outreach materials in multiple languages in
- 28 accordance with the provisions of P.L.2023, c.263 (C.52:14-40 et
- 29 seq.); and
- 30 (n) implementing an overall comprehensive census plan to
- 31 ensure a complete count of all New Jersey households;
- 32 (16) coordinate with the New Jersey Complete Count
- 33 Commission to develop and promulgate a New Jersey Census Bill
- 34 of Rights and Responsibilities no later than one year after the
- 35 effective date of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the
- 36 Legislature as this bill), which shall affirm the rights of all New
- 37 Jerseyans to:
- 38 (a) participate in the federal decennial census and other
- 39 important censuses free from threat or intimidation;
- 40 (b) maintain confidentiality of the information provided in a
- 41 census form or by verbal response;
- 42 (c) respond to a census by means of either electronic or written
- 43 responses, or by telephone;
- 44 (d) request language assistance; and
- 45 (e) verify the identity of a census worker;
- 46 (17) translate the New Jersey Census Bill of Rights and
- 47 Responsibilities in languages other than English, consistent with the
- 48 provisions of P.L.2023, c.263 (C.52:14-40 et seq.);
- 49 (18) make the New Jersey Census Bill of Rights and
- 50 Responsibilities available on its Internet website and available to

1 the public for uses such as inclusion on city and county census
2 Internet websites and census questionnaire assistance center
3 Internet websites; and

4 (19) any other actions as determined by the Secretary of the State
5 to be necessary to carry out the responsibilities of the office.
6

7 8. The New Jersey Office of the Census shall provide any
8 materials and data requested, including but not limited to
9 demographic analyses and population estimates completed in
10 accordance with the office's duties, to be included in a publicly
11 accessible database maintained and administered by the Department
12 of State.
13

14 9. There is established in the Department of State a "New
15 Jersey Census Complete Count Trust Fund" into which shall be
16 appropriated from the State General Fund the sum of \$1 million
17 annually. Moneys in the fund shall be invested in permitted
18 investments or shall be held in interest-bearing accounts in those
19 depositories as the State Treasurer may select, and may be invested
20 and reinvested in permitted investments or as other trust funds in
21 the custody of the State Treasurer in the manner provided by law.
22 All interest or other income or earnings derived from the investment
23 or reinvestment of moneys in the fund shall be credited to the fund.
24 Moneys in the fund shall be used by the Department of State to fund
25 State, local, and community efforts to achieve the full count of the
26 State's population in each federal decennial census.
27

28 10. This act shall take effect immediately.