ASSEMBLY, No. 4995

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MAY 7, 2026

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman ALEX SAUICKIE
District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)

Co-Sponsored by:
Assemblyman Kearney

SYNOPSIS
Provides gross income tax credit for certain household pet expenses.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 9/10/2026)

AN ACT providing a gross income tax credit for certain household pet expenses and supplementing Title 54A of the New Jersey Statutes.

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

1. a. A taxpayer shall be allowed a credit against the tax otherwise due for the taxable year under the "New Jersey Gross Income Tax Act," N.J.S.54A:1-1 et seq., in an amount equal to the qualified everyday pet expenses incurred by the taxpayer during the taxable year for a household pet, up to $300 per taxable year, and for the qualified veterinary expenses incurred by the taxpayer for a household pet, up to $600 per taxable year. The total amount of the credit allowed by this section shall not exceed $900 per taxpayer per taxable year.

b. When filing a return that includes a claim for the credit allowed pursuant to this section, a taxpayer shall submit documentation demonstrating that the taxpayer is the owner of a household pet and copies of receipts demonstrating that the taxpayer incurred qualified everyday pet expenses and qualified medical or veterinary expenses for the household pet during the taxable year.

c. The order of priority of the application of the credit allowed pursuant to this section, and any other credits allowed against the tax imposed pursuant to N.J.S.54A:1-1 et seq., shall be as prescribed by the director. The amount of the credit, together with any other credits allowed by law, shall not reduce the taxpayer's liability otherwise due for the taxable year under N.J.S.54A:1-1 et seq. to an amount less than zero.

d. A taxpayer who is not subject to tax in accordance with N.J.S.54A:2-4 for a taxable year may apply for a tax credit using an application to be made available by the director. The due date for a tax credit application shall coincide with the due date for annual gross income tax returns.

e. The director shall adopt rules and regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as the director may deem necessary to effectuate the provisions of this section.

f. As used in this section:

"Household pet" means a dog or cat kept for the primary purpose of companionship and normally maintained in or near the residence of the taxpayer, provided that keeping such animal is not in violation of a federal, State, or local law. The term "household pet" shall not include:

(1) a dog or cat confined to the premises of any public or private hospital devoted solely to the treatment of sick animals;

(2) a dog or cat confined for the purposes of educational, research, or scientific purposes to the premises of an educational or research institution, including, but not limited to, an institution of higher education, school district, or nonpublic school;

(3) a dog or cat confined to the premises of a person or business engaged in breeding or raising dogs or cats for profit and licensed as a Class A dealer under the federal "Animal Welfare Act," 7 U.S.C. s.2131 et seq; or

(4) a dog owned or used by a law enforcement agency to assist in investigations or search and rescue missions.

"Qualified everyday pet expense" means an expense incurred for items that are essential for the care of a household pet, including, but not limited to, food, crates, leashes, litter boxes, litter, harnesses, collars, grooming supplies, and toys specifically designed for animal use.

"Qualified veterinary expense" means an expense incurred for the services of a licensed veterinarian for the purpose of maintaining and supporting the overall health of the household pet, including, but not limited to, annual exams, medications, emergency care, and diagnostic testing.

2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to taxable years beginning on or after January 1 of the year next following the date of enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill provides a gross income tax credit for certain household pet expenses.

Under the bill, a taxpayer would be allowed a gross income tax credit in an amount equal to the qualified everyday pet expenses incurred by the taxpayer during the taxable year for household pets, up to $300 per taxable year, and for the qualified medical or veterinary expenses incurred for household pets, up to $600 per taxable year. The total amount of a credit allowed under the bill would not exceed $900 per taxpayer per taxable year. In order to claim the credit, a taxpayer would be required to include with their tax return documentation demonstrating that the taxpayer owns a household pet and copies of receipts demonstrating that the taxpayer incurred qualified everyday pet expenses and qualified medical or veterinary expenses for the household pet during the taxable year.

The term "household pet" is defined under the bill as a dog or cat kept for the primary purpose of companionship and is normally maintained in or near the residence of the taxpayer. A household pet would not include: (1) a dog or cat confined to the premises of any public or private veterinary hospital; a dog or cat confined for

educational, research, or scientific purposes to the premises of certain educational or research institutions; a dog or cat confined to the premises of any person or business engaged in breeding or raising dogs or cats for profit; and any dog owned or used by a law enforcement agency to assist in investigations or search and rescue missions. The term "qualified everyday pet expense" is defined as expenses incurred for items purchased that are essential for the care of a household pet, including, but not limited to, food, crates, leashes, litter boxes, litter, harnesses, collars, grooming supplies, and toys designed for animal use. The term "qualified medical or veterinary expenses" is defined as expense incurred for the services of a licensed veterinarian for the purpose of maintaining and supporting the overall health of the household pet, including, but not limited to, annual exams, medications, emergency care, and diagnostic testing.