

ASSEMBLY, No. 5675

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 19, 2026

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman KENYATTA STEWART
District 35 (Bergen and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Expands responsibilities of public awareness campaign on effects of menstrual disorders; appropriates \$500,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning menstrual disorders, amending P.L.2023, c.147
2 and P.L.2023, c.240, and making an appropriation.

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

6
7 1. Section 2 of P.L.2023, c.147 (C.18A:33-30) is amended to
8 read as follows:

9 2. a. As used in this section, "menstrual products" mean
10 tampons and sanitary napkins for use in connection with the
11 menstrual cycle.

12 b. A school district shall ensure that students in each school
13 educating students in grades six through 12, or any combination
14 thereof, have direct access to menstrual products in at least 50
15 percent of female and gender-neutral school bathrooms, if
16 applicable, free of charge.

17 c. Any costs incurred by a school district in providing an
18 adequate supply of menstrual products to meet the needs of its
19 students shall be borne by the State.

20 d. The Department of Education, in conjunction with the
21 Department of Health, shall periodically review and assess whether
22 the provision of free menstrual products pursuant to **[this act]**
23 P.L.2023, c.147 (C.18A:33-29 et seq.) meets the needs of
24 menstruating students, and, if necessary, shall make
25 recommendations regarding the expansion of access to menstrual
26 products to students in grades below grade six.

27 e. A school district shall prominently display, in the school
28 bathrooms where students in grades six through 12 have direct
29 access to menstrual products pursuant to subsection b. of this
30 section, and disseminate, in writing, to the appropriate students, a
31 notice with the information contained in the educational resources
32 made available to school districts pursuant to subsection d. of
33 section 3 of P.L. c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill).
34 Each notice posted or distributed pursuant to this subsection shall
35 be in English, Spanish, and at the school district's discretion, any
36 other language spoken by the majority of the students in the district.
37 (cf: P.L.2023, c.147, s.2)

38
39 2. Section 1 of P.L.2023, c.240 (C.26:1A-131.1) is amended to
40 read as follows:

41 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

42 a. Menstrual disorders such as endometriosis **[and]** ,
43 polycystic ovarian syndrome, uterine fibroids, and premenstrual
44 dysphoric disorder affect many women and can have a negative
45 effect on fertility and overall maternal health;

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 b. According to the United States Department of Health and
2 Human Services' Office on Women's Health, endometriosis may
3 affect more than 11 percent of American women between the ages
4 of 15 and 44, which is approximately 6.5 million women in the
5 United States alone; endometriosis may also occur in pre-
6 menarcheal and post-menopausal individuals;

7 c. According to the Mayo Clinic, endometriosis is an often
8 painful disorder in which tissue similar to the tissue that normally
9 lines the inside of a woman's uterus, called the endometrium, grows
10 outside the uterus;

11 d. In patients who have endometriosis, the endometrial-like
12 tissue thickens, breaks down, and bleeds. However, since this
13 tissue has no way to exit the body, it becomes trapped;

14 e. When endometriosis impacts the ovaries, cysts called
15 endometriomas may form. Surrounding tissue can become irritated,
16 eventually developing scar tissue and adhesions that can cause
17 pelvic tissues and organs to stick to each other;

18 f. The primary symptom of endometriosis is pelvic pain.
19 Although many women experience cramping during their menstrual
20 periods, those with endometriosis typically describe menstrual pain
21 that is much worse than normal cramping, which pain may increase
22 over time;

23 g. Symptoms of endometriosis include: painful periods known
24 as dysmenorrhea, pain with intercourse, pain with bowel
25 movements or urination, excessive bleeding, infertility, fatigue,
26 diarrhea, constipation, bloating, and nausea;

27 h. Ovarian cancer is more common in those who have
28 endometriosis as compared with the general population;

29 i. Although rare, another type of cancer called endometriosis-
30 associated adenocarcinoma can develop later in life in those who
31 have had endometriosis;

32 j. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and
33 Prevention, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) is one of the most
34 common causes of female infertility, affecting as many as five
35 million, or six to 12 percent, of women of reproductive age in the
36 United States;

37 k. Polycystic ovary syndrome is a lifelong health condition that
38 can affect the lives of people who have it far beyond their child-
39 bearing years and involves other serious health complications;

40 l. Women with PCOS are often insulin resistant, which means
41 that their bodies can make insulin but are unable to use it
42 effectively, increasing their risk for Type 2 diabetes;

43 m. Women with PCOS also have higher levels of androgens,
44 which are hormones that can stop eggs from being released and
45 cause irregular periods, acne, thinning scalp hair, and excess hair
46 growth on the face and body;

47 n. More than half of women with PCOS develop type 2
48 diabetes by age 40. Women with PCOS can also develop

- 1 gestational diabetes when pregnant, which puts the pregnancy and
2 baby at risk and can lead to type 2 diabetes later in life for both
3 mother and child;
- 4 o. Women with PCOS are at higher risk of heart disease, which
5 risk increases with age;
- 6 p. Women with PCOS can also experience: (1) high blood
7 pressure, which can damage the heart, brain, and kidneys; (2) high
8 LDL or "bad" cholesterol and low HDL or "good" cholesterol,
9 which increases the risk for heart disease; (3) sleep apnea, which is
10 a disorder that causes breathing to stop during sleep and raises the
11 risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes; and (4) stroke;
- 12 q. PCOS is also linked to depression and anxiety;
- 13 r. Menstrual toxic shock syndrome is a menstruation-related
14 condition that can lead to serious adverse health symptoms,
15 including death if left untreated. The symptoms of menstrual toxic
16 shock syndrome generally begin with low fever, muscle aches,
17 chills, fatigue, and headaches, but as the condition progresses,
18 symptoms can include high fever, vomiting, rashes, redness of the
19 eyes, lips, and tongue, low blood pressure, and mental confusion;
- 20 s. Menstrual toxic shock syndrome is generally treatable with
21 antibiotics, but treatment relies on identifying the signs of the
22 condition and seeking professional help. Anyone can contract
23 menstrual toxic shock syndrome, but women using tampons and
24 similar devices are at a higher risk; **[and]**
- 25 t. **[Given all of the increased health risks associated with**
26 **menstrual disorders, such as endometriosis and PCOS, as well as**
27 **the risks of menstrual toxic shock syndrome, and the number of**
28 **women impacted by these conditions, it is imperative that the**
29 **Department of Health establish a public awareness campaign about**
30 **the effects of menstrual disorders and menstruation-related**
31 **conditions on fertility and overall maternal health.] Deleted by**
32 **amendment, P.L. , c.) (pending before the Legislature as this**
33 **bill).**
- 34 u. Uterine fibroids are noncancerous tumors composed of
35 muscle and connective tissue that develop in or on the uterus,
36 causing heavy, prolonged, or irregularly menstrual bleeding, severe
37 menstrual cramps or pelvic pain, and often lead to menstrual
38 disorders. Uterine fibroids are extremely common, affecting 70 to
39 80 percent of women by age 50, with higher prevalence in women
40 with early menarche, obesity, or hypertension;
- 41 v. Premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) is a severe and
42 chronic condition that affects women of childbearing age during the
43 week before menstruation, caused by hormone changes and
44 serotonin deficiency. Symptoms of PMDD, including, but not
45 limited to, back pain, fatigue, sleep problems, confusion, mood
46 swings, anxiety, depression, feelings of hopelessness, and thoughts
47 of suicide, can be severe and often interfere with daily life;

1 w. PMDD affects up to ten percent of women of child bearing
2 age, and many women with PMDD may also have anxiety or
3 depression. The disorder is generally treatable with over the
4 counter pain relivers, vitamin supplements, and changes in diet.
5 Women with more severe cases are prescribed birth control pills or
6 anti-depressants; and

7 x. Given all of the increased health risks associated with
8 menstrual disorders, such as endometriosis [and] , PCOS, uterine
9 fibroids, and PMDD, as well as the risks of menstrual toxic shock
10 syndrome, and the number of women impacted by these conditions,
11 it is imperative that the Department of Health establish a public
12 awareness campaign about the effects of menstrual disorders and
13 menstruation-related conditions on fertility and overall maternal
14 health.

15 (cf: P.L.2023, c.240, s.1)

16
17 3. Section 2 of P.L.2023, c.240 (C.26:1A-131.2) is amended to
18 read as follows:

19 2. a. The Department of Health shall establish a public
20 awareness campaign to promote awareness among State residents
21 about how menstrual disorders, menstruation-related disorders, and
22 menstruation-related conditions affect fertility and overall maternal
23 health. The campaign may provide for the development of print and
24 electronic media in languages including, but not limited to, English
25 and Spanish

26 b. The public awareness campaign shall include, but not be
27 limited to, the following:

28 (1) a comprehensive description of common menstrual **[and]**
29 disorders, menstruation-related disorders, and menstruation-related
30 conditions, such as endometriosis **[and]** , PCOS, uterine fibroids,
31 and PMDD, including discussion of causes, symptoms, and
32 treatment options;

33 (2) information on the causes and symptoms of menstrual toxic
34 shock syndrome and the ways in which women may reduce the risk
35 of developing the syndrome;

36 (3) information about educational resources available to women
37 concerning menstrual disorders, menstruation-related disorders, and
38 menstruation-related conditions; and

39 (4) materials encouraging women to schedule routine
40 gynecological examinations, consult with their physicians about,
41 and seek treatment, if appropriate, for, menstrual [and] disorders,
42 menstruation-related disorders, and menstruation-related conditions,
43 and seek treatment if they are experiencing symptoms associated
44 with menstrual toxic shock syndrome.

45 c. (1) The department shall make available to the public,
46 including, but not limited to, public libraries, institutions of higher
47 education, local health departments, community health centers,
48 public health clinics, shelters and organizations serving individuals

1 experiencing homelessness, and other public or nonprofit entities
2 that provide menstrual products to members of the public, in print,
3 and electronically on its website, information about common
4 menstrual [and] disorders, menstruation-related disorders, and
5 menstruation-related conditions, such as endometriosis [and] ,
6 PCOS, uterine fibroids, and PMDD, and their effects on maternal
7 health, as well as informational literature concerning the signs,
8 causes, and dangers of menstrual toxic shock syndrome.

9 (2) The information made available pursuant to paragraph (1) of
10 this subsection shall be in: (a) English and Spanish; (b) various
11 other languages based on the 10 most prevalent language access
12 needs in the State; and (c) a manner and format in which the
13 information can be accessed by individuals with disabilities.

14 d. The department shall make available to every school district
15 that ensures students in grades six to 12 have direct access to
16 menstrual products pursuant to the provisions of P.L.2023, c.147
17 (C.18A:33-29 et seq.) and P.L. ,c. (pending before the
18 Legislature as this bill) educational resources containing
19 information about common menstrual disorders, menstruation-
20 related disorders, and menstruation-related condition, such as
21 endometriosis, PCOS, uterine fibroids, and PMDD, the causes and
22 symptoms of, and when to seek treatment for, such disorders and
23 conditions, and the signs, causes, and dangers of, and when to seek
24 treatment for, menstrual toxic shock syndrome.

25 (cf: P.L.2023, c.240, s.2)

26
27 4. There is appropriated from the General Fund \$500,000 to the
28 Department of Health for preparation and dissemination of the
29 information and educational resources made available by the public
30 awareness campaign pursuant to subsections c. and d. of section 3
31 of P.L. , c. (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

32
33 5. This act shall take effect immediately.
34
35

36 STATEMENT

37
38 This bill amends P.L.2023, c.240 (C.26:1A-131.1 et seq.) to
39 require the public awareness campaign established pursuant to the
40 law to include information on uterine fibroids and premenstrual
41 dysphoric disorder. Currently, the public awareness campaign
42 provides information to the public on endometriosis, PCOS, and
43 menstrual toxic shock syndrome but is not required to provide
44 information on any other disorders and conditions.

45 The bill also amends the law to require the Department of Health
46 (DOH) to make available to: (1) public libraries, institutions of
47 higher education, local health departments, community health
48 centers, public health clinics, shelters and organizations serving

1 individuals experiencing homelessness, and other public or
2 nonprofit entities that provide menstrual products to the public,
3 information about common menstrual disorders and menstruation-
4 related disorders and conditions; and (2) school districts that ensure
5 students have access to menstrual products pursuant to P.L.2023,
6 c.147 (C.18A:33-29 et seq.) educational resources about common
7 menstrual disorders and menstruation-related disorders and
8 conditions.

9 Current law requires the DOH to make the information provided
10 to the public available electronically, but does not: (1) mandate that
11 the DOH make the information available in print; (2) specify the
12 entities or organizations that are to receive the printed information;
13 or (3) require the DOH to provide certain information about
14 menstrual and menstruation-related disorders and conditions to
15 school districts that ensure students access to menstrual products.

16 The bill amends P.L.2023, c.147 (C.18A:33-29 et seq.) to require
17 school districts prominently display, in the school bathrooms where
18 students have access to menstrual products, and disseminate, in
19 writing, to the appropriate students, a notice in English, Spanish,
20 and any other language spoken by the majority of the students in the
21 district, with the information contained in the educational resources
22 made available by the public awareness campaign.

23 The bill appropriates \$500,000 to the DOH for preparation and
24 dissemination of the information and educational resources made
25 available by the public awareness campaign.