

SENATE, No. 4751

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 5, 2026

Sponsored by:
Senator BRITNEE N. TIMBERLAKE
District 34 (Essex)
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District 31 (Hudson)

SYNOPSIS

Eliminates statute of limitations for criminal prosecutions and civil actions related to human trafficking and certain sex offenses.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/22/2026)

1 AN ACT concerning certain criminal and civil statutes of limitations
2 and amending various parts of the statutory law.

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

6
7 1. N.J.S.2C:1-6 is amended to read as follows:

8 2C:1-6. Time Limitations. a. (1) A prosecution for any offense
9 set forth in N.J.S.2C:11-3, section 1 of P.L.2005, c.77 (C.2C:13-8),
10 sections 5 and 12 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.2C:13-9 and C.2C:13-10),
11 N.J.S.2C:11-4, N.J.S.2C:14-2 or sections 1 through 5 of P.L.2002,
12 c.26 (C.2C:38-1 through C.2C:38-5) may be commenced at any
13 time.

14 (2) A prosecution for any offense set forth in N.J.S.2C:17-2,
15 section 9 of P.L.1970, c.39 (C.13:1E-9), section 20 of P.L.1989,
16 c.34 (C.13:1E-48.20), section 19 of P.L.1954, c.212 (C.26:2C-19),
17 section 10 of P.L.1984, c.173 (C.34:5A-41), or section 10 of
18 P.L.1977, c.74 (C.58:10A-10) may be commenced at any time.

19 (3) A prosecution for an offense set forth in N.J.S.2C:14-3 or
20 N.J.S.2C:24-4 may be commenced at any time.

21 b. Except as otherwise provided in this section, prosecutions
22 for other offenses are subject to the following periods of
23 limitations:

24 (1) A prosecution for a crime must be commenced within five
25 years after it is committed;

26 (2) A prosecution for a disorderly persons offense or petty
27 disorderly persons offense must be commenced within one year
28 after it is committed;

29 (3) A prosecution for any offense set forth in N.J.S.2C:27-2,
30 N.J.S.2C:27-4, N.J.S.2C:27-6, N.J.S.2C:27-7, N.J.S.2C:29-4,
31 N.J.S.2C:30-2, N.J.S.2C:30-3, or any attempt or conspiracy to
32 commit such an offense, must be commenced within seven years
33 after the commission of the offense;

34 (4) **[**A prosecution for an offense set forth in N.J.S.2C:14-3 or
35 N.J.S.2C:24-4, when the victim at the time of the offense is below
36 the age of 18 years, must be commenced within five years of the
37 victim's attaining the age of 18 or within two years of the discovery
38 of the offense by the victim, whichever is later;**]** (Deleted by
39 amendment, P.L. , c.) (pending before the Legislature as this
40 bill)

41 (5) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.2007, c.131).

42 c. An offense is committed either when every element occurs
43 or, if a legislative purpose to prohibit a continuing course of
44 conduct plainly appears, at the time when the course of conduct or
45 the defendant's complicity therein is terminated. Time starts to run

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 on the day after the offense is committed, except that when the
2 prosecution is supported by physical evidence that identifies the
3 actor by means of DNA testing or fingerprint analysis, time does
4 not start to run until the State is in possession of both the physical
5 evidence and the DNA or fingerprint evidence necessary to
6 establish the identification of the actor by means of comparison to
7 the physical evidence.

8 d. A prosecution is commenced for a crime when an indictment
9 is found and for a nonindictable offense when a warrant or other
10 process is issued, provided that such warrant or process is executed
11 without unreasonable delay. Nothing contained in this section,
12 however, shall be deemed to prohibit the downgrading of an offense
13 at any time if the prosecution of the greater offense was commenced
14 within the statute of limitations applicable to the greater offense.

15 e. The period of limitation does not run during any time when a
16 prosecution against the accused for the same conduct is pending in
17 this State.

18 f. The limitations in this section shall not apply to any person
19 fleeing from justice.

20 g. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this code, no civil action
21 shall be brought pursuant to this code more than five years after
22 such action accrues;

23 (2) A civil action arising from a violation of section 1 of
24 P.L.2005, c.77 (C.2C:13-8), section 5 or 12 of P.L.2013, c.51
25 (C.2C:13-9 or C.2C:13-10), N.J.S.2C:14-2, N.J.S.2C:14-3, or
26 N.J.S.2C:24-4 may be commenced at any time.

27 (cf: P.L.2007, c.131, s.1)

28
29 2. Section 4 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.2C:13-8.1) is amended to
30 read as follows:

31 4. a. Any person injured, including injury due to the loss of
32 moneys or property, real or personal, as a result of the commission
33 of a human trafficking offense in violation of section 1 of P.L.2005,
34 c.77 (C.2C:13-8), or section 5 of P.L.2013, c.51 (C.2C:13-9), may
35 bring a civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction against:
36 (1) the offender; (2) all those acting in concert with that offender;
37 (3) all those knowingly deriving a pecuniary benefit from the
38 offense, whether or not these parties are acting in concert with the
39 offender; and (4) all those knowingly maintaining any victim of the
40 offense, whether or not these parties are acting in concert with the
41 offender. A civil action brought under this section shall not
42 preclude the application of any other civil, administrative, or
43 criminal remedy under any other provision of law.

44 b. (1) The standard of proof in a civil action brought pursuant to
45 this section is a preponderance of the evidence, and the fact that a
46 prosecution against the offending actor is not instituted or,
47 whenever instituted, terminates without a conviction, shall not
48 preclude a civil action.

1 (2) A final judgment rendered in favor of the State in any
2 criminal proceeding shall estop the defendant from denying the
3 same conduct in any civil action brought pursuant to this section.

4 c. In any civil action brought pursuant to this section, the court
5 shall, in addition to any other appropriate legal or equitable relief,
6 including damages for pain and suffering, recovery of reasonable
7 costs for necessary medical, dental, and psychological services and
8 punitive damages, award damages in an amount that is the greater
9 of:

10 (1) the gross income or value to the defendant of the injured
11 party's labor or services; or

12 (2) the value of the injured party's labor or services as
13 determined by the "New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act," P.L.1963,
14 c.150 (C.34:11-56.25 et seq.), the "New Jersey State Wage and
15 Hour Law," P.L.1966, c.113 (C.34:11-56a et seq.), the Seasonal
16 Farm Labor Act, P.L.1945, c.71 (C.34:9A-1 et seq.), the laws
17 concerning the regulation of child labor in chapter 2 of Title 34 of
18 the Revised Statutes, or any other applicable State law, and the
19 "Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938," 29 U.S.C. s.201 et seq., or any
20 other applicable federal law.

21 d. In addition to any damages, penalty, injunction, or other
22 appropriate relief awarded in an action brought pursuant to this
23 section, the court may award to the injured person bringing suit
24 reasonable attorney's fees and costs.

25 e. A civil action brought pursuant to this section may be
26 commenced at any time.

27 (cf: P.L.2023, c.208)

28
29 3. Section 2 of P.L.2019, c.120 (C.2A:14-2a) is amended to
30 read as follows:

31 2. a. (1) Every action at law for an injury resulting from the
32 commission of sexual assault, any other crime of a sexual nature, a
33 prohibited sexual act as defined in section 2 of P.L.1992, c.7
34 (C.2A:30B-2), or sexual abuse as defined in section 1 of P.L.1992,
35 c.109 (C.2A:61B-1) against a minor under the age of 18 that
36 occurred prior to, on or after the effective date of P.L.2019, c.120
37 (C.2A:14-2a et al.) **】shall be commenced within 37 years after the**
38 **minor reaches the age of majority, or within seven years from the**
39 **date of reasonable discovery of the injury and its causal relationship**
40 **to the act, whichever date is later】** may be commenced at any time.

41 (2) To the extent applicable, any action for an injury that
42 occurred prior to the effective date of P.L.2019, c.120 (C.2A:14-2a
43 et al.) shall be subject to the provisions of subsection c. of section 1
44 of P.L.1959, c.90 (C.2A:53A-7) and P.L.2005, c.264 (C.2A:53A-
45 7.4 et seq.), as amended by P.L.2019, c.120 (C.2A:14-2a et al.).

46 b. (1) Every action at law for an injury resulting from the
47 commission of sexual assault or any other crime of a sexual nature
48 against a person 18 years of age or older that occurred prior to, on

1 or after the effective date of P.L.2019, c.120 (C.2A:14-2a et al.)
2 **【shall be commenced within seven years from the date of**
3 **reasonable discovery of the injury and its causal relationship to the**
4 **act】 may be commenced at any time.**

5 (2) To the extent applicable, any action for an injury that
6 occurred prior to the effective date of P.L.2019, c.120 (C.2A:14-2a
7 et al.) shall be subject to the provisions of subsection c. of section 1
8 of P.L.1959, c.90 (C.2A:53A-7), as amended by P.L.2019, c.120
9 (C.2A:14-2a et al.).

10 Nothing in this section is intended to preclude the court from
11 finding that the statute of limitations was tolled in an action because
12 of the plaintiff's mental state, physical or mental disability, duress
13 by the defendant, or any other equitable grounds. Such a finding
14 shall be made after a plenary hearing. The court may order an
15 independent psychiatric evaluation of the plaintiff in order to assist
16 in the determination as to whether the statute of limitations was
17 tolled.

18 c. (1) Every action at law for an injury that is commenced
19 pursuant to this section shall proceed on an individual basis, and not
20 proceed on behalf of a class in a class action, due to the particular
21 circumstances, source of injury and its discovery, and damages
22 relating to each occurrence or occurrences of sexual assault, any
23 other crime of a sexual nature, a prohibited sexual act as defined in
24 section 2 of P.L.1992, c.7 (C.2A:30B-2), or sexual abuse as defined
25 in section 1 of P.L.1992, c.109 (C.2A:61B-1) against either a minor
26 under the age of 18 or a person 18 years of age or older.

27 (2) Any private, contractual arrangement intending to settle
28 claims for occurrences described in paragraph (1) of this subsection
29 on a class basis is against public policy and shall be void and
30 unenforceable.

31 (cf: P.L.2019, c.120, s.2)

32
33 4. This act shall take effect immediately and shall be applicable
34 to all offenses not yet barred from prosecution under the statute of
35 limitations, and all civil actions which are not yet barred by the
36 statute of limitations as of the effective date.

37 38 39 STATEMENT

40
41 This bill eliminates the statute of limitations for criminal
42 prosecutions and civil actions for certain human trafficking and sex
43 offenses.

44 Currently, under the provisions of N.J.S.A.2C:1-6 there is no
45 statute of limitations for prosecutions for the following crimes:
46 murder; manslaughter; sexual assault; and criminal offenses arising
47 from violations of certain environmental statutes concerning
48 widespread injury or damage.

1 Prosecution for other crimes, such as human trafficking, must be
2 commenced within five years, except for certain crimes enumerated
3 in the statute such as: (1) bribery and official misconduct offenses
4 which must be commenced within seven years; and (2) criminal
5 sexual contact or endangering the welfare of a minor which must be
6 commenced within five years after the victim attains the age of 18
7 or two years after discovery, whichever is later. Prosecutions for
8 disorderly persons offenses must be commenced within one year
9 after they are committed. Pursuant to N.J.S.A.2C:1-6, a civil action
10 based on a violation of criminal law generally must be commenced
11 within five years after the action accrues.

12 By eliminating the statute of limitations for human trafficking
13 crimes, criminal sexual contact, and endangering the welfare of a
14 child, and civil actions related to these crimes, the prosecution or a
15 civil action related to these crimes may be commenced at any time
16 rather than within the time limits established under current law.

17 Federal legislation, H.R.5560, was introduced in September of
18 2025. H.R.5560 authorizes the Children's Bureau's Office of Child
19 Abuse and Neglect in the U.S. Department of Health and Human
20 Services to award grants to states that have (1) eliminated their
21 criminal and civil statutes of limitations for child sexual abuse, and
22 (2) revived previously time-barred civil claims. If the federal
23 legislation is passed, the enactment of this bill would maximize the
24 amount of grant funding that New Jersey would receive from the
25 Children's Bureau's Office of Child Abuse and Neglect.