

[Second Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 1657

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
221st LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2024 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman PAMELA R. LAMPITT

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Assemblyman LOUIS D. GREENWALD

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Assemblywoman SHANIQUE SPEIGHT

District 29 (Essex and Hudson)

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Senator RENEE C. BURGESS

District 28 (Essex and Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Verrelli, Stanley, Wimberly, Assemblywomen Lopez, Matsikoudis, Assemblyman Sampson, Assemblywoman Bagolie, Assemblyman Freiman, Assemblywoman Drulis, Assemblyman Rodriguez, Assemblywomen Donlon, Peterpaul, Reynolds-Jackson, Senators Diegnan, Turner, Timberlake and Assemblywoman Murphy

SYNOPSIS

Permits certain mental health professionals working in school districts to refer or help facilitate referral of students to professional counselors.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As reported by the Senate Education Committee on November 10, 2025, with amendments.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/22/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning mental health services for public school
2 students and supplementing chapter 40 of Title 18A of the New
3 Jersey Statutes.

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

7
8 1. A student assistance coordinator, school counselor, or school
9 psychologist or other mental health professional working in a school
10 district may refer, or help facilitate the referral of, a student to ¹**["a private]** ¹an¹ individual ¹or practice¹ licensed to provide professional
11 counseling under Title 45 of the Revised Statutes, for mental health
12 assessments and services. A student assistance coordinator, school
13 counselor, or school psychologist or other mental health professional
14 working in a school district shall not refer a student to ¹**["a private]** ¹an¹
15 individual ¹or practice¹ licensed to provide professional counseling if
16 the student assistance coordinator, school counselor, or school
17 psychologist or other mental health professional, or that individual's
18 immediate family, or that individual in combination with the
19 individual's immediate family has a significant beneficial interest in or
20 with the ¹**["private]**¹ individual ¹or practice¹ licensed to provide
21 professional counseling. If a student is not legally permitted to
22 consent ¹**["on his own]**¹ to the mental health assessments and services,
23 the student's parent or guardian shall be notified of, and consent to, the
24 referral or the facilitation of a referral prior to the provision of any
25 assessment or service by the licensed ¹**["private]**¹ individual ¹or
26 practice¹. ²A licensed individual or practice shall be required to obtain
27 consent from a student, or from the parent or guardian in the case of a
28 student who is not legally permitted to consent, before providing
29 mental health assessments or services.²

30
31 In the case of a referral or a facilitation of a referral pursuant to this
32 section, neither the school district nor the individual referring or
33 facilitating the referral shall bear the cost of the assessments or
34 services provided to the student ², unless otherwise provided by law².

35 This section shall not be construed to limit a school district's
36 authority to provide mental health assessments and services to a
37 student prior to or after a referral or the facilitation of a referral has
38 been made to ¹**["a private]** ¹an¹ individual ¹or practice¹ licensed to
39 provide professional counseling under Title 45 of the Revised Statutes.

40
41 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹Assembly AED committee amendments adopted September 19, 2024.

²Senate SED committee amendments adopted November 10, 2025.