

## CHAPTER 17

**AN ACT** establishing the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and Business Partnerships and supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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

C.52:9ZZ-1 New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and Business Partnerships.

1. The New Jersey Commission on Higher Education and Business Partnerships is created and established in the Executive Branch of the State Government. For the purposes of complying with the provisions of Article V, Section IV, paragraph 1 of the New Jersey Constitution, the commission is allocated within the Department of State, but notwithstanding this allocation, the commission shall be independent of any supervision or control by the department or by any board or officer thereof.

C.52:9ZZ-2 Membership of the commission.

2. The commission shall consist of 19 members as follows:

- a. the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, or a designee, who shall serve ex officio;
- b. the Secretary of Higher Education, or a designee, who shall serve ex officio;
- c. the Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, or a designee, who shall serve ex officio;
- d. twelve members appointed by the Governor who shall include: the president of a public research university, a representative of a public college or university located in the State and a representative of an independent college or university located in the State that are actively engaged in business partnerships, a representative of the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, a representative of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association, a representative of the Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey, a representative of the New Jersey Technology Council, a representative of BioNJ, a representative of the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, a representative of the New Jersey Association of State Colleges and Universities, a representative of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges, and a representative of the New Jersey Association of Independent Colleges and Universities;
- e. four members of the public with backgrounds in higher education, public-private partnerships, private sector innovation, or a combination of those experiences. The President of the Senate, Speaker of the General Assembly, Minority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leader of the General Assembly shall each appoint one of these members.

C.52:9ZZ-3 Terms; vacancies; designation of chairperson.

3. a. The terms of the appointed members of the commission shall be for five years, except that of the appointments first made to the commission, six shall serve for terms of three years, five shall serve for terms of four years, and five shall serve for terms of five years. Each appointed member shall serve for the term of the appointment and until his successor is appointed. A member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring in the membership of the commission for any reason other than the expiration of the term shall have a term of appointment for the unexpired term only. Any vacancy shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. The commission members shall serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

b. The Governor shall designate the chairperson of the commission from among his appointed members.

C.52:9ZZ-4 Duties of the commission.

4. The commission shall:
  - a. Explore how to best foster innovation in the State through public-private partnerships in higher education;
  - b. Stimulate academic-industrial collaboration through such mechanisms as business incubation facilities and clinical research and clinical trials;
  - c. Identify and support research opportunities at New Jersey academic institutions and other institutions that can advance economic development and employment;
  - d. Facilitate collaborations between businesses and institutions of higher education, with a greater emphasis on research and development in the pharmaceutical, biosciences, biotechnology, medical technology, information technology, and telecommunications industries;
  - e. Identify and support opportunities for partnerships between institutions of higher education and pharmaceutical, biosciences, and biotechnology companies that can accelerate the commercialization of new therapies, drugs, and technologies;
  - f. Identify strategies to significantly increase the number of clinical trials conducted by public and independent institutions of higher education in the State;
  - g. Identify the workforce and economic development needs of the State and strategies for meeting those needs;
  - h. Study the current roles of the four-year public and independent institutions of higher education, the county colleges, and the county vocational school districts in meeting and advancing the workforce and economic development needs of the State, and make recommendations on improving the role of each of these sectors in advancing these needs; and
  - i. Provide the Governor, and the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), with a report by January 30 of each year describing the status of the commission's activities and the efforts of the ombudsman pursuant to section 6 of this act.

C.52:9ZZ-5 Authority of the commission.

5. The commission is authorized to:
  - a. Adopt rules and regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), concerning the operation of the commission, the functions and responsibilities of its officers and employees, and other matters as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this act;
  - b. Maintain offices at such places within the State as it may designate;
  - c. Employ, subject to the availability of funds, an executive director and other personnel as may be necessary, whose employment shall be in the unclassified service of the Civil Service, except that employees performing stenographic or clerical duties shall be in the career service and appointed pursuant to Title 11A of the New Jersey Statutes;
  - d. Conduct meetings and public hearings in connection with the purposes of this act;
  - e. Enter into contracts with individuals, organizations, and institutions necessary or incidental to the performance of its duties and the execution of its powers under this act; and
  - f. Take any and all necessary or convenient actions to carry out its purposes and exercise the powers granted in this act.

C.52:9ZZ-6 Higher Education-Business Partnership Ombudsman.

6. In addition to any other duties and responsibilities that the commission may assign to the executive director, the executive director shall serve as the Higher Education-Business Partnership Ombudsman. A business that seeks to form a partnership with an institution of

higher education may collaborate and work with the ombudsman in the establishment of that partnership. The ombudsman shall:

- a. Assist business and industry in making the appropriate contacts at the institutions of higher education that may be necessary to foster a partnership;
- b. Make available to business and industry information on research efforts, either planned or in progress, at institutions of higher education that may be applicable to the work of that business or industry and may foster its interest in establishing a collaboration or partnership with the institution;
- c. Collaborate with institutions of higher education in the establishment of strategies that an institution might implement to inform business and industry of the expertise and achievements of the institution's faculty and research staff applicable to the business or industry's area of interest;
- d. Conduct annual outreach efforts to pharmaceutical companies to assess the interest of those companies in establishing clinical trials at institutions of higher education in the State;
- e. Determine the specific reasons for any lack of interest in conducting clinical trials at institutions of higher education and then work with the institutions to implement actions that address the concerns and issues raised; and
- f. Annually assess the success of institutions of higher education in meeting the research and development needs of business and industry.

7. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved February 10, 2017.