

## CHAPTER 134

AN ACT concerning hospitals and supplementing P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.).

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

C.26:2H-12.109 Licensed general acute care hospital addressing homelessness, housing insecurity.

1. a. A general acute care hospital licensed pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.) may adopt as part of its mission the goal of addressing issues related to homelessness or housing insecurity. A hospital that chooses to address issues related to homelessness or housing insecurity as part of its mission pursuant to this section shall be authorized to construct, rehabilitate, or remediate housing, or enter into a partnership or other contractual arrangement therefor, and provide wrap-around services for individuals who are homeless or housing insecure, or enter into a partnership or other contractual arrangement therefor, who are treated at the hospital, which wrap-around services may include:

- (1) referrals to outpatient primary care and behavioral health care services;
- (2) appropriate follow-up care and treatment management assistance;
- (3) assistance identifying and procuring sources of health benefits coverage, including, but not limited to, coverage under the State Medicaid and NJ FamilyCare programs pursuant to P.L.1968, c.413 (C.30:4D-1 et seq.) and P.L.2005, c.156 (C.30:4J-8 et al.) ; and
- (4) assistance in identifying and accessing appropriate social services, including, but not limited to, food, transportation, housing, employment, and child care assistance.

Such hospital shall notify the Department of Health as to the wrap-around services intended to be provided pursuant to this section and if any such service is subject to the Department of Health's healthcare facility licensing requirements the service shall be licensed prior to it being provided. To the extent practicable, a hospital may collaborate with a regional health hub to provide the wrap-around services described in paragraphs (1) through (4) of this subsection.

b. Housing for individuals who are homeless or housing insecure constructed, rehabilitated, or remediated by a hospital, or its partners or contractors, pursuant to subsection a. of this section shall be:

- (1) deemed a permitted use in all residential and nonresidential districts of a municipality and shall be exempt from local zoning restrictions ; and
- (2) exempt from the Department of Health's health care facility licensing requirements, provided that, if wrap-around services provided in connection with the housing are provided in a health clinic or other comparable health care facility licensed pursuant to P.L.1971, c.136 (C.26:2H-1 et seq.), the clinic or facility shall comply with the department's health care facility licensing requirements.

c. Commencing one year after the date a hospital, or its partners or contractors, first constructs, rehabilitates, or remediates housing and begins providing wrap-around services for individuals who are homeless or housing insecure pursuant to subsection a. of this section, and annually thereafter, the hospital shall report to the Department of Health concerning any reductions in the number of inpatient admissions and emergency department visits at the hospital and increased usage of preventative care related to the construction, rehabilitation, or remediation of housing and the provision of wrap-around services by the hospital or its partners or contractors, to individuals who are homeless or housing insecure over the previous year. The report shall include data based on each payer type for inpatient admissions and emergency department visits, including charity care and, to the extent practicable, shall include input from local stakeholders, including regional health hubs, on program design and implementation. The report may be shared with regional health hubs to

assist the Department of Health in program design, population analysis, strategic planning, and other appropriate functions.

d. The Department of Health shall annually provide to the Legislature a report aggregating the data contained in the reports submitted to the department by a hospital pursuant to subsection c. of this section for five years following the effective date of P.L.2021, c.134 (C.26:2H-12.109) and quinquennially thereafter.

e. As used in this section, “individual who is homeless or housing insecure” means a person or household who is homeless or experiences periods of homelessness as either of those terms is defined pursuant to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, (42 U.S.C. s.11301 et seq.), the Qualified Allocation Plan adopted by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency, or any other State or federal program specifically designed to assist such persons or households; or a person or household eligible for and occupying very-low-income housing, low-income housing, or moderate-income housing as those terms are defined in section 4 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-304).

f. This section shall not be construed to invalidate or otherwise limit the credit or bonus credit for which a municipality may otherwise be eligible to receive in accordance with P.L.1985, c.222 (52:27D-301 et seq.) or any court order issued or settlement agreement executed consistent therewith.

g. This section shall not be construed to invalidate or otherwise limit the authority or ability to facilitate or enter into such arrangements, or agreements, or projects under existing law.

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved June 30, 2021.