

Chapter 12A of  
Title 9,  
redesignated  
Children's Shelters  
§§1-8  
C. 9:12A-2 to  
9:12A-9  
§9 - Approp.  
§10 - Note To §§1-9

P.L. 1999, CHAPTER 224, *approved September 22, 1999*  
Senate Committee Substitute (*First Reprint*) for  
Senate, No. 1789

1 **AN ACT** concerning homeless youth, supplementing Title 9 of the  
2 Revised Statutes 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. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "New Jersey  
8 Homeless Youth Act."

9

10 2. The Legislature finds and declares that: homeless youth are a  
11 largely invisible population; many of these children have no families  
12 and are being exploited by adults or are turning to delinquency as a  
13 way to survive on the streets; these young people are urgently in need  
14 of services which will prevent them from becoming permanently  
15 homeless; therefore, it is in the best interest of the State to establish  
16 and support a continuum of services geared specifically for homeless  
17 youth, including street outreach or basic center shelter or transitional  
18 living programs.

19

20 3. As used in this act:

21 "Department" means the Department of Human Services.

22 "Division" means the Division of Youth and Family Services in the  
23 Department of Human Services.

24 "Homeless youth" means a person 21 years of age or younger who  
25 is without shelter where appropriate care and supervision are available.

26

27 4. The department shall establish and support a comprehensive  
28 program for homeless youth in the State by contracting with  
29 organizations and agencies, licensed by the department, that provide  
30 street outreach or basic center shelter or transitional living services for  
31 homeless youth. The department shall establish licensure requirements  
32 and shall contract for programs that ensure that services, as specified

**EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.**

**Matter underlined thus is new matter.**

**Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:**

**<sup>1</sup> Senate floor amendments adopted June 21, 1999.**

1 by this act, are provided to homeless youth in the State in an  
2 appropriate and responsible manner. The commissioner may establish  
3 such other requirements for the homeless youth programs as he deems  
4 necessary.

5  
6 5. A street outreach program for homeless youth shall enhance  
7 the accessibility of resources to a homeless youth by locating,  
8 contacting and providing services to the youth through mobile  
9 outreach.

10 The services provided by the street outreach program, as  
11 determined by the department's contract, may include, but are not  
12 limited to:

- 13 a. Assistance in finding temporary or short-term shelter;
- 14 b. Assistance in obtaining food;
- 15 c. A clothing allowance;
- 16 d. Individual and group counseling in the area of violence  
17 prevention;
- 18 e. Information and referral services regarding organizations and  
19 agencies that provide support services to homeless youth; and
- 20 f. Assistance in obtaining medical care.

21  
22 6. a. A basic center shelter program shall provide a homeless  
23 youth with 24-hour, seven-day a week, walk-in access to emergency,  
24 short-term residential care. The services offered by the program shall  
25 provide a homeless youth with a stable out-of-home placement and  
26 help reunite the youth with his parent or legal guardian, except in the  
27 case where family reunification is not in the youth's best interest.

28 The services provided at the basic center shelter, as determined by  
29 the department's contract, may include, but are not limited to, the  
30 following core services:

- 31 (1) Family reunification services;
- 32 (2) Individual, family and group counseling;
- 33 (3) Food;
- 34 (4) A clothing allowance;
- 35 (5) Medical care;
- 36 (6) Educational services;
- 37 (7) Recreational activities; and
- 38 (8) Advocacy and referral services.

39 b. If a homeless youth under the age of 18 is admitted to a basic  
40 center shelter, the shelter shall attempt to notify the youth's parent or  
41 legal guardian of the youth's admission within 24 hours after the  
42 admission. The notification shall include a description of the youth's  
43 physical and emotional condition and the circumstances surrounding  
44 the youth's admission to the basic center shelter, unless there are  
45 compelling reasons not to provide the parent or legal guardian with  
46 this information. Compelling reasons include, but are not limited to,

1 circumstances in which the youth is or has been a victim of child abuse  
2 or neglect.

3 c. If a homeless youth under the age of 18 is admitted to a basic  
4 center shelter, the shelter shall notify the division of the youth's  
5 admission to the basic center shelter within 24 hours after the  
6 admission to determine if the youth is in the legal care or custody of  
7 the division. If the homeless youth is in the legal care or custody of  
8 the division, the division, in consultation with the basic center shelter,  
9 shall determine what services shall be provided to the youth. The  
10 services may include, but are not limited to: crisis intervention  
11 services, continued temporary placement in the basic center shelter for  
12 up to 30 days, placement in an alternative living arrangement or  
13 referral to a transitional living program established pursuant to section  
14 7 of this act or to other appropriate organizations and agencies.

15 d. When the basic center shelter has reason to believe that the  
16 youth is an abused or neglected child as defined in P.L.1974, c.119  
17 (C.9:6-8.21et seq.), the basic center shelter shall report the allegation  
18 to the division pursuant to section 3 of P.L1971, c.437 (C.9:6-8.10).  
19 A homeless youth may remain at a basic center shelter for up to 30  
20 days pending the division's disposition of any case originated pursuant  
21 to this subsection.

22 e. If a homeless youth under the age of 18 is not in the legal care  
23 or custody of the division as provided in subsection c. of this section,  
24 and a basic center shelter has not made a report to the division  
25 pursuant to subsection d. of this section, the basic center shelter shall  
26 notify a juvenile-family crisis intervention unit, established pursuant to  
27 P.L.1982, c.80 (C.2A:4A-76 et seq.), in the county of residence of the  
28 homeless youth, within 24 hours of the youth's admission to the basic  
29 center shelter, that a juvenile-family crisis exists as defined in section  
30 3 of P.L.1982, c.77 (C.2A:4A-22).

31 f. In the event that a basic center shelter notifies a juvenile-family  
32 crisis intervention unit pursuant to subsection e. of this section, the  
33 homeless youth may remain at the basic center shelter for up to 10  
34 days without the consent of the youth's parent or legal guardian.  
35 During this time, the juvenile-family crisis intervention unit and the  
36 basic center shelter shall help to reunite the youth with his parent or  
37 legal guardian. If reunification with the parent or legal guardian is not  
38 in the youth's best interest or not possible because the youth's parent  
39 or legal guardian cannot be located, the juvenile-family crisis  
40 intervention unit, in consultation with the basic center shelter, shall  
41 determine what services shall be provided to the youth. The services  
42 may include, but are not limited to, crisis intervention services and  
43 continued temporary placement in the basic center shelter for up to an  
44 additional 30 days.

45 g. In the case of a homeless youth from another state who is under  
46 the age of 18, a basic center shelter shall notify the Compact

1 Administrator of the Interstate Compact on Juveniles, as soon as  
2 practicable, but within 24 hours of the youth's admission to the basic  
3 center shelter. The Compact Administrator shall facilitate the youth's  
4 return home to his parent or legal guardian or make other suitable care  
5 arrangements for the youth.

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7 7. A transitional living program shall provide residential care and  
8 treatment services for up to 18 months to a homeless youth 16 to 21  
9 years of age who demonstrates the maturity to function with minimal  
10 adult supervision.

11 The program shall assist in the maintenance of a homeless youth in  
12 a living arrangement that will prepare the youth for independence and  
13 self-sufficiency through the direct provision of, or through referrals  
14 to, other organizations and agencies for services, as determined by the  
15 department's contract, which may include:

16 (1) Educational assessment and attachment to an educational  
17 program;

18 (2) Career planning, employment and life skills training;

19 (3) Job placement;

20 (4) Budgeting and money management;

21 (5) Assistance in securing housing appropriate to a homeless  
22 youth's needs and income; and

23 (6) Assistance in accessing other social services as may be  
24 appropriate.

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26 8. Subject to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410  
27 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), the Commissioner of Human Services shall  
28 adopt rules and regulations for the licensing by the department of  
29 organizations and agencies that provide street outreach or basic  
30 center shelter or transitional living programs for homeless youth.

31  
32 9. There is appropriated <sup>1</sup>["\$4,000,000"] \$1,000,000<sup>1</sup> from the  
33 General Fund to the Department of Human Services. The department  
34 shall contract with organizations and agencies licensed by the  
35 department pursuant to the provisions of this act, to provide street  
36 outreach or basic center shelter or transitional living programs to  
37 homeless youth.

38 Six percent of the annual appropriation to the department under  
39 this act shall be allocated to fund the department's administrative costs  
40 in implementing the provisions of this act.

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42 10. This act shall take effect 90 days following enactment.

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"New Jersey Homeless Youth Act;" appropriates \$1 million.