

35:3-1 to 35:3-5 et al LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

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LAWS OF: 2025 **CHAPTER:** 72

NJSA: 35:3-1 to 35:3-5 et al Provides for publication of required legal notices on government Internet websites and through certain online news publications.

BILL NO: S4654 (Substituted for A5878)

SPONSOR(S) Scutari, Nicholas P. and others

DATE INTRODUCED: 6/19/2025

COMMITTEE: **ASSEMBLY:** --

SENATE: Budget & Appropriations

AMENDED DURING PASSAGE: No

DATE OF PASSAGE: ASSEMBLY: 06/30/2025

SENATE: 06/30/2025

DATE OF APPROVAL: 6/30/2025

FOLLOWING ARE ATTACHED IF AVAILABLE:

FINAL TEXT OF BILL (S4654 enacted)

ADVANCE LAW Yes

PAMPHLET LAW Yes

S4654

INTRODUCED BILL: (Includes sponsor(s) statement) Yes

REPRINT(S): No

TECHNICAL REVIEW OF BILL: No

COMMITTEE STATEMENT: **ASSEMBLY:** No

SENATE: Yes

(Audio archived recordings of the committee meetings, corresponding to the date of the committee statement, ***may possibly*** be found at www.njleg.state.nj.us)

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT: No

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE: Yes

A5878

INTRODUCED BILL: (Includes sponsor(s) statement) Yes

REPRINT(S): No

TECHNICAL REVIEW OF BILL: No

COMMITTEE STATEMENT: **ASSEMBLY:** Yes
SENATE: No

(Audio archived recordings of the committee meetings, corresponding to the date of the committee statement, ***may possibly*** be found at www.njleg.state.nj.us)

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT: No

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE: Yes

VETO MESSAGE: No

GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING: Yes

LEGISLATOR STATEMENT: No

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

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REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: Yes

Senate Budget & Appropriations Committee, June 26, 2025, Archival Video:

<https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/archived-media/2024/SBA-meeting-list/media-player?committee=SBA&agendaDate=2025-06-26-12:00:00&agendaType=M&av=V>

Assembly Budget Committee, June 26, 2025, Archival Video: <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/archived-media/2024/ABU-meeting-list/media-player?committee=ABU&agendaDate=2025-06-26-13:00:00&agendaType=M&av=V>

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES: Yes

Katie Sobko, NorthJersey.com, 'Murphy signs law to end most public notice publication', *Burlington County Times*(online), 2 Jul 2025 A1 <<https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=NewsBank&docref=news/1A19402613DD5F78>>

Title 35.
Chapter 3. (New)
Official
Electronic
Publication
§§1-5
C.35:3-1
to 35: 3-5

P.L. 2025, CHAPTER 72, *approved June 30, 2025*
Senate, No. 4654

1 **AN ACT** concerning publication of required legal notices,
2 supplementing Title 35 of the Revised Statutes, and amending
3 various parts of the statutory law.
4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*
7
8 1. (New section) As used in P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
9 before the Legislature as this bill):
10 "Electronic format" means an Internet website and other
11 technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical,
12 electromagnetic, or similar capabilities that is operated by or for a
13 newspaper for publication.
14 "IP address" means an Internet Protocol address.
15 "Legal notice" means any resolution, official proclamation,
16 notice or advertisement of any sort, kind, or character, including
17 proposals for bids on public work and otherwise, required by law or
18 by the order or rule of any court to be published by a public entity,
19 corporation, an individual, or any other entity.
20 "Local government unit" means a county, municipality, or other
21 political subdivision of the State, or any agency, board,
22 commission, utilities authority or other authority, or other entity
23 thereof, or a person who is a local government unit officer or
24 employee.
25 "Online news publication" means a news publication in
26 electronic format that contains news on matters of public concern
27 and has published news predominantly in the English language at
28 least once per week for at least one year continuously.
29 "Print newspaper" means a news publication in print form that
30 contains news on matters of public concern and has published news
31 predominantly in the English language at least once per week for at
32 least one year continuously.

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 "Public entity" means the State, any State agency, and any local
2 government unit, district, public authority, public agency, and any
3 other political subdivision or political body in the State.

4 "Secretary" means the Secretary of State.

5 "State agency" means any of the principal departments in the
6 Executive Branch of the State Government, and any division, board,
7 bureau, office, commission, or other instrumentality within or
8 created by a department, and, to the extent consistent with law, any
9 interstate agency to which New Jersey is a party and any
10 independent State authority, commission, instrumentality, or
11 agency. A local government unit shall not be deemed an agency or
12 instrumentality of the State.

13
14 2. (New section) a. After March 1, 2026, whenever a public
15 entity is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish
16 or advertise a legal notice, the public entity shall publish or
17 advertise the legal notice on the public entity's official Internet
18 website. The public entity's official Internet website shall be
19 accessible and available to the public free of charge. A direct
20 hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official
21 Internet website shall be conspicuously placed on the website's
22 homepage.

23 b. No later than March 1, 2026, the Secretary of State, with
24 support from the Office of Information Technology and any other
25 State agency the secretary deems necessary, shall establish an
26 Internet webpage on which shall be included hyperlinks to the legal
27 notices webpage of each public entity created pursuant to
28 subsection a. of this section. The legal notices hyperlink webpage
29 established by the secretary shall be accessible and available to the
30 public free of charge and shall be accessible by direct hyperlink
31 conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's Internet homepage.
32 Each public entity shall submit the hyperlink to the Secretary of
33 State and provide any updates thereto prior to effectuation.

34 c. No later than March 1, 2026, a public entity shall maintain
35 an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed,
36 which shall be kept for at least one year. The archive shall not be
37 subject to any records retention schedule adopted by the State
38 Records Committee nor to the "Destruction of Public Records Law
39 (1953)," P.L.1953, c.410 (C.47:3-15 et seq.). A public entity shall
40 display a legal notice on its legal notices Internet webpage for at
41 least one week, or other time period as required by law, before
42 transferring the publication to the public entity's Internet archive.
43 A local government unit shall initially publish an Internet archive
44 no later than July 1, 2026 and shall maintain the archive thereafter.

45 d. A local government unit may, in addition to the publication
46 on its official Internet website pursuant to subsection a. of this
47 section, publish or advertise a legal notice separately on an eligible
48 online news publication that meets the criteria of subsection b. of

1 section 3 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature
2 as this bill). The local government unit shall provide a notice in a
3 prominent location on its official Internet website if it publishes or
4 advertises its legal notices in an online news publication and shall
5 publish a hyperlink to the online news publication.
6

7 3. (New section)a. (1) After March 1, 2026, whenever a
8 corporation, individual, or any other entity that is not a public entity
9 is required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
10 advertise a legal notice, the corporation, individual, or other entity
11 shall publish or advertise the legal notice on an online news
12 publication that satisfies the requirements of subsection b. of this
13 section.

14 (2) The corporation, individual, or other entity shall select an
15 online news publication based on the geographic target as
16 established or implied under the law, court order, or court rule
17 requiring publication.

18 b. To be an eligible online news publication under subsection
19 a. of this section, an online news publication shall:

20 (1) use a domain name for the Internet website that will be
21 easily recognizable and understandable to users of the website as
22 belonging to that online news publication;

23 (2) maintain the online news publication on the Internet in a
24 manner that is fully accessible and searchable by members of the
25 public at all times, other than during routine maintenance or
26 circumstances outside of the operator's control;

27 (3) ensure that legal notices published or advertised on the
28 online news publication comply with the requirements that would
29 apply to the legal notices if they were published in a physical
30 newspaper, as applicable;

31 (4) maintain an archive for at least one year of notices that are
32 no longer displayed on the online news publication;

33 (5) display a legal notice for at least one week, or other time
34 period as required by law, before placing it in archive;

35 (6) enable legal notices, both those currently displayed and
36 those archived, to be accessed by key word, by party name, by case
37 number, by county, or other useful identifiers;

38 (7) maintain an adequate security system and develop a
39 contingency plan for coping with and recovering from power
40 outages, systemic failures, and other unforeseen circumstances;

41 (8) not charge a fee or require registration or a subscription to
42 view legal notices;

43 (9) maintain media liability insurance of up to \$1 million;

44 (10) have been in continuous operation for at least three years,
45 which can be satisfied by the online news publication itself or by a
46 company that has a controlling or majority interest in the online
47 news publication; and

1 (11) (a) provide the number of monthly unique website visits
2 and monthly unique website visits by users in this State and in each
3 county, as evidenced by IP address or other appropriate identifier,
4 which shall be prominently displayed on the Internet homepage of
5 the online news publication along with the criteria provided in this
6 subsection, or a hyperlink to a webpage displaying such criteria,
7 and whether the online news publication meets each criteria.

8 (b) (i) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to
9 publish legal notices for municipal-wide circulation, the online
10 news publication shall receive 4,000 unique monthly visits on
11 average as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which
12 shall be from IP addresses within the applicable municipality or
13 within a 10-mile radius of the municipality.

14 (ii) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish
15 legal notices for county-wide circulation, the online news
16 publication shall receive 50,000 unique monthly visits on average
17 as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be
18 from IP addresses within the applicable county or within a 10-mile
19 radius of the county.

20 (iii) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish
21 legal notices for State-wide circulation, the online news publication
22 shall receive 350,000 unique monthly visits on average as
23 calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be from
24 IP addresses within the State.

25 c. The price to be paid for publishing all public notices or legal
26 notices in an online news publication pursuant to P.L. , c.
27 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), shall not
28 exceed the rates established pursuant to R.S.35:2-1.

29 d. Unless otherwise provided pursuant to applicable law or
30 court rule or order, an online news publication that receives a legal
31 notice for publication pursuant to this section shall publish the
32 notice within 24 hours of receipt.

33 e. An online news publication that falsely represents that it
34 meets the criteria established pursuant to subsection b. of this
35 section and accepts legal notices for publication shall deemed to
36 have committed an unlawful practice under P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-
37 1 et seq.) and liable to enforcement by the Attorney General
38 pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-1 et seq.).
39

40 4. (New section) a. A public entity, corporation, or individual
41 required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
42 advertise a legal notice shall publish or advertise the notice in
43 accordance with the applicable law or court order or rule.

44 b. A public entity, corporation, or individual shall be deemed to
45 satisfy their legal obligations to provide a legal notice upon
46 publication of the notice as required pursuant to P.L. , c.
47 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

1 c. Legal notices published on a public entity's Internet website
2 or the Internet website of an online news publication in accordance
3 with P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
4 bill) shall not be deemed defective if at least one of the following
5 circumstances exist:

6 (1) there is an error in the content or form of the legal notice
7 published or advertised on a public entity's Internet website or
8 online news publication due to a clerical, administrative, or any
9 other error outside of the control of the public entity, corporation, or
10 individual required by law or court order or rule to publish the legal
11 notice;

12 (2) there is a temporary outage, technical malfunction,
13 disruption, or service interruption preventing the publishing,
14 posting, or display of a legal notice on the public entity's Internet
15 website or online news publication;

16 (3) the operator of the public entity's Internet website or the
17 online news publication imposes standard restrictions that prevent
18 access to the website or online news publication;

19 (4) the public entity's Internet website or the online news
20 publication is subject to a cyberattack or cybersecurity incident,
21 including but not limited to ransomware or a data breach, causing
22 the failure to timely or accurately publish the legal notice; or

23 (5) any other circumstances preventing the publishing, posting,
24 or display of a legal notice on the public entity Internet website or
25 online news publication that are outside of the control of the public
26 entity, corporation, or individual required by law or court order or
27 rule to publish the legal notice.

28

29 5. (New section) a. Starting on January 1, 2026 and at least
30 twice per month through December 31, 2026, a public entity
31 required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
32 advertise a legal notice, or that elects to publish or advertise a legal
33 notice before that date pursuant to P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
34 before the Legislature as this bill), shall provide an advertisement in
35 an online news publication that meets the requirements of
36 subsection b. of section 3 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
37 the Legislature as this bill), that:

38 (1) states that the complete text of each legal notice may be
39 obtained or viewed by the public on the official Internet website of
40 each public entity; and

41 (2) provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal
42 notices hyperlink Internet webpage established pursuant to
43 subsection b. of section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
44 the Legislature as this bill).

45 b. Until the Secretary of State establishes the legal notices
46 hyperlinks Internet webpage pursuant to subsection b. of section 3
47 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
48 bill), a public entity that elects to comply with the provisions of

1 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill)
2 shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of P.L. , c.
3 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill) without
4 publication of the public entity's hyperlink on the Internet webpage
5 to be established pursuant to subsection b. of section 3 of P.L. , c.
6 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

7
8 6. R.S.40:53-2 is amended to read as follows:

9 40:53-2. a. All ordinances or other public notices which any
10 municipality, except cities, may be required by any law to publish,
11 where the manner of publication is not otherwise specifically
12 provided for, shall until March 1, 2026 be published either in at
13 least one newspaper published and circulating in the municipality,
14 and if there be no such newspaper, then in at least one newspaper
15 published in the county in which the municipality is located and
16 circulating in the municipality or consistent with section 2 of
17 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

18 b. After March 1, 2026, all ordinances or other public notices
19 which any municipality, except cities, may be required by any law
20 to publish, where the manner of publication is not otherwise
21 specifically provided for, shall be published consistent with section
22 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
23 bill).

24 (cf: R.S.40:53-2)

25
26 7. N.J.S.40A:2-19 is amended to read as follows:

27 40A:2-19. 1. a. Publications required by this chapter
28 shall, until March 1, 2026, either in the case of a municipality, be in
29 a newspaper published and circulating in the municipality, if there
30 be one, and if not, in a newspaper published in the county and
31 circulating in the municipality. In the case of a county, publications
32 shall be in a newspaper published at the county seat, if there be one,
33 and if not, in a newspaper published and circulating in the county.
34 For the purposes of this section, a newspaper shall not be deemed to
35 be published during any period of time in which the publication of
36 such newspaper shall be interrupted by any involuntary suspension
37 of publication resulting from loss, destruction, mechanical or
38 electric failure of typesetting equipment or printing presses or the
39 unavailability due to conditions beyond the control of the publisher,
40 of paper or other materials and supplies necessary for operation, or
41 resulting from a labor dispute with a recognized labor union or be
42 published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c.
43 (C. or C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

44 b. After March 1, 2026 publications required by this chapter
45 shall be published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of
46 P.L. , c. (C. or C.) (pending before the Legislature as
47 this bill).

48 (cf: P.L.1970, c.318, s.1)

1 8. R.S.35:1-2.2 is amended to read as follows:

2 35:1-2.2. a. Whenever until March 1, 2026, by law, it is
3 required that there be published by printing and publishing in a
4 newspaper or newspapers, ordinances, resolutions or notices or
5 advertisements of any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or
6 other municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal
7 board or official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any
8 person or corporation, **【such】** the newspaper or newspapers **【must】**
9 shall, in addition to any other qualification now required by law,
10 meet the following qualifications, namely: **【said】** the newspaper or
11 newspapers shall be entirely printed in the English language, shall
12 be printed and published within the State of New Jersey, shall be a
13 newspaper of general paid circulation possessing an average news
14 content of not less than 35 **【%】** percent, shall have been published
15 continuously in the municipality where its publication office is
16 situate for not less than **【2】** two years and shall have been entered
17 for **【2】** two years as second-class mail matter under the postal laws
18 and regulations of the United States. In case a newspaper cannot
19 meet these qualifications itself but has acquired another newspaper
20 which meets these qualifications, the acquiring newspaper shall be
21 deemed to meet these qualifications if it is published in the same
22 municipality and entered in the same post office as was the acquired
23 newspaper. Continuous publication within the meaning of this
24 section shall not be deemed interrupted by any involuntary
25 suspension of publication for a period not exceeding **【6】** six
26 months resulting from loss, destruction, mechanical or electrical
27 failure of typesetting equipment or printing presses or the
28 unavailability, due to conditions beyond the control or the
29 publisher, of paper or other materials and supplies necessary for
30 operation, or resulting from a labor dispute with a recognized labor
31 union, and any newspaper so affected shall not be disqualified
32 hereunder in the event that publication is resumed within said
33 period of **【6】** six months.

34 For the purposes of this section and for the purpose of qualifying
35 for legal advertisements generally, any newspaper which for not
36 less than **【2】** two years shall have been continuously printed in a
37 building located within two municipalities and which for not less
38 than **【2】** two years shall have continuously maintained its editorial
39 and business offices in said building shall be deemed to have been
40 published continuously in each of said municipalities during that
41 period and its publication office shall be deemed to have been
42 situate in each municipality during that period.

43 In the event any newspaper which shall have been qualified to
44 publish legal advertisements shall move its publication office to
45 any municipality in the same county or in an adjacent county in
46 this State and which shall otherwise continue to meet the
47 qualifications of this section, it shall be qualified to publish legal

1 advertisements which it was qualified to publish prior to moving
2 said publication office for a period of **[2]** two years after the date
3 of the moving of its publication office or such period as **[said]** the
4 newspaper shall have the highest paid circulation of any newspaper
5 within the county or municipality which shall use said newspaper
6 for legal advertisements.

7 b. In lieu of the requirements of subsection a. of this section,
8 whenever until March 1, 2026, by law, it is required that there be
9 published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or newspapers,
10 ordinances, resolutions or notices or advertisements of any sort,
11 kind, or character by any county, city, or other municipality or
12 municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or official board,
13 or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or corporation, the
14 newspaper or newspapers may be published consistent with section
15 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c. (C. or C.) (pending
16 before the Legislature as this bill).

17 c. After March 1, 2026 whenever, by law, it is required that
18 there be published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or
19 newspapers, ordinances, resolutions or notices or advertisements of
20 any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or other
21 municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or
22 official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or
23 corporation, the newspaper or newspapers shall be published
24 consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c.
25 (C. or C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

26 (cf: P.L.1979, c.84, s.1)

27
28 9. Section 1 of P.L.2024, c.106, as amended by P.L.2025, c.22,
29 is amended to read as follows:

30 1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, regulation, or municipal
31 ordinance to the contrary, a newspaper utilized or permitted to be
32 utilized by a person for the purpose of complying with any legal
33 requirement, or a public body, as defined in section 3 of the "Open
34 Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231 (C.10:4-8), from January 1,
35 2024 through December 31, 2024 for the purpose of complying with
36 R.S.35:1-2.2 or any other requirements for issuing or publishing a
37 public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not limited to,
38 for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the solicitation of bids,
39 qualifications, or proposals, or the publication of any ordinances,
40 synopses, or summaries of official documents, shall be deemed
41 eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to **[June 30,**
42 **2025]** March 1, 2026 if the newspaper's publication is in print or
43 electronic format. The price to be paid for publishing all public
44 notices or legal advertisements in print or electronic format as
45 described in this section shall not exceed the rates established
46 pursuant to R.S.35:2-1. A fee shall not be charged, and registration
47 shall not be required, for viewing public notices or legal
48 advertisements published in an electronic format.

1 month in an eligible online news publication that: states that the
2 complete text of each legal notice may be obtained or viewed by the
3 public on the official Internet website of the public entity; and
4 provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal notices
5 hyperlink Internet webpage, with exceptions provided in the bill.

6 Additionally, under current law, a newspaper utilized, or
7 permitted to be utilized, by a person or public body, as defined in
8 section 3 of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231
9 (C.10:4-8), from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 for
10 the purpose of complying with any requirements for issuing or
11 publishing a public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not
12 limited to, for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the
13 solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication
14 of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents, is
15 deemed eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to June
16 30, 2025 if the newspaper's publication is in print or electronic
17 format. This bill amends that law to provide that public bodies may
18 continue using qualifying newspapers for required public notices
19 and legal advertisements until March 1, 2026 regardless of format.

20 The bill is to take effect immediately.

21
22
23
24
25 Provides for publication of required legal notices on government
26 Internet websites and through certain online news publications.

CHAPTER 72

AN ACT concerning publication of required legal notices, supplementing Title 35 of the Revised Statutes, and amending various parts of the statutory law.

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

C.35:3-1 Definitions.

1. As used in P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-1 et al.):

"Electronic format" means an Internet website and other technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities that is operated by or for a newspaper for publication.

"IP address" means an Internet Protocol address.

"Legal notice" means any resolution, official proclamation, notice, or advertisement of any sort, kind, or character, including proposals for bids on public work and otherwise, required by law or by the order or rule of any court to be published by a public entity, corporation, an individual, or any other entity.

"Local government unit" means a county, municipality, or other political subdivision of the State, or any agency, board, commission, utilities authority or other authority, or other entity thereof, or a person who is a local government unit officer or employee.

"Online news publication" means a news publication in electronic format that contains news on matters of public concern and has published news predominantly in the English language at least once per week for at least one year continuously.

"Print newspaper" means a news publication in print form that contains news on matters of public concern and has published news predominantly in the English language at least once per week for at least one year continuously.

"Public entity" means the State, any State agency, and any local government unit, district, public authority, public agency, and any other political subdivision or political body in the State.

"Secretary" means the Secretary of State.

"State agency" means any of the principal departments in the Executive Branch of the State Government and any division, board, bureau, office, commission, or other instrumentality within or created by a department and, to the extent consistent with law, any interstate agency to which New Jersey is a party and any independent State authority, commission, instrumentality, or agency. A local government unit shall not be deemed an agency or instrumentality of the State.

C.35:3-2 Public entities to publish, advertise legal notices on official Internet website.

2. a. After March 1, 2026, whenever a public entity is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the public entity shall publish or advertise the legal notice on the public entity's official Internet website. The public entity's official Internet website shall be accessible and available to the public free of charge. A direct hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official Internet website shall be conspicuously placed on the website's homepage.

b. No later than March 1, 2026, the Secretary of State, with support from the Office of Information Technology and any other State agency the secretary deems necessary, shall establish an Internet webpage on which shall be included hyperlinks to the legal notices webpage of each public entity created pursuant to subsection a. of this section. The legal notices hyperlink webpage established by the secretary shall be accessible and available to the public free of charge and shall be accessible by direct hyperlink conspicuously placed on the

Secretary of State's Internet homepage. Each public entity shall submit the hyperlink to the Secretary of State and provide any updates thereto prior to effectuation.

c. No later than March 1, 2026, a public entity shall maintain an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed, which shall be kept for at least one year. The archive shall not be subject to any records retention schedule adopted by the State Records Committee nor to the "Destruction of Public Records Law (1953)," P.L.1953, c.410 (C.47:3-15 et seq.). A public entity shall display a legal notice on its legal notices Internet webpage for at least one week, or other time period as required by law, before transferring the publication to the public entity's Internet archive. A local government unit shall initially publish an Internet archive no later than July 1, 2026 and shall maintain the archive thereafter.

d. A local government unit may, in addition to the publication on its official Internet website pursuant to subsection a. of this section, publish or advertise a legal notice separately on an eligible online news publication that meets the criteria of subsection b. of section 3 of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-3). The local government unit shall provide a notice in a prominent location on its official Internet website if it publishes or advertises its legal notices in an online news publication and shall publish a hyperlink to the online news publication.

C.35:3-3 Non-public entities, publishing, advertising legal notices, online publication, eligibility.

3. a. (1) After March 1, 2026, whenever a corporation, individual, or any other entity that is not a public entity is required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the corporation, individual, or other entity shall publish or advertise the legal notice on an online news publication that satisfies the requirements of subsection b. of this section.

(2) The corporation, individual, or other entity shall select an online news publication based on the geographic target as established or implied under the law, court order, or court rule requiring publication.

b. To be an eligible online news publication under subsection a. of this section, an online news publication shall:

(1) use a domain name for the Internet website that will be easily recognizable and understandable to users of the website as belonging to that online news publication;

(2) maintain the online news publication on the Internet in a manner that is fully accessible and searchable by members of the public at all times, other than during routine maintenance or circumstances outside of the operator's control;

(3) ensure that legal notices published or advertised on the online news publication comply with the requirements that would apply to the legal notices if they were published in a physical newspaper, as applicable;

(4) maintain an archive for at least one year of notices that are no longer displayed on the online news publication;

(5) display a legal notice for at least one week, or other time period as required by law, before placing it in archive;

(6) enable legal notices, both those currently displayed and those archived, to be accessed by key word, by party name, by case number, by county, or other useful identifiers;

(7) maintain an adequate security system and develop a contingency plan for coping with and recovering from power outages, systemic failures, and other unforeseen circumstances;

(8) not charge a fee or require registration or a subscription to view legal notices;

(9) maintain media liability insurance of up to \$1 million;

(10) have been in continuous operation for at least three years, which can be satisfied by the online news publication itself or by a company that has a controlling or majority interest in the online news publication; and

(11) (a) provide the number of monthly unique website visits and monthly unique website visits by users in this State and in each county, as evidenced by IP address or other appropriate identifier, which shall be prominently displayed on the Internet homepage of the online news publication along with the criteria provided in this subsection, or a hyperlink to a webpage displaying such criteria, and whether the online news publication meets each criteria.

(b) (i) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish legal notices for municipal-wide circulation, the online news publication shall receive 4,000 unique monthly visits on average as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be from IP addresses within the applicable municipality or within a 10-mile radius of the municipality.

(ii) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish legal notices for county-wide circulation, the online news publication shall receive 50,000 unique monthly visits on average as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be from IP addresses within the applicable county or within a 10-mile radius of the county.

(iii) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish legal notices for State-wide circulation, the online news publication shall receive 350,000 unique monthly visits on average as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be from IP addresses within the State.

c. The price to be paid for publishing all public notices or legal notices in an online news publication pursuant to P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-1 et al.), shall not exceed the rates established pursuant to R.S.35:2-1.

d. Unless otherwise provided pursuant to applicable law or court rule or order, an online news publication that receives a legal notice for publication pursuant to this section shall publish the notice within 24 hours of receipt.

e. An online news publication that falsely represents that it meets the criteria established pursuant to subsection b. of this section and accepts legal notices for publication shall be deemed to have committed an unlawful practice under P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-1 et seq.) and liable to enforcement by the Attorney General pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-1 et seq.).

C.35:3-4 Public entity, corporation, individual required to publish, advertise legal notices, applicable law, compliance.

4. a. A public entity, corporation, or individual required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice shall publish or advertise the notice in accordance with the applicable law or court order or rule.

b. A public entity, corporation, or individual shall be deemed to satisfy their legal obligations to provide a legal notice upon publication of the notice as required pursuant to P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-1 et al.).

c. Legal notices published on a public entity's Internet website or the Internet website of an online news publication in accordance with P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-1 et al.) shall not be deemed defective if at least one of the following circumstances exist:

(1) there is an error in the content or form of the legal notice published or advertised on a public entity's Internet website or online news publication due to a clerical, administrative, or any other error outside of the control of the public entity, corporation, or individual required by law or court order or rule to publish the legal notice;

(2) there is a temporary outage, technical malfunction, disruption, or service interruption preventing the publishing, posting, or display of a legal notice on the public entity's Internet website or online news publication;

(3) the operator of the public entity's Internet website or the online news publication imposes standard restrictions that prevent access to the website or online news publication;

(4) the public entity's Internet website or the online news publication is subject to a cyberattack or cybersecurity incident, including, but not limited to, ransomware or a data breach, causing the failure to timely or accurately publish the legal notice; or

(5) any other circumstances preventing the publishing, posting, or display of a legal notice on the public entity Internet website or online news publication that are outside of the control of the public entity, corporation, or individual required by law or court order or rule to publish the legal notice.

C.35:3-5 Legal notice published by public entities, advertisement, content requirements.

5. a. Starting on January 1, 2026 and at least twice per month through December 31, 2026, a public entity required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, or that elects to publish or advertise a legal notice before that date pursuant to P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-1 et al.), shall provide an advertisement in an online news publication that meets the requirements of subsection b. of section 3 of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-3), that:

(1) states that the complete text of each legal notice may be obtained or viewed by the public on the official Internet website of each public entity; and

(2) provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal notices hyperlink Internet webpage established pursuant to subsection b. of section 2 of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2).

b. Until the Secretary of State establishes the legal notices hyperlinks Internet webpage pursuant to subsection b. of section 2 of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2), a public entity that elects to comply with the provisions of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-1 et al.) shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-1 et al.) without publication of the public entity's hyperlink on the Internet webpage to be established pursuant to subsection b. of section 2 of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2).

6. R.S.40:53-2 is amended to read as follows:

Public notices generally; publication.

40:53-2. a. All ordinances or other public notices which any municipality, except cities, may be required by any law to publish, where the manner of publication is not otherwise specifically provided for, shall until March 1, 2026 be published either in at least one newspaper published and circulating in the municipality, and if there be no such newspaper, then in at least one newspaper published in the county in which the municipality is located and circulating in the municipality or consistent with section 2 of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2).

b. After March 1, 2026, all ordinances or other public notices which any municipality, except cities, may be required by any law to publish, where the manner of publication is not otherwise specifically provided for, shall be published consistent with section 2 of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2).

7. N.J.S.40A:2-19 is amended to read as follows:

Publications.

40A:2-19. 1. a. Publications required by this chapter shall, until March 1, 2026, either in the case of a municipality, be in a newspaper published and circulating in the municipality, if there be one, and if not, in a newspaper published in the county and circulating in the municipality. In the case of a county, publications shall be in a newspaper published at the county seat, if there be one, and if not, in a newspaper published and circulating in the county.

For the purposes of this section, a newspaper shall not be deemed to be published during any period of time in which the publication of such newspaper shall be interrupted by any involuntary suspension of publication resulting from loss, destruction, mechanical or electric failure of typesetting equipment or printing presses or the unavailability due to conditions beyond the control of the publisher, of paper or other materials and supplies necessary for operation, or resulting from a labor dispute with a recognized labor union or be published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2 or C.35:3-3).

b. After March 1, 2026 publications required by this chapter shall be published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2 or C.35:3-3).

8. R.S.35:1-2.2 is amended to read as follows:

Publication by counties, municipalities, individuals or corporations; additional qualifications of newspaper.

35:1-2.2. a. Whenever, until March 1, 2026, by law, it is required that there be published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or newspapers, ordinances, resolutions, or notices or advertisements of any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or other municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or corporation, the newspaper or newspapers shall, in addition to any other qualification now required by law, meet the following qualifications, namely: the newspaper or newspapers shall be entirely printed in the English language, shall be printed and published within the State of New Jersey, shall be a newspaper of general paid circulation possessing an average news content of not less than 35 percent, shall have been published continuously in the municipality where its publication office is situate for not less than two years and shall have been entered for two years as second-class mail matter under the postal laws and regulations of the United States. In case a newspaper cannot meet these qualifications itself but has acquired another newspaper which meets these qualifications, the acquiring newspaper shall be deemed to meet these qualifications if it is published in the same municipality and entered in the same post office as was the acquired newspaper. Continuous publication within the meaning of this section shall not be deemed interrupted by any involuntary suspension of publication for a period not exceeding six months resulting from loss, destruction, mechanical or electrical failure of typesetting equipment or printing presses or the unavailability, due to conditions beyond the control of the publisher, of paper or other materials and supplies necessary for operation, or resulting from a labor dispute with a recognized labor union, and any newspaper so affected shall not be disqualified hereunder in the event that publication is resumed within said period of six months.

For the purposes of this section and for the purpose of qualifying for legal advertisements generally, any newspaper which for not less than two years shall have been continuously printed in a building located within two municipalities and which for not less than two years shall have continuously maintained its editorial and business offices in said building shall be deemed to have been published continuously in each of said municipalities during that period and its publication office shall be deemed to have been situate in each municipality during that period.

In the event any newspaper which shall have been qualified to publish legal advertisements shall move its publication office to any municipality in the same county or in an adjacent county in this State and which shall otherwise continue to meet the qualifications of this section, it shall be qualified to publish legal advertisements which it was qualified to publish prior to moving said publication office for a period of two years after the date of the moving of its publication office or such period as the newspaper shall have the highest paid circulation of any newspaper within the county or municipality which shall use said newspaper for legal advertisements.

b. In lieu of the requirements of subsection a. of this section, whenever, until March 1, 2026, by law, it is required that there be published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or newspapers, ordinances, resolutions, or notices or advertisements of any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or other municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or corporation, the newspaper or newspapers may be published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2 or C.35:3-3).

c. After March 1, 2026 whenever, by law, it is required that there be published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or newspapers, ordinances, resolutions, or notices or advertisements of any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or other municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or corporation, the newspaper or newspapers shall be published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L.2025, c.72 (C.35:3-2 or C.35:3-3).

9. Section 1 of P.L.2024, c.106, is amended to read as follows:

1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, regulation, or municipal ordinance to the contrary, a newspaper utilized or permitted to be utilized by a person for the purpose of complying with any legal requirement, or a public body, as defined in section 3 of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231 (C.10:4-8), from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 for the purpose of complying with R.S.35:1-2.2 or any other requirements for issuing or publishing a public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not limited to, for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents, shall be deemed eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to March 1, 2026 if the newspaper's publication is in print or electronic format. The price to be paid for publishing all public notices or legal advertisements in print or electronic format as described in this section shall not exceed the rates established pursuant to R.S.35:2-1. A fee shall not be charged, and registration shall not be required, for viewing public notices or legal advertisements published in an electronic format.

b. For the purposes of this section, "electronic format" means an Internet website and other technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities that is operated by or for a newspaper for publication.

10. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved June 30, 2025.

SENATE, No. 4654

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 19, 2025

Sponsored by:

Senator NICHOLAS P. SCUTARI

District 22 (Somerset and Union)

Senator ANTHONY M. BUCCO

District 25 (Morris and Passaic)

Assemblyman ALEXANDER "AVI" SCHNALL

District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)

Assemblyman MICHAEL INGANAMORT

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Murphy

SYNOPSIS

Provides for publication of required legal notices on government Internet websites and through certain online news publications.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/30/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning publication of required legal notices,
2 supplementing Title 35 of the Revised Statutes, and amending
3 various parts of the statutory law.

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

7
8 1. (New section) As used in P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
9 before the Legislature as this bill):

10 "Electronic format" means an Internet website and other
11 technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical,
12 electromagnetic, or similar capabilities that is operated by or for a
13 newspaper for publication.

14 "IP address" means an Internet Protocol address.

15 "Legal notice" means any resolution, official proclamation,
16 notice or advertisement of any sort, kind, or character, including
17 proposals for bids on public work and otherwise, required by law or
18 by the order or rule of any court to be published by a public entity,
19 corporation, an individual, or any other entity.

20 "Local government unit" means a county, municipality, or other
21 political subdivision of the State, or any agency, board,
22 commission, utilities authority or other authority, or other entity
23 thereof, or a person who is a local government unit officer or
24 employee.

25 "Online news publication" means a news publication in
26 electronic format that contains news on matters of public concern
27 and has published news predominantly in the English language at
28 least once per week for at least one year continuously.

29 "Print newspaper" means a news publication in print form that
30 contains news on matters of public concern and has published news
31 predominantly in the English language at least once per week for at
32 least one year continuously.

33 "Public entity" means the State, any State agency, and any local
34 government unit, district, public authority, public agency, and any
35 other political subdivision or political body in the State.

36 "Secretary" means the Secretary of State.

37 "State agency" means any of the principal departments in the
38 Executive Branch of the State Government, and any division, board,
39 bureau, office, commission, or other instrumentality within or
40 created by a department, and, to the extent consistent with law, any
41 interstate agency to which New Jersey is a party and any
42 independent State authority, commission, instrumentality, or
43 agency. A local government unit shall not be deemed an agency or
44 instrumentality of the State.

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 2. (New section)a. After March 1, 2026, whenever a public
2 entity is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish
3 or advertise a legal notice, the public entity shall publish or
4 advertise the legal notice on the public entity's official Internet
5 website. The public entity's official Internet website shall be
6 accessible and available to the public free of charge. A direct
7 hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official
8 Internet website shall be conspicuously placed on the website's
9 homepage.

10 b. No later than March 1, 2026, the Secretary of State, with
11 support from the Office of Information Technology and any other
12 State agency the secretary deems necessary, shall establish an
13 Internet webpage on which shall be included hyperlinks to the legal
14 notices webpage of each public entity created pursuant to
15 subsection a. of this section. The legal notices hyperlink webpage
16 established by the secretary shall be accessible and available to the
17 public free of charge and shall be accessible by direct hyperlink
18 conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's Internet homepage.
19 Each public entity shall submit the hyperlink to the Secretary of
20 State and provide any updates thereto prior to effectuation.

21 c. No later than March 1, 2026, a public entity shall maintain
22 an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed,
23 which shall be kept for at least one year. The archive shall not be
24 subject to any records retention schedule adopted by the State
25 Records Committee nor to the "Destruction of Public Records Law
26 (1953)," P.L.1953, c.410 (C.47:3-15 et seq.). A public entity shall
27 display a legal notice on its legal notices Internet webpage for at
28 least one week, or other time period as required by law, before
29 transferring the publication to the public entity's Internet archive.
30 A local government unit shall initially publish an Internet archive
31 no later than July 1, 2026 and shall maintain the archive thereafter.

32 d. A local government unit may, in addition to the publication
33 on its official Internet website pursuant to subsection a. of this
34 section, publish or advertise a legal notice separately on an eligible
35 online news publication that meets the criteria of subsection b. of
36 section 3 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature
37 as this bill). The local government unit shall provide a notice in a
38 prominent location on its official Internet website if it publishes or
39 advertises its legal notices in an online news publication and shall
40 publish a hyperlink to the online news publication.

41

42 3. (New section)a. (1) After March 1, 2026, whenever a
43 corporation, individual, or any other entity that is not a public entity
44 is required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
45 advertise a legal notice, the corporation, individual, or other entity
46 shall publish or advertise the legal notice on an online news
47 publication that satisfies the requirements of subsection b. of this
48 section.

1 (2) The corporation, individual, or other entity shall select an
2 online news publication based on the geographic target as
3 established or implied under the law, court order, or court rule
4 requiring publication.

5 b. To be an eligible online news publication under subsection
6 a. of this section, an online news publication shall:

7 (1) use a domain name for the Internet website that will be
8 easily recognizable and understandable to users of the website as
9 belonging to that online news publication;

10 (2) maintain the online news publication on the Internet in a
11 manner that is fully accessible and searchable by members of the
12 public at all times, other than during routine maintenance or
13 circumstances outside of the operator's control;

14 (3) ensure that legal notices published or advertised on the
15 online news publication comply with the requirements that would
16 apply to the legal notices if they were published in a physical
17 newspaper, as applicable;

18 (4) maintain an archive for at least one year of notices that are
19 no longer displayed on the online news publication;

20 (5) display a legal notice for at least one week, or other time
21 period as required by law, before placing it in archive;

22 (6) enable legal notices, both those currently displayed and
23 those archived, to be accessed by key word, by party name, by case
24 number, by county, or other useful identifiers;

25 (7) maintain an adequate security system and develop a
26 contingency plan for coping with and recovering from power
27 outages, systemic failures, and other unforeseen circumstances;

28 (8) not charge a fee or require registration or a subscription to
29 view legal notices;

30 (9) maintain media liability insurance of up to \$1 million;

31 (10) have been in continuous operation for at least three years,
32 which can be satisfied by the online news publication itself or by a
33 company that has a controlling or majority interest in the online
34 news publication; and

35 (11) (a) provide the number of monthly unique website visits
36 and monthly unique website visits by users in this State and in each
37 county, as evidenced by IP address or other appropriate identifier,
38 which shall be prominently displayed on the Internet homepage of
39 the online news publication along with the criteria provided in this
40 subsection, or a hyperlink to a webpage displaying such criteria,
41 and whether the online news publication meets each criteria.

42 (b) (i) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to
43 publish legal notices for municipal-wide circulation, the online
44 news publication shall receive 4,000 unique monthly visits on
45 average as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which
46 shall be from IP addresses within the applicable municipality or
47 within a 10-mile radius of the municipality.

1 (ii) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish
2 legal notices for county-wide circulation, the online news
3 publication shall receive 50,000 unique monthly visits on average
4 as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be
5 from IP addresses within the applicable county or within a 10-mile
6 radius of the county.

7 (iii) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish
8 legal notices for State-wide circulation, the online news publication
9 shall receive 350,000 unique monthly visits on average as
10 calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be from
11 IP addresses within the State.

12 c. The price to be paid for publishing all public notices or legal
13 notices in an online news publication pursuant to P.L. , c.
14 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), shall not
15 exceed the rates established pursuant to R.S.35:2-1.

16 d. Unless otherwise provided pursuant to applicable law or
17 court rule or order, an online news publication that receives a legal
18 notice for publication pursuant to this section shall publish the
19 notice within 24 hours of receipt.

20 e. An online news publication that falsely represents that it
21 meets the criteria established pursuant to subsection b. of this
22 section and accepts legal notices for publication shall deemed to
23 have committed an unlawful practice under P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-
24 1 et seq.) and liable to enforcement by the Attorney General
25 pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-1 et seq.).
26

27 4. (New section) a. A public entity, corporation, or individual
28 required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
29 advertise a legal notice shall publish or advertise the notice in
30 accordance with the applicable law or court order or rule.

31 b. A public entity, corporation, or individual shall be deemed to
32 satisfy their legal obligations to provide a legal notice upon
33 publication of the notice as required pursuant to P.L. , c.
34 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

35 c. Legal notices published on a public entity's Internet website
36 or the Internet website of an online news publication in accordance
37 with P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
38 bill) shall not be deemed defective if at least one of the following
39 circumstances exist:

40 (1) there is an error in the content or form of the legal notice
41 published or advertised on a public entity's Internet website or
42 online news publication due to a clerical, administrative, or any
43 other error outside of the control of the public entity, corporation, or
44 individual required by law or court order or rule to publish the legal
45 notice;

46 (2) there is a temporary outage, technical malfunction,
47 disruption, or service interruption preventing the publishing,

1 posting, or display of a legal notice on the public entity's Internet
2 website or online news publication;

3 (3) the operator of the public entity's Internet website or the
4 online news publication imposes standard restrictions that prevent
5 access to the website or online news publication;

6 (4) the public entity's Internet website or the online news
7 publication is subject to a cyberattack or cybersecurity incident,
8 including but not limited to ransomware or a data breach, causing
9 the failure to timely or accurately publish the legal notice; or

10 (5) any other circumstances preventing the publishing, posting,
11 or display of a legal notice on the public entity Internet website or
12 online news publication that are outside of the control of the public
13 entity, corporation, or individual required by law or court order or
14 rule to publish the legal notice.

15

16 5. (New section) a. Starting on January 1, 2026 and at least
17 twice per month through December 31, 2026, a public entity
18 required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
19 advertise a legal notice, or that elects to publish or advertise a legal
20 notice before that date pursuant to P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
21 before the Legislature as this bill), shall provide an advertisement in
22 an online news publication that meets the requirements of
23 subsection b. of section 3 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
24 the Legislature as this bill), that:

25 (1) states that the complete text of each legal notice may be
26 obtained or viewed by the public on the official Internet website of
27 each public entity; and

28 (2) provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal
29 notices hyperlink Internet webpage established pursuant to
30 subsection b. of section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
31 the Legislature as this bill).

32 b. Until the Secretary of State establishes the legal notices
33 hyperlinks Internet webpage pursuant to subsection b. of section 3
34 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
35 bill), a public entity that elects to comply with the provisions of
36 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill)
37 shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of P.L. , c.
38 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill) without
39 publication of the public entity's hyperlink on the Internet webpage
40 to be established pursuant to subsection b. of section 3 of P.L. , c.
41 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

42

43 6. R.S.40:53-2 is amended to read as follows:

44 40:53-2. a. All ordinances or other public notices which any
45 municipality, except cities, may be required by any law to publish,
46 where the manner of publication is not otherwise specifically
47 provided for, shall until March 1, 2026 be published either in at
48 least one newspaper published and circulating in the municipality,

1 and if there be no such newspaper, then in at least one newspaper
2 published in the county in which the municipality is located and
3 circulating in the municipality or consistent with section 2 of
4 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

5 b. After March 1, 2026, all ordinances or other public notices
6 which any municipality, except cities, may be required by any law
7 to publish, where the manner of publication is not otherwise
8 specifically provided for, shall be published consistent with section
9 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
10 bill).

11 (cf: R.S.40:53-2)

12
13 7. N.J.S.40A:2-19 is amended to read as follows:

14 40A:2-19. 1. a. Publications required by this chapter
15 shall, until March 1, 2026, either in the case of a municipality, be in
16 a newspaper published and circulating in the municipality, if there
17 be one, and if not, in a newspaper published in the county and
18 circulating in the municipality. In the case of a county, publications
19 shall be in a newspaper published at the county seat, if there be one,
20 and if not, in a newspaper published and circulating in the county.
21 For the purposes of this section, a newspaper shall not be deemed to
22 be published during any period of time in which the publication of
23 such newspaper shall be interrupted by any involuntary suspension
24 of publication resulting from loss, destruction, mechanical or
25 electric failure of typesetting equipment or printing presses or the
26 unavailability due to conditions beyond the control of the publisher,
27 of paper or other materials and supplies necessary for operation, or
28 resulting from a labor dispute with a recognized labor union or be
29 published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c.
30 (C. or C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

31 b. After March 1, 2026 publications required by this chapter
32 shall be published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of
33 P.L. , c. (C. or C.) (pending before the Legislature as
34 this bill).

35 (cf: P.L.1970, c.318, s.1)

36
37 8. R.S.35:1-2.2 is amended to read as follows:

38 35:1-2.2. a. Whenever until March 1, 2026, by law, it is
39 required that there be published by printing and publishing in a
40 newspaper or newspapers, ordinances, resolutions or notices or
41 advertisements of any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or
42 other municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal
43 board or official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any
44 person or corporation, [such] the newspaper or newspapers [must]
45 shall, in addition to any other qualification now required by law,
46 meet the following qualifications, namely: [said] the newspaper or
47 newspapers shall be entirely printed in the English language, shall
48 be printed and published within the State of New Jersey, shall be a

1 newspaper of general paid circulation possessing an average news
2 content of not less than 35 **[%]** percent, shall have been published
3 continuously in the municipality where its publication office is
4 situate for not less than **[2]** two years and shall have been entered
5 for **[2]** two years as second-class mail matter under the postal laws
6 and regulations of the United States. In case a newspaper cannot
7 meet these qualifications itself but has acquired another newspaper
8 which meets these qualifications, the acquiring newspaper shall be
9 deemed to meet these qualifications if it is published in the same
10 municipality and entered in the same post office as was the acquired
11 newspaper. Continuous publication within the meaning of this
12 section shall not be deemed interrupted by any involuntary
13 suspension of publication for a period not exceeding **[6]** six
14 months resulting from loss, destruction, mechanical or electrical
15 failure of typesetting equipment or printing presses or the
16 unavailability, due to conditions beyond the control or the
17 publisher, of paper or other materials and supplies necessary for
18 operation, or resulting from a labor dispute with a recognized labor
19 union, and any newspaper so affected shall not be disqualified
20 hereunder in the event that publication is resumed within said
21 period of **[6]** six months.

22 For the purposes of this section and for the purpose of qualifying
23 for legal advertisements generally, any newspaper which for not
24 less than **[2]** two years shall have been continuously printed in a
25 building located within two municipalities and which for not less
26 than **[2]** two years shall have continuously maintained its editorial
27 and business offices in said building shall be deemed to have been
28 published continuously in each of said municipalities during that
29 period and its publication office shall be deemed to have been
30 situate in each municipality during that period.

31 In the event any newspaper which shall have been qualified to
32 publish legal advertisements shall move its publication office to
33 any municipality in the same county or in an adjacent county in
34 this State and which shall otherwise continue to meet the
35 qualifications of this section, it shall be qualified to publish legal
36 advertisements which it was qualified to publish prior to moving
37 said publication office for a period of **[2]** two years after the date
38 of the moving of its publication office or such period as **[said]** the
39 newspaper shall have the highest paid circulation of any newspaper
40 within the county or municipality which shall use said newspaper
41 for legal advertisements.

42 b. In lieu of the requirements of subsection a. of this section,
43 whenever until March 1, 2026, by law, it is required that there be
44 published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or newspapers,
45 ordinances, resolutions or notices or advertisements of any sort,
46 kind, or character by any county, city, or other municipality or
47 municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or official board,

1 or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or corporation, the
2 newspaper or newspapers may be published consistent with section
3 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c. (C. or C.) (pending
4 before the Legislature as this bill).

5 c. After March 1, 2026 whenever, by law, it is required that
6 there be published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or
7 newspapers, ordinances, resolutions or notices or advertisements of
8 any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or other
9 municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or
10 official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or
11 corporation, the newspaper or newspapers shall be published
12 consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c.
13 (C. or C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).
14 (cf: P.L.1979, c.84, s.1)

15
16 9. Section 1 of P.L.2024, c.106, as amended by P.L.2025, c.22,
17 is amended to read as follows:

18 1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, regulation, or municipal
19 ordinance to the contrary, a newspaper utilized or permitted to be
20 utilized by a person for the purpose of complying with any legal
21 requirement, or a public body, as defined in section 3 of the "Open
22 Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231 (C.10:4-8), from January 1,
23 2024 through December 31, 2024 for the purpose of complying with
24 R.S.35:1-2.2 or any other requirements for issuing or publishing a
25 public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not limited to,
26 for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the solicitation of bids,
27 qualifications, or proposals, or the publication of any ordinances,
28 synopses, or summaries of official documents, shall be deemed
29 eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to **June 30,**
30 **2025】** March 1, 2026 if the newspaper's publication is in print or
31 electronic format. The price to be paid for publishing all public
32 notices or legal advertisements in print or electronic format as
33 described in this section shall not exceed the rates established
34 pursuant to R.S.35:2-1. A fee shall not be charged, and registration
35 shall not be required, for viewing public notices or legal
36 advertisements published in an electronic format.

37 b. For the purposes of this section, "electronic format" means
38 an Internet website and other technology having electrical, digital,
39 magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities
40 that is operated by or for a newspaper for publication.

41
42 10. This act shall take effect immediately.
43
44

45 STATEMENT

46
47 This bill provides that whenever a public entity, as defined in the
48 bill, is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish or

1 advertise a legal notice, the public entity is to publish or advertise
2 the legal notice on the public entity's official Internet website. The
3 majority of the bill's requirements are mandatory beginning March
4 1, 2026, and are optional until that date. Under the bill, the public
5 entity's official Internet website is to be accessible and available to
6 the public free of charge, and a direct hyperlink to legal notices
7 published on the public entity's official Internet website is to be
8 conspicuously placed on the public entity's Internet homepage.

9 The Secretary of State, with support from the Office of
10 Information Technology and any other State agency the secretary
11 deems necessary, is required to establish an Internet webpage which
12 includes the hyperlinks to the legal notices webpage of each public
13 entity. The legal notices hyperlink webpage is to be accessible and
14 available to the public free of charge and be accessible by a direct
15 hyperlink that is conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's
16 homepage. Each public entity is required to submit the entity's
17 hyperlink to the Secretary of State and provide any updates thereto.

18 The bill provides that a public entity is required to maintain an
19 Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed, which
20 are required to be kept for at least one year. A public entity is
21 required to display a legal notice on its legal notices webpage for at
22 least one week, or other time period as required by law, before
23 transferring it to the archive. Under the bill, a local government
24 unit is not required to maintain an archive until July 1, 2026.

25 Under the bill, a local government unit may in addition to the
26 publication on its official website, publish or advertise a legal
27 notice on an eligible online news publication that meets the criteria
28 as specified in the bill.

29 The bill also provides that whenever a corporation, individual, or
30 any other entity that is not a public entity is required by law or by
31 the order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice,
32 the corporation, individual, or other entity is to publish or advertise
33 the legal notice on an online news publication that satisfies the
34 eligibility requirements to function as an online news publication,
35 as specified in the bill. For the year from January 1, 2026, a public
36 entity is required to provide an advertisement at least twice per
37 month in an eligible online news publication that: states that the
38 complete text of each legal notice may be obtained or viewed by the
39 public on the official Internet website of the public entity; and
40 provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal notices
41 hyperlink Internet webpage, with exceptions provided in the bill.

42 Additionally, under current law, a newspaper utilized, or
43 permitted to be utilized, by a person or public body, as defined in
44 section 3 of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231
45 (C.10:4-8), from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 for
46 the purpose of complying with any requirements for issuing or
47 publishing a public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not
48 limited to, for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the

1 solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication
2 of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents, is
3 deemed eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to June
4 30, 2025 if the newspaper's publication is in print or electronic
5 format. This bill amends that law to provide that public bodies may
6 continue using qualifying newspapers for required public notices
7 and legal advertisements until March 1, 2026 regardless of format.
8 The bill is to take effect immediately.

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 4654

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 26, 2025

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 4654.

As reported, this bill provides that whenever a public entity, as defined in the bill, is required by law, or by order or rule of any court, to publish or advertise a legal notice (which is defined to include any resolution, official proclamation, notice or advertisement of any sort, kind, or character), the public entity is to publish or advertise the legal notice on the public entity's official Internet website. The majority of the bill's requirements are mandatory beginning March 1, 2026, and are optional until that date. Under the bill, the public entity's official Internet website is to be accessible and available to the public free of charge, and a direct hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official Internet website is to be conspicuously placed on the public entity's Internet homepage.

Under the bill, a public entity is defined to include the State, any State agency, and any local government unit, district, public authority, public agency, and any other political subdivision or political body in the State. With respect to the public entities that are local government units, the bill specifies inclusion of a county, municipality, or other political subdivision of the State, or any agency, board, commission, utilities authority or other authority, or other entity thereof, or a person who is a local government unit officer or employee, which would include any sheriff or sheriff's office.

The Secretary of State, with support from the Office of Information Technology and any other State agency the secretary deems necessary, is required to establish an Internet webpage which includes the hyperlinks to the legal notices webpage of each public entity. The legal notices hyperlink webpage is to be accessible and available to the public free of charge and be accessible by a direct hyperlink that is conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's homepage. Each public entity is required to submit the entity's hyperlink to the Secretary of State and provide any updates thereto.

The bill provides that a public entity is required to maintain an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed, which are required to be kept for at least one year. A public entity is required to display a legal notice on its legal notices webpage for at least one week, or other time period as required by law, before transferring it to

the archive. Under the bill, a local government unit is not required to maintain an archive until July 1, 2026.

Under the bill, a local government unit may in addition to the publication on its official website, publish or advertise a legal notice on an eligible online news publication that meets the criteria as specified in the bill.

The bill also provides that whenever a corporation, individual, or any other entity that is not a public entity is required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the corporation, individual, or other entity is to publish or advertise the legal notice on an online news publication that satisfies the eligibility requirements to function as an online news publication, as specified in the bill. For the year from January 1, 2026, a public entity is required to provide an advertisement at least twice per month in an eligible online news publication that: states that the complete text of each legal notice may be obtained or viewed by the public on the official Internet website of the public entity; and provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal notices hyperlink Internet webpage, with exceptions provided in the bill.

Additionally, under current law, a newspaper utilized, or permitted to be utilized, by a person or public body, as defined in section 3 of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231 (C.10:4-8), from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 for the purpose of complying with any requirements for issuing or publishing a public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not limited to, for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents, is deemed eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025 if the newspaper's publication is in print or electronic format. This bill amends that law to provide that public bodies may continue using qualifying newspapers for required public notices and legal advertisements until March 1, 2026 regardless of format.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that that bill may result in increased State and local administrative costs in the first year after enactment associated with the bill's requirement for: (1) public entities to establish an Internet webpage for the purpose of publishing legal notices and advertisements; and (2) the Secretary of State to establish an Internet webpage that links to the legal notices Internet webpage of each public entity.

The bill is also expected to result in cost savings to local government units associated with the bill's provisions that allow local government units to publish certain notices, ordinances, resolutions, and other documents on the local government unit's Internet website rather than in print newspapers or online news publications. A portion

of these cost savings would be expected beginning no later than March 2026, and full cost savings in January 2027.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

SENATE, No. 4654

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: JUNE 27, 2025

SUMMARY

Synopsis: Provides for publication of required legal notices on government Internet websites and through certain online news publications.

Type of Impact: State and local cost increases in the first year; State and local savings thereafter.

Agencies Affected: Secretary of State; Local Government Units; Other Public Entities.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	Year 1	Year 2 and Thereafter
State Expenditures	Indeterminate Increase	Indeterminate Savings
Local Expenditures	Indeterminate Increase	Indeterminate Savings

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that that bill may result in increased State and local government administrative costs in the first year after enactment associated with the bill’s requirement for: 1) public entities to establish an Internet webpage for the purpose of publishing legal notices and advertisements; and 2) the Secretary of State to establish an Internet webpage that links to the legal notices Internet webpage of each public entity.
- The bill is also expected to result in cost savings to local government units by allowing local government units to publish certain notices, ordinances, resolutions, and other documents on the local government unit’s Internet website rather than in print newspapers or online news publications, for which there are fees. A portion of these cost savings would be expected beginning no later than March 2026, and full cost savings in January 2027.

BILL DESCRIPTION

The bill provides that whenever a public entity, as defined in the bill, is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the public entity is to publish or advertise the legal notice on the public entity’s official Internet website. The majority of the bill’s requirements are mandatory beginning March 1, 2026, and are optional until that date. Under the bill, the public entity’s official Internet website is to be accessible and available to the public free

of charge, and a direct hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official Internet website is to be conspicuously placed on the public entity's Internet homepage.

Under the bill, the Secretary of State, with support from the Office of Information Technology and any other State agency the secretary deems necessary, is required to establish an Internet webpage which includes the hyperlinks to the legal notices webpage of each public entity. The legal notices hyperlink webpage is to be accessible and available to the public free of charge and be accessible by a direct hyperlink that is conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's homepage. Each public entity is required to submit the entity's hyperlink to the Secretary of State and provide any updates thereto.

The bill provides that a public entity is required to maintain an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed, which are required to be kept for at least one year. A public entity is required to display a legal notice on its legal notices webpage for at least one week, or other time period as required by law, before transferring it to the archive. Under the bill, a local government unit is not required to maintain an archive until July 1, 2026.

Under the bill, a local government unit may, in addition to the publication on its official website, publish or advertise a legal notice on an eligible online news publication that meets the criteria as specified in the bill.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concludes that that bill may result in increased State and local government administrative costs in the first year after enactment associated with the bill's requirement for: 1) public entities to establish an Internet webpage for the purpose of publishing legal notices and advertisements; and 2) the Secretary of State to establish an Internet webpage that links to the legal notices Internet webpage of each public entity.

The bill requires public entities to publish or advertise legal notices on the public entity's official Internet website for no less than one week, and maintain an Internet archive of legal notices for one year beginning no later than March 1, 2026, except that a local government unit is to establish and maintain an archive no later than July 1, 2026. While it is expected that most public entities already operate an Internet website, to the extent that a public entity does not currently operate an Internet website to which it can add the required webpages to fulfill the bill's requirements, the public entity would likely experience an increase in administrative costs to establish such an Internet website. The OLS is unable to determine the number of public entities that do not currently maintain an Internet website and, therefore, would experience costs associated with establishing a new Internet website. Public entities that currently operate an Internet website may also experience modest administrative costs associated with establishing the required legal notices webpage. The Secretary of State, with support from the Office of Information Technology, is also required to establish and maintain an Internet webpage that links to the legal notices webpage of each public entity created pursuant to the bill. Each public entity is required to submit its link to the Secretary of State for inclusion on the Secretary of State's Internet webpage. The Secretary of State may incur modest administrative costs to establish and maintain such a webpage.

The bill is also expected to result in cost savings to public entities, including local government units, by eventually requiring them to publish certain notices, ordinances, resolutions, and other documents on the public entity's Internet website rather than in print newspapers or online news publications. A portion of these cost savings would be expected beginning no later than March 2026, and full cost savings in January 2027. Until March 1, 2026, public entities may elect to publish certain documents, including, but not limited to, ordinances, resolutions, bond notices, and other notices or advertisements, on the local government unit's Internet website rather than in a print newspaper or online news publication; these publication requirements are to become mandatory after March 1, 2026. However, for the duration of calendar year 2026, public entities, including local government units, are required to advertise, twice per month, in an online news publication that information concerning legal notices can be obtained on the official Internet website of the public entity. The OLS is unable to estimate the amount that each public entity, including local government units, is currently expending on fees to news publications to meet the requirements for public notices under current law, and is therefore unable to estimate the exact cost savings that local governments are expected to experience as a result of the bill's provisions that revise and ease existing publication requirements and mandates.

Section: Local Government
Analyst: Abigail Stoyer
Senior Fiscal Analyst
Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

ASSEMBLY, No. 5878

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JUNE 25, 2025

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman ALEXANDER "AVI" SCHNALL
District 30 (Monmouth and Ocean)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman Murphy

SYNOPSIS

Provides for publication of required legal notices on government Internet websites and through certain online news publications.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 6/27/2025)

1 AN ACT concerning publication of required legal notices,
2 supplementing Title 35 of the Revised Statutes, and amending
3 various parts of the statutory law.

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

7
8 1. (New section) As used in P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
9 before the Legislature as this bill):

10 "Electronic format" means an Internet website and other
11 technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical,
12 electromagnetic, or similar capabilities that is operated by or for a
13 newspaper for publication.

14 "IP address" means an Internet Protocol address.

15 "Legal notice" means any resolution, official proclamation,
16 notice or advertisement of any sort, kind, or character, including
17 proposals for bids on public work and otherwise, required by law or
18 by the order or rule of any court to be published by a public entity,
19 corporation, an individual, or any other entity.

20 "Local government unit" means a county, municipality, or other
21 political subdivision of the State, or any agency, board,
22 commission, utilities authority or other authority, or other entity
23 thereof, or a person who is a local government unit officer or
24 employee.

25 "Online news publication" means a news publication in
26 electronic format that contains news on matters of public concern
27 and has published news predominantly in the English language at
28 least once per week for at least one year continuously.

29 "Print newspaper" means a news publication in print form that
30 contains news on matters of public concern and has published news
31 predominantly in the English language at least once per week for at
32 least one year continuously.

33 "Public entity" means the State, any State agency, and any local
34 government unit, district, public authority, public agency, and any
35 other political subdivision or political body in the State.

36 "Secretary" means the Secretary of State.

37 "State agency" means any of the principal departments in the
38 Executive Branch of the State Government, and any division, board,
39 bureau, office, commission, or other instrumentality within or
40 created by a department, and, to the extent consistent with law, any
41 interstate agency to which New Jersey is a party and any
42 independent State authority, commission, instrumentality, or
43 agency. A local government unit shall not be deemed an agency or
44 instrumentality of the State.

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 2. (New section)a. After March 1, 2026, whenever a public
2 entity is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish
3 or advertise a legal notice, the public entity shall publish or
4 advertise the legal notice on the public entity's official Internet
5 website. The public entity's official Internet website shall be
6 accessible and available to the public free of charge. A direct
7 hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official
8 Internet website shall be conspicuously placed on the website's
9 homepage.

10 b. No later than March 1, 2026, the Secretary of State, with
11 support from the Office of Information Technology and any other
12 State agency the secretary deems necessary, shall establish an
13 Internet webpage on which shall be included hyperlinks to the legal
14 notices webpage of each public entity created pursuant to
15 subsection a. of this section. The legal notices hyperlink webpage
16 established by the secretary shall be accessible and available to the
17 public free of charge and shall be accessible by direct hyperlink
18 conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's Internet homepage.
19 Each public entity shall submit the hyperlink to the Secretary of
20 State and provide any updates thereto prior to effectuation.

21 c. No later than March 1, 2026, a public entity shall maintain
22 an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed,
23 which shall be kept for at least one year. The archive shall not be
24 subject to any records retention schedule adopted by the State
25 Records Committee nor to the "Destruction of Public Records Law
26 (1953)," P.L.1953, c.410 (C.47:3-15 et seq.). A public entity shall
27 display a legal notice on its legal notices Internet webpage for at
28 least one week, or other time period as required by law, before
29 transferring the publication to the public entity's Internet archive.
30 A local government unit shall initially publish an Internet archive
31 no later than July 1, 2026 and shall maintain the archive thereafter.

32 d. A local government unit may, in addition to the publication
33 on its official Internet website pursuant to subsection a. of this
34 section, publish or advertise a legal notice separately on an eligible
35 online news publication that meets the criteria of subsection b. of
36 section 3 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature
37 as this bill). The local government unit shall provide a notice in a
38 prominent location on its official Internet website if it publishes or
39 advertises its legal notices in an online news publication and shall
40 publish a hyperlink to the online news publication.

41

42 3. (New section)a. (1) After March 1, 2026, whenever a
43 corporation, individual, or any other entity that is not a public entity
44 is required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
45 advertise a legal notice, the corporation, individual, or other entity
46 shall publish or advertise the legal notice on an online news
47 publication that satisfies the requirements of subsection b. of this
48 section.

1 (2) The corporation, individual, or other entity shall select an
2 online news publication based on the geographic target as
3 established or implied under the law, court order, or court rule
4 requiring publication.

5 b. To be an eligible online news publication under subsection
6 a. of this section, an online news publication shall:

7 (1) use a domain name for the Internet website that will be
8 easily recognizable and understandable to users of the website as
9 belonging to that online news publication;

10 (2) maintain the online news publication on the Internet in a
11 manner that is fully accessible and searchable by members of the
12 public at all times, other than during routine maintenance or
13 circumstances outside of the operator's control;

14 (3) ensure that legal notices published or advertised on the
15 online news publication comply with the requirements that would
16 apply to the legal notices if they were published in a physical
17 newspaper, as applicable;

18 (4) maintain an archive for at least one year of notices that are
19 no longer displayed on the online news publication;

20 (5) display a legal notice for at least one week, or other time
21 period as required by law, before placing it in archive;

22 (6) enable legal notices, both those currently displayed and
23 those archived, to be accessed by key word, by party name, by case
24 number, by county, or other useful identifiers;

25 (7) maintain an adequate security system and develop a
26 contingency plan for coping with and recovering from power
27 outages, systemic failures, and other unforeseen circumstances;

28 (8) not charge a fee or require registration or a subscription to
29 view legal notices;

30 (9) maintain media liability insurance of up to \$1 million;

31 (10) have been in continuous operation for at least three years,
32 which can be satisfied by the online news publication itself or by a
33 company that has a controlling or majority interest in the online
34 news publication; and

35 (11) (a) provide the number of monthly unique website visits
36 and monthly unique website visits by users in this State and in each
37 county, as evidenced by IP address or other appropriate identifier,
38 which shall be prominently displayed on the Internet homepage of
39 the online news publication along with the criteria provided in this
40 subsection, or a hyperlink to a webpage displaying such criteria,
41 and whether the online news publication meets each criteria.

42 (b) (i) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to
43 publish legal notices for municipal-wide circulation, the online
44 news publication shall receive 4,000 unique monthly visits on
45 average as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which
46 shall be from IP addresses within the applicable municipality or
47 within a 10-mile radius of the municipality.

1 (ii) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish
2 legal notices for county-wide circulation, the online news
3 publication shall receive 50,000 unique monthly visits on average
4 as calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be
5 from IP addresses within the applicable county or within a 10-mile
6 radius of the county.

7 (iii) To qualify as an online news publication eligible to publish
8 legal notices for State-wide circulation, the online news publication
9 shall receive 350,000 unique monthly visits on average as
10 calculated annually, no less than 50 percent of which shall be from
11 IP addresses within the State.

12 c. The price to be paid for publishing all public notices or legal
13 notices in an online news publication pursuant to P.L. , c.
14 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), shall not
15 exceed the rates established pursuant to R.S.35:2-1.

16 d. Unless otherwise provided pursuant to applicable law or
17 court rule or order, an online news publication that receives a legal
18 notice for publication pursuant to this section shall publish the
19 notice within 24 hours of receipt.

20 e. An online news publication that falsely represents that it
21 meets the criteria established pursuant to subsection b. of this
22 section and accepts legal notices for publication shall deemed to
23 have committed an unlawful practice under P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-
24 1 et seq.) and liable to enforcement by the Attorney General
25 pursuant to the provisions of P.L.1960, c.39 (C.56:8-1 et seq.).
26

27 4. (New section) a. A public entity, corporation, or individual
28 required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
29 advertise a legal notice shall publish or advertise the notice in
30 accordance with the applicable law or court order or rule.

31 b. A public entity, corporation, or individual shall be deemed to
32 satisfy their legal obligations to provide a legal notice upon
33 publication of the notice as required pursuant to P.L. , c.
34 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

35 c. Legal notices published on a public entity's Internet website
36 or the Internet website of an online news publication in accordance
37 with P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
38 bill) shall not be deemed defective if at least one of the following
39 circumstances exist:

40 (1) there is an error in the content or form of the legal notice
41 published or advertised on a public entity's Internet website or
42 online news publication due to a clerical, administrative, or any
43 other error outside of the control of the public entity, corporation, or
44 individual required by law or court order or rule to publish the legal
45 notice;

46 (2) there is a temporary outage, technical malfunction,
47 disruption, or service interruption preventing the publishing,

1 posting, or display of a legal notice on the public entity's Internet
2 website or online news publication;

3 (3) the operator of the public entity's Internet website or the
4 online news publication imposes standard restrictions that prevent
5 access to the website or online news publication;

6 (4) the public entity's Internet website or the online news
7 publication is subject to a cyberattack or cybersecurity incident,
8 including but not limited to ransomware or a data breach, causing
9 the failure to timely or accurately publish the legal notice; or

10 (5) any other circumstances preventing the publishing, posting,
11 or display of a legal notice on the public entity Internet website or
12 online news publication that are outside of the control of the public
13 entity, corporation, or individual required by law or court order or
14 rule to publish the legal notice.

15

16 5. (New section) a. Starting on January 1, 2026 and at least
17 twice per month through December 31, 2026, a public entity
18 required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or
19 advertise a legal notice, or that elects to publish or advertise a legal
20 notice before that date pursuant to P.L. , c. (C.) (pending
21 before the Legislature as this bill), shall provide an advertisement in
22 an online news publication that meets the requirements of
23 subsection b. of section 3 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
24 the Legislature as this bill), that:

25 (1) states that the complete text of each legal notice may be
26 obtained or viewed by the public on the official Internet website of
27 each public entity; and

28 (2) provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal
29 notices hyperlink Internet webpage established pursuant to
30 subsection b. of section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before
31 the Legislature as this bill).

32 b. Until the Secretary of State establishes the legal notices
33 hyperlinks Internet webpage pursuant to subsection b. of section 3
34 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
35 bill), a public entity that elects to comply with the provisions of
36 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill)
37 shall be deemed to have satisfied the requirements of P.L. , c.
38 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill) without
39 publication of the public entity's hyperlink on the Internet webpage
40 to be established pursuant to subsection b. of section 3 of P.L. , c.
41 (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

42

43 6. R.S.40:53-2 is amended to read as follows:

44 40:53-2. a. All ordinances or other public notices which any
45 municipality, except cities, may be required by any law to publish,
46 where the manner of publication is not otherwise specifically
47 provided for, shall until March 1, 2026 be published either in at
48 least one newspaper published and circulating in the municipality,

1 and if there be no such newspaper, then in at least one newspaper
2 published in the county in which the municipality is located and
3 circulating in the municipality or consistent with section 2 of
4 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

5 b. After March 1, 2026, all ordinances or other public notices
6 which any municipality, except cities, may be required by any law
7 to publish, where the manner of publication is not otherwise
8 specifically provided for, shall be published consistent with section
9 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this
10 bill).

11 (cf: R.S.40:53-2)

12
13 7. N.J.S.40A:2-19 is amended to read as follows:

14 40A:2-19. a. Publications required by this chapter shall, until
15 March 1, 2026, either in the case of a municipality, be in a
16 newspaper published and circulating in the municipality, if there be
17 one, and if not, in a newspaper published in the county and
18 circulating in the municipality. In the case of a county, publications
19 shall be in a newspaper published at the county seat, if there be one,
20 and if not, in a newspaper published and circulating in the county.
21 For the purposes of this section, a newspaper shall not be deemed to
22 be published during any period of time in which the publication of
23 such newspaper shall be interrupted by any involuntary suspension
24 of publication resulting from loss, destruction, mechanical or
25 electric failure of typesetting equipment or printing presses or the
26 unavailability due to conditions beyond the control of the publisher,
27 of paper or other materials and supplies necessary for operation, or
28 resulting from a labor dispute with a recognized labor union or be
29 published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c.
30 (C. or C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

31 b. After March 1, 2026 publications required by this chapter
32 shall be published consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of
33 P.L. , c. (C. or C.) (pending before the Legislature as
34 this bill).

35 (cf: P.L.1970, c.318, s.1)

36
37 8. R.S.35:1-2.2 is amended to read as follows:

38 35:1-2.2. a. Whenever until March 1, 2026, by law, it is
39 required that there be published by printing and publishing in a
40 newspaper or newspapers, ordinances, resolutions or notices or
41 advertisements of any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or
42 other municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal
43 board or official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any
44 person or corporation, [such] the newspaper or newspapers [must]
45 shall, in addition to any other qualification now required by law,
46 meet the following qualifications, namely: [said] the newspaper or
47 newspapers shall be entirely printed in the English language, shall

1 be printed and published within the State of New Jersey, shall be a
2 newspaper of general paid circulation possessing an average news
3 content of not less than 35 **[%]** percent, shall have been published
4 continuously in the municipality where its publication office is
5 situate for not less than **[2]** two years and shall have been entered
6 for **[2]** two years as second-class mail matter under the postal laws
7 and regulations of the United States. In case a newspaper cannot
8 meet these qualifications itself but has acquired another newspaper
9 which meets these qualifications, the acquiring newspaper shall be
10 deemed to meet these qualifications if it is published in the same
11 municipality and entered in the same post office as was the acquired
12 newspaper. Continuous publication within the meaning of this
13 section shall not be deemed interrupted by any involuntary
14 suspension of publication for a period not exceeding **[6]** six
15 months resulting from loss, destruction, mechanical or electrical
16 failure of typesetting equipment or printing presses or the
17 unavailability, due to conditions beyond the control or the
18 publisher, of paper or other materials and supplies necessary for
19 operation, or resulting from a labor dispute with a recognized labor
20 union, and any newspaper so affected shall not be disqualified
21 hereunder in the event that publication is resumed within said
22 period of **[6]** six months.

23 For the purposes of this section and for the purpose of qualifying
24 for legal advertisements generally, any newspaper which for not
25 less than **[2]** two years shall have been continuously printed in a
26 building located within two municipalities and which for not less
27 than **[2]** two years shall have continuously maintained its editorial
28 and business offices in said building shall be deemed to have been
29 published continuously in each of said municipalities during that
30 period and its publication office shall be deemed to have been
31 situate in each municipality during that period.

32 In the event any newspaper which shall have been qualified to
33 publish legal advertisements shall move its publication office to
34 any municipality in the same county or in an adjacent county in
35 this State and which shall otherwise continue to meet the
36 qualifications of this section, it shall be qualified to publish legal
37 advertisements which it was qualified to publish prior to moving
38 said publication office for a period of **[2]** two years after the date
39 of the moving of its publication office or such period as **[said]** the
40 newspaper shall have the highest paid circulation of any newspaper
41 within the county or municipality which shall use said newspaper
42 for legal advertisements.

43 b. In lieu of the requirements of subsection a. of this section,
44 whenever until March 1, 2026, by law, it is required that there be
45 published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or newspapers,
46 ordinances, resolutions or notices or advertisements of any sort,
47 kind, or character by any county, city, or other municipality or

1 municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or official board,
2 or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or corporation, the
3 newspaper or newspapers may be published consistent with section
4 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c. (C. or C.) (pending
5 before the Legislature as this bill).

6 c. After March 1, 2026 whenever, by law, it is required that
7 there be published by printing and publishing in a newspaper or
8 newspapers, ordinances, resolutions or notices or advertisements of
9 any sort, kind, or character by any county, city, or other
10 municipality or municipal corporation, or by any municipal board or
11 official board, or body, or office, or officials, or by any person or
12 corporation, the newspaper or newspapers shall be published
13 consistent with section 2 or 3, as applicable, of P.L. , c. (C.
14 or C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).
15 (cf: P.L.1979, c.84, s.1)
16

17 9. Section 1 of P.L.2024, c.106, as amended by P.L.2025, c.22,
18 is amended to read as follows:

19 1. a. Notwithstanding any law, rule, regulation, or
20 municipal ordinance to the contrary, a newspaper utilized or
21 permitted to be utilized by a person for the purpose of complying
22 with any legal requirement, or a public body, as defined in section 3
23 of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231 (C.10:4-8),
24 from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 for the purpose of
25 complying with R.S.35:1-2.2 or any other requirements for issuing
26 or publishing a public notice or legal advertisement, including, but
27 not limited to, for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the
28 solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication
29 of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents,
30 shall be deemed eligible for the same purposes from January 1,
31 2025 to **【June 30, 2025】** March 1, 2026 if the newspaper's
32 publication is in print or electronic format. The price to be paid for
33 publishing all public notices or legal advertisements in print or
34 electronic format as described in this section shall not exceed the
35 rates established pursuant to R.S.35:2-1. A fee shall not be
36 charged, and registration shall not be required, for viewing public
37 notices or legal advertisements published in an electronic format.

38 b. For the purposes of this section, "electronic format" means
39 an Internet website and other technology having electrical, digital,
40 magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities
41 that is operated by or for a newspaper for publication.
42

43 10. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill provides that whenever a public entity, as defined in the bill, is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the public entity is to publish or advertise the legal notice on the public entity's official Internet website. The majority of the bill's requirements are mandatory beginning March 1, 2026, and are optional until that date. Under the bill, the public entity's official Internet website is to be accessible and available to the public free of charge, and a direct hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official Internet website is to be conspicuously placed on the public entity's Internet homepage.

The Secretary of State, with support from the Office of Information Technology and any other State agency the secretary deems necessary, is required to establish an Internet webpage which includes the hyperlinks to the legal notices webpage of each public entity. The legal notices hyperlink webpage is to be accessible and available to the public free of charge and be accessible by a direct hyperlink that is conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's homepage. Each public entity is required to submit the entity's hyperlink to the Secretary of State and provide any updates thereto.

The bill provides that a public entity is required to maintain an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed, which are required to be kept for at least one year. A public entity is required to display a legal notice on its legal notices webpage for at least one week, or other time period as required by law, before transferring it to the archive. Under the bill, a local government unit is not required to maintain an archive until July 1, 2026.

Under the bill, a local government unit may in addition to the publication on its official website, publish or advertise a legal notice on an eligible online news publication that meets the criteria as specified in the bill.

The bill also provides that whenever a corporation, individual, or any other entity that is not a public entity is required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the corporation, individual, or other entity is to publish or advertise the legal notice on an online news publication that satisfies the eligibility requirements to function as an online news publication, as specified in the bill. For the year from January 1, 2026, a public entity is required to provide an advertisement at least twice per month in an eligible online news publication that: states that the complete text of each legal notice may be obtained or viewed by the public on the official Internet website of the public entity; and provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal notices hyperlink Internet webpage, with exceptions provided in the bill.

Additionally, under current law, a newspaper utilized, or permitted to be utilized, by a person or public body, as defined in section 3 of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231

1 (C.10:4-8), from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 for
2 the purpose of complying with any requirements for issuing or
3 publishing a public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not
4 limited to, for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the
5 solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication
6 of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents, is
7 deemed eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to June
8 30, 2025 if the newspaper's publication is in print or electronic
9 format. This bill amends that law to provide that public bodies may
10 continue using qualifying newspapers for required public notices
11 and legal advertisements until March 1, 2026 regardless of format.
12 The bill is to take effect immediately.

ASSEMBLY BUDGET COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 5878

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 26, 2025

The Assembly Budget Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 5878.

As reported, this bill provides that whenever a public entity, as defined in the bill, is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the public entity is to publish or advertise the legal notice on the public entity's official Internet website. The majority of the bill's requirements are mandatory beginning March 1, 2026, and are optional until that date. Under the bill, the public entity's official Internet website is to be accessible and available to the public free of charge, and a direct hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official Internet website is to be conspicuously placed on the public entity's Internet homepage.

The Secretary of State, with support from the Office of Information Technology and any other State agency the secretary deems necessary, is required to establish an Internet webpage which includes the hyperlinks to the legal notices webpage of each public entity. The legal notices hyperlink webpage is to be accessible and available to the public free of charge and be accessible by a direct hyperlink that is conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's homepage. Each public entity is required to submit the entity's hyperlink to the Secretary of State and provide any updates thereto.

The bill provides that a public entity is required to maintain an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed, which are required to be kept for at least one year. A public entity is required to display a legal notice on its legal notices webpage for at least one week, or other time period as required by law, before transferring it to the archive. Under the bill, a local government unit is not required to maintain an archive until July 1, 2026.

Under the bill, a local government unit may in addition to the publication on its official website, publish or advertise a legal notice on an eligible online news publication that meets the criteria as specified in the bill.

The bill also provides that whenever a corporation, individual, or any other entity that is not a public entity is required by law or by the order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the corporation, individual, or other entity is to publish or advertise the legal notice on an online news publication that satisfies the eligibility requirements to function as an online news publication, as specified in

the bill. For the year from January 1, 2026, a public entity is required to provide an advertisement at least twice per month in an eligible online news publication that: states that the complete text of each legal notice may be obtained or viewed by the public on the official Internet website of the public entity; and provides the hyperlink to the Secretary of State's legal notices hyperlink Internet webpage, with exceptions provided in the bill.

Additionally, under current law, a newspaper utilized, or permitted to be utilized, by a person or public body, as defined in section 3 of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231 (C.10:4-8), from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 for the purpose of complying with any requirements for issuing or publishing a public notice or legal advertisement, including, but not limited to, for providing adequate notice of a meeting, the solicitation of bids, qualifications, or proposals, or the publication of any ordinances, synopses, or summaries of official documents, is deemed eligible for the same purposes from January 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025 if the newspaper's publication is in print or electronic format. This bill amends that law to provide that public bodies may continue using qualifying newspapers for required public notices and legal advertisements until March 1, 2026 regardless of format.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services concludes that that bill may result in increased State and local government administrative costs in the first year after enactment associated with the bill's requirement for: 1) public entities to establish an Internet webpage for the purpose of publishing legal notices and advertisements; and 2) the Secretary of State to establish an Internet webpage that links to the legal notices Internet webpage of each public entity.

The bill is also expected to result in cost savings to local government units by allowing local government units to publish certain notices, ordinances, resolutions, and other documents on the local government unit's Internet website rather than in print newspapers or online news publications, for which there are fees. A portion of these cost savings would be expected beginning no later than March 2026, and full cost savings in January 2027.

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

ASSEMBLY, No. 5878

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

DATED: JULY 3, 2025

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Provides for publication of required legal notices on government Internet websites and through certain online news publications.
- Type of Impact:** State and local cost increases in the first year; State and local savings thereafter.
- Agencies Affected:** Secretary of State; Local Government Units; Other Public Entities.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Fiscal Impact	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2 and Thereafter</u>
State Expenditures	Indeterminate Increase	Indeterminate Savings
Local Expenditures	Indeterminate Increase	Indeterminate Savings

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that that bill may result in increased State and local government administrative costs in the first year after enactment associated with the bill’s requirement for: 1) public entities to establish an Internet webpage for the purpose of publishing legal notices and advertisements; and 2) the Secretary of State to establish an Internet webpage that links to the legal notices Internet webpage of each public entity.
- The bill is also expected to result in cost savings to local government units by allowing local government units to publish certain notices, ordinances, resolutions, and other documents on the local government unit’s Internet website rather than in print newspapers or online news publications, for which there are fees. A portion of these cost savings would be expected beginning no later than March 2026, and full cost savings in January 2027.

BILL DESCRIPTION

The bill provides that whenever a public entity, as defined in the bill, is required by law or by order or rule of any court to publish or advertise a legal notice, the public entity is to publish or advertise the legal notice on the public entity’s official Internet website. The majority of the bill’s requirements are mandatory beginning March 1, 2026, and are optional until that date. Under the bill, the public entity’s official Internet website is to be accessible and available to the public free

of charge, and a direct hyperlink to legal notices published on the public entity's official Internet website is to be conspicuously placed on the public entity's Internet homepage.

Under the bill, the Secretary of State, with support from the Office of Information Technology and any other State agency the secretary deems necessary, is required to establish an Internet webpage which includes the hyperlinks to the legal notices webpage of each public entity. The legal notices hyperlink webpage is to be accessible and available to the public free of charge and be accessible by a direct hyperlink that is conspicuously placed on the Secretary of State's homepage. Each public entity is required to submit the entity's hyperlink to the Secretary of State and provide any updates thereto.

The bill provides that a public entity is required to maintain an Internet archive of legal notices that are no longer displayed, which are required to be kept for at least one year. A public entity is required to display a legal notice on its legal notices webpage for at least one week, or other time period as required by law, before transferring it to the archive. Under the bill, a local government unit is not required to maintain an archive until July 1, 2026.

Under the bill, a local government unit may, in addition to the publication on its official website, publish or advertise a legal notice on an eligible online news publication that meets the criteria as specified in the bill.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concludes that that bill may result in increased State and local government administrative costs in the first year after enactment associated with the bill's requirement for: 1) public entities to establish an Internet webpage for the purpose of publishing legal notices and advertisements; and 2) the Secretary of State to establish an Internet webpage that links to the legal notices Internet webpage of each public entity.

The bill requires public entities to publish or advertise legal notices on the public entity's official Internet website for no less than one week, and maintain an Internet archive of legal notices for one year beginning no later than March 1, 2026, except that a local government unit is to establish and maintain an archive no later than July 1, 2026. While it is expected that most public entities already operate an Internet website, to the extent that a public entity does not currently operate an Internet website to which it can add the required webpages to fulfill the bill's requirements, the public entity would likely experience an increase in administrative costs to establish such an Internet website. The OLS is unable to determine the number of public entities that do not currently maintain an Internet website and, therefore, would experience costs associated with establishing a new Internet website. Public entities that currently operate an Internet website may also experience modest administrative costs associated with establishing the required legal notices webpage. The Secretary of State, with support from the Office of Information Technology, is also required to establish and maintain an Internet webpage that links to the legal notices webpage of each public entity created pursuant to the bill. Each public entity is required to submit its link to the Secretary of State for inclusion on the Secretary of State's Internet webpage. The Secretary of State may incur modest administrative costs to establish and maintain such a webpage.

The bill is also expected to result in cost savings to public entities, including local government units, by eventually requiring them to publish certain notices, ordinances, resolutions, and other documents on the public entity's Internet website rather than in print newspapers or online news publications. A portion of these cost savings would be expected beginning no later than March 2026, and full cost savings in January 2027. Until March 1, 2026, public entities may elect to publish certain documents, including, but not limited to, ordinances, resolutions, bond notices, and other notices or advertisements, on the local government unit's Internet website rather than in a print newspaper or online news publication; these publication requirements are to become mandatory after March 1, 2026. However, for the duration of calendar year 2026, public entities, including local government units, are required to advertise, twice per month, in an online news publication that information concerning legal notices can be obtained on the official Internet website of the public entity. The OLS is unable to estimate the amount that each public entity, including local government units, is currently expending on fees to news publications to meet the requirements for public notices under current law, and is therefore unable to estimate the exact cost savings that local governments are expected to experience as a result of the bill's provisions that revise and ease existing publication requirements and mandates.

Section: Local Government

*Analyst: Abigail Stoyer
Senior Fiscal Analyst*

*Approved: Thomas Koenig
Legislative Budget and Finance Officer*

This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).

Bills Gov Acted On

Posted on - 06/30/2025

The Governor has acted on the following bills:

BILL SIGNINGS:

S-4620/A-5879 (McKnight, Mukherji/McCann Stamato) - Amends Fiscal Year 2025 annual appropriations act to assign distribution of Old Courthouse asbestos remediation funding from Hudson County to Jersey City

S-2788wGR/A-4569 (Cruz-Perez, Turner/Freiman, Katz, Simmons) - Appropriates \$128.241 million from constitutionally dedicated CBT revenues to State Agriculture Development Committee for farmland preservation purposes

A-5100/S-3991 (Rodriguez/Stack) - Re-appropriates unexpended balance of FY 2024 appropriation for Town of West New York to support recreation center; appropriates \$3 million for Town of West New York – Recreation Center to restore lapsed FY 2024 funding

A-5807/S-4655 (Pintor Marin/Sarlo) - Makes FY2025 supplemental appropriations of \$142,615,000; adds various language provisions to FY2025 Appropriations Act

A-5803/SCS for S-3064 (Bagolie/McKeon, Turner) - Modifies tax on certain forms of online gaming and wagering

ACS for A-4455/SCS for S-4503 (Freiman, Schaer, Karabinchak /Sarlo, Mukherji) - Allows exemption from New Jersey gross income of certain capital gains from sale or exchange of qualified small business stock

A-5805/SCS for S-4659 and 4661 (Venezia/Sarlo, Vitale) - Modifies tax rate on certain nicotine products

A-5804/S-4666 (Reynolds-Jackson/Wimberly) - Modifies payer of additional fees and taxes imposed on certain real property transfers; modifies fees and taxes imposed on property transfers valued over \$2 million

A-5809/S-4656 (Murphy/Vitale) - "Healthcare Finance Enhancement Act"

S-3189/A-2365 (Zwicker, Sarlo/Tully, Murphy, DePhillips) - Makes various changes to “New Jersey Angel Investor Tax Credit Act” and Technology Business Tax Certificate Transfer Program; repeals “New Jersey Ignite Act”

S-4654/A-5878 (Scutari, A.M. Bucco/Schnall, Inganamort) - Provides for publication of required legal notices on government Internet websites and through certain online news publications

A-5801/S-4692 (Freiman/Sarlo) - Appropriates \$247,128,000 from “New Jersey Debt Defeasance and Prevention Fund”; establishes process for authorizing future appropriations for debt defeasance and capital projects

(BUDGET BILL – w/Rev Cert. LIV, Summary)

BILL VETOED:

[S-2026/A-5800](#) (Sarlo/Pintor Marin, Park) – w/LINE ITEM Appropriates \$58,782,119,000 in State funds and \$31,007,261,743 in federal funds for the State budget for fiscal year 2026

BILL SIGNINGS:

A-5810/S-4660 (Pintor Marin, Dolon, Bagolie/McKeon, McKnight) - Promotes equity in health insurance appeal process

S-4632/A-5812 (Scutari, Ruiz/Schaer) - Establishes grant program in DOE for public schools to purchase and install point-of-use filtered bottle-filling stations and filtered faucets

S-3618/A-4926 (Smith, Greenstein/Calabrese, Tully, Haider) - Directs DEP and DOT to establish “Wildlife Corridor Action Plan”

S-3933/A-5075 (Ruiz, McKnight/Swain, Morales, Bagolie) - Establishes School Supervisor Mentorship Pilot Program; appropriates \$500,000

A-5077/S-4375 (Morales, Bagolie, Carter/Ruiz, Zwicker) - Extends statutory pause on collection of student growth objective data

A-5795/S-4619 (Pintor Marin, Freiman, Drulis/Zwicker) - Modifies certain provisions of "New Jersey Innovation Evergreen Act"

S-4618/A-5827 (Mukherji, Gopal/Pintor Marin, Peterpaul, Donlon) - Modifies certain requirements and award availability under film and digital media content production tax credit program

S-4122/A-5257 (Burzichelli/Stanley, Egan) - Revises apportionment of State lottery contributions

Governor Murphy Signs Fiscal Year 2026 Budget into Law

Posted on - 06/30/2025

Budget Builds on Governor Murphy's Historic Record of Fiscal Responsibility – With a \$6.7 Billion Surplus to Help Weather Future Financial Challenges Compared to Just \$409 Million Surplus Inherited in 2018

Budget Provides An All-Time High Level of Property Tax Relief, the Highest Level of School Funding in History, and a Fifth Consecutive Full Pension Payment

Budget Makes Historic Investments in Women's Health Care and Provides Funding to Fully Modernize NJ TRANSIT's Fleet

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed into law the Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations Act, marking a culmination of the Murphy Administration's longstanding commitment to fiscal responsibility, affordability, and opportunity. Over nine budgets spanning nearly eight years in office, Governor Murphy has presided over sustained economic growth while making long overdue investments in addressing the needs of working New Jerseyans, from property tax relief, to school funding, to restoring funding for the State's pension systems.

The \$58.78 billion Fiscal Year 2026 (FY2026) budget, which was passed by the Legislature earlier today, redirects over 75 percent of the total budget back into our communities in the form of grants-in-aid for property tax relief, social services, higher education, as well as State aid to schools, municipalities, and counties. The budget includes an all-time high level of direct property tax relief for homeowners and renters, yields the highest level of school funding in history, and delivers a fifth consecutive full pension payment. It also prioritizes quality health services for women and families, and it invests in beginning to fully modernize NJ TRANSIT's fleet.

Upon taking office, Governor Murphy inherited a \$409 million surplus from his predecessor. Eight years later, the Governor will leave his successor with a surplus 16 times greater than that amount—\$6.7 billion.

"This budget exemplifies our dedication to fiscal responsibility, affordability, and opportunity for all New Jerseyans," **said Governor Murphy**. "Over nearly eight years in office, we have maintained a steadfast commitment to building a stronger and fairer New Jersey and righting our fiscal ship. I'm proud that this budget caps off an eight-year journey to turn our state around and delivers greater economic security and opportunity to every family. With the help of our legislative partners, we are moving New Jersey toward a brighter future for every child, student, worker, parent, and senior citizen who calls our great state home."

"The budget upholds our administration's promise to make sure that New Jersey remains the best state in the nation to live, work, raise a family, and retire," **said Lieutenant Governor Tahesha Way**. "Over the past seven and a half years, we have made historic strides in making our state more affordable for hardworking residents and families through expanded tax relief and major investments in affordable housing, social services, and

education. This state budget is a direct result of the strong collaboration between Governor Murphy, Treasurer Muoio, and legislative leadership.”

“This budget is the culmination of a nearly eight-year effort to improve conditions for all New Jerseyans, building a fiscally stronger state that is more affordable for all,” **said State Treasurer Elizabeth Maher Muoio**. “As always, this budget could not have been completed without the hard work of my staff at the Department of the Treasury and particularly the folks at the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Revenue and Economic Analysis. I want to thank all of them for their tireless work, dedication, and exemplary professionalism over the past seven and a half years.”

“This is a fiscally responsible budget that puts New Jersey families first. At a time when working people are being left behind by misguided decisions in Washington, we’re making smart, strategic investments that deliver meaningful support, especially through historic property tax reductions, strong funding for public education, higher education, healthcare, transit, and a full pension payment,” **said Senate President Nick Scutari, Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz and Senator Paul Sarlo, Chair of the Senate Budget Committee**. “We’re grateful to Governor Murphy and our colleagues in the Legislature for coming together to enact a disciplined, forward-looking budget that safeguards essential services, expands opportunity, and reinforces New Jersey’s long-term fiscal strength.”

Fiscal Responsibility

The budget once again provides a full payment to the pension systems. This year’s \$7.2 billion payment marks the fifth year in a row Governor Murphy has fully funded the systems. Total pension contributions by the Murphy Administration are on track to exceed \$47 billion – nearly four times the \$12.2 billion in total contributions of the previous six governors combined.

With an eye toward ensuring New Jersey remains prepared for the future, this budget provides a surplus of \$6.7 billion, more than ten times larger than the average surplus under the previous administration.

Additionally, the budget includes \$788 million in funding from the Corporate Transit Fee dedicated to support NJ TRANSIT and builds upon \$1.358 billion in interest saved by taxpayers over the last four years by paying down debt and minimizing new debt taken on.

The budget also includes several tax policy changes, including increases for the highest tier of realty transfer fees, sports betting, and cigarettes and vaping, as well as a new exemption for small business investment and reforms to the Angel Investor Tax Credit.

These changes, along with the cuts in appropriations, help ensure that revenues are more closely in line with expenditures.

Affordability and Economic Security

Continuing efforts to make New Jersey affordable for all, this budget includes nearly \$4.3 billion in direct property tax relief for New Jersey homeowners and renters, including \$2.4 billion for the continuation of the popular ANCHOR program, which last year delivered more than \$2.2 billion in property tax relief to nearly two million residents. The budget also continues the Senior Freeze program, with a \$239 million allocation to benefit more than 235,000 taxpayers.

The budget also includes additional funding for the landmark Stay NJ program, allocating \$600 million in

resources to significantly reduce property taxes for more than 432,000 senior homeowners. Stay NJ is expected to launch for the 2025 tax season and will reimburse eligible seniors for up to 50 percent of their property tax bills.

Continuing the focus on making the state more affordable for working and middle-class families, the budget maintains recent expansions of the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit, and the Child Tax Credit.

The tax relief included in this budget brings the total relief provided by the Murphy Administration and our partners in the Legislature to more than double any prior administration.

Continuing efforts to provide quality health services for all, a top priority of this administration, the budget includes \$165 million for the continuation of Cover All Kids; \$55.4 million for the Pharmaceutical Assistance to the Aged and Disabled (PAAD) and Senior Gold programs, helping more than 149,000 seniors and residents with disabilities; \$52 million for family planning services and reproductive health programs; and \$35.8 million for Family Connects NJ, which has provided nearly 2,500 free in-home nurse visits to families with newborns and is now available in 11 counties; and \$52 million for family planning services and reproductive health programs.

The proposal also includes \$10 million for a new initiative to provide State employees with full pay while they take family leave to care for a newborn, adopted, or fostered child.

Supporting the Next Generation of New Jerseyans

Last year, Governor Murphy became the first Governor to fully fund the K-12 school funding formula. This budget builds on that commitment, providing record-high school funding in FY2026. The budget includes a record \$12.1 billion for K-12 schools, a nearly \$4 billion increase since FY2018. This budget also addresses feedback from school districts by capping losses in major school aid categories and reducing input volatility, ensuring no district sees a steep reduction in aid from one year to the next. A district's K-12 State aid will not decrease by an amount greater than 3% of the prior year's State aid in the four primary categories: equalization, special education, security, and transportation.

The budget also proposes \$7.5 million in new grant funding to support districts in providing high-impact tutoring to students in need of extra academic support, as well as \$3 million in incentive grants for schools that want to go entirely phone-free, giving students the best opportunity to learn without distraction.

Continuing the push for universal pre-school throughout New Jersey, the FY2026 budget proposes \$1.27 billion for Preschool Education Aid. Since 2018, the Murphy Administration has expanded pre-K to 229 school districts and created nearly 20,000 new seats.

Building New Jersey's Future

In an effort to fortify our transportation infrastructure, this budget includes \$1.23 billion for critical investments in State and local highway and bridge projects, and another \$767 million for NJ TRANSIT to begin to fully modernize its fleet.

To ensure stability and future success for New Jersey's institutions of higher education, this budget provides \$755.2 million in institutional support for State colleges and universities, as well as \$169.1 million for county colleges and \$8.6 million for independent institutions of higher education in New Jersey. This totals \$932.9 million, a nearly 50% increase over the \$629.6 million in funding provided in FY2018.

The budget agreement also provides for \$250 million in bonding for capital grants to higher education institutions. This builds on the \$400 million in capital grants announced in 2023.

The budget also sets aside \$222 million from the Debt Defeasance and Prevention Fund for a critical investment in the construction of a new correctional facility to replace the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women.

An additional one-page policy summary on the central commitments of the FY2026 budget can be found online [here](#).

Governor Murphy signed the Appropriations Act into law today:

S-2026/A-5800 (Sarlo/Pintor Marin, Park) – w/LINE ITEM Appropriates \$58,782,119,000 in State funds and \$31,007,261,743 in federal funds for the State budget for fiscal year 2026

[Line Item Veto Message](#)

[Line Item Veto Summary](#)

[Revenue Certification](#)

In addition to the Appropriations Act, Governor Murphy also signed the following bills into law today:

S-4620/A-5879 (McKnight, Mukherji/McCann Stamato) - Amends Fiscal Year 2025 annual appropriations act to assign distribution of Old Courthouse asbestos remediation funding from Hudson County to Jersey City

S-2788wGR/A-4569 (Cruz-Perez, Turner/Freiman, Katz, Simmons) - Appropriates \$128.241 million from constitutionally dedicated CBT revenues to State Agriculture Development Committee for farmland preservation purposes

A-5100/S-3991 (Rodriguez/Stack) - Re-appropriates unexpended balance of FY 2024 appropriation for Town of West New York to support recreation center; appropriates \$3 million for Town of West New York – Recreation Center to restore lapsed FY 2024 funding

A-5807/S-4655 (Pintor Marin/Sarlo) - Makes FY2025 supplemental appropriations of \$142,615,000; adds various language provisions to FY2025 Appropriations Act

A-5803/SCS for S-3064 (Bagolie/McKeon, Turner) - Modifies tax on certain forms of online gaming and wagering

ACS for A-4455/SCS for S-4503 (Freiman, Schaer, Karabinchak /Sarlo, Mukherji) - Allows exemption from New Jersey gross income of certain capital gains from sale or exchange of qualified small business stock

A-5805/SCS for S-4659 and 4661 (Venezia/Sarlo, Vitale) - Modifies tax rate on certain nicotine products

A-5804/S-4666 (Reynolds-Jackson/Wimberly) - Modifies payer of additional fees and taxes imposed on certain real property transfers; modifies fees and taxes imposed on property transfers valued over \$2 million

A-5809/S-4656 (Murphy/Vitale) - "Healthcare Finance Enhancement Act

S-3189/A-2365 (Zwicker, Sarlo/Tully, Murphy, DePhillips) - Makes various changes to "New Jersey Angel Investor Tax Credit Act" and Technology Business Tax Certificate Transfer Program; repeals "New Jersey Ignite Act"

S-4654/A-5878 (Scutari, A.M. Bucco/Schnall, Inganamort) - Provides for publication of required legal notices on government Internet websites and through certain online news publications

A-5801/S-4692 (Freiman/Sarlo) - Appropriates \$247,128,000 from "New Jersey Debt Defeasance and Prevention Fund"; establishes process for authorizing future appropriations for debt defeasance and capital projects

A-5810/S-4660 (Pintor Marin, Dolon, Bagolie/McKeon, McKnight) - Promotes equity in health insurance appeal process

S-4632/A-5812 (Scutari, Ruiz/Schaer) - Establishes grant program in DOE for public schools to purchase and install point-of-use filtered bottle-filling stations and filtered faucets

S-3618/A-4926 (Smith, Greenstein/Calabrese, Tully, Haider) - Directs DEP and DOT to establish "Wildlife Corridor Action Plan"

S-3933/A-5075 (Ruiz, McKnight/Swain, Morales, Bagolie) - Establishes School Supervisor Mentorship Pilot Program; appropriates \$500,000

A-5077/S-4375 (Morales, Bagolie, Carter/Ruiz, Zwicker) - Extends statutory pause on collection of student growth objective data

A-5795/S-4619 (Pintor Marin, Freiman, Drulis/Zwicker) - Modifies certain provisions of "New Jersey Innovation Evergreen Act"

S-4618/A-5827 (Mukherji, Gopal/Pintor Marin, Peterpaul, Donlon) - Modifies certain requirements and award availability under film and digital media content production tax credit program

S-4122/A-5257 (Burzichelli/Stanley, Egan) - Revises apportionment of State lottery contributions