

18A:6-4.3a

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

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LAWS OF: 2005 **CHAPTER:** 322

NJSA: 18A:6-4.3a (Authorizes colleges and universities to investigate the fitness of applicants for police officer)

BILL NO: S1044

SPONSOR(S): Bryant and Turner

DATE INTRODUCED: February 9, 2004

COMMITTEE: **ASSEMBLY:** Education; Law and Public Safety

SENATE: Law and Public Safety and Veterans' Affairs

AMENDED DURING PASSAGE: Yes

DATE OF PASSAGE: **ASSEMBLY:** January 9, 2006

SENATE: October 25, 2004

DATE OF APPROVAL: January 12, 2006

FOLLOWING ARE ATTACHED IF AVAILABLE:

[FINAL TEXT OF BILL](#) (1st reprint enacted)

S1044

[SPONSOR'S STATEMENT:](#) (Begins on page 5 of original bill) [Yes](#)

COMMITTEE STATEMENT: **ASSEMBLY:** Yes [3-7-2005 \(Education\)](#)
[12-5-2005 \(L& PS\)](#)

[SENATE:](#) [Yes](#)

FLOOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT: No

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE: No

VETO MESSAGE: No

GOVERNOR'S PRESS RELEASE ON SIGNING: No

FOLLOWING WERE PRINTED:

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REPORTS: No

HEARINGS: No

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES: No

IS 2/5/08

P.L. 2005, CHAPTER 322, *approved January 12, 2006*
Senate, No. 1044 (*First Reprint*)

1 **AN ACT** concerning background investigations of certain university
2 police officer applicants and supplementing chapter 6 of Title 18A
3 of the New Jersey Statutes.

4

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

7

8 1. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 2 of P.L.1970, c.211
9 (C.18A:6-4.3) to the contrary, a college or university with an
10 established police agency may conduct the complete investigation of
11 an applicant's criminal history, character, competency, integrity and
12 fitness required by that section. ¹[These investigations shall be
13 conducted in accordance with guidelines promulgated by the
14 Superintendent of the State Police. A person conducting an
15 investigation under this section shall be trained and certified by the
16 superintendent]¹.

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18 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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23 Authorizes colleges and universities to investigate the fitness of
24 applicants for police officer.

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

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

Matter enclosed in superscript numerals has been adopted as follows:

¹ Senate SLP committee amendments adopted September 27, 2004.

SENATE, No. 1044

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
211th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 9, 2004

Sponsored by:

Senator WAYNE R. BRYANT

District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

SYNOPSIS

Authorizes colleges and universities to investigate the fitness of applicants for police officer.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



S1044 BRYANT

2

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14 Superintendent of the State Police. A person conducting an
15 investigation under this section shall be trained and certified by the
16 superintendent.

17

18 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

19

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STATEMENT

22

23 This bill permits colleges and universities with established police
24 agencies to investigate the character, competency, integrity and fitness
25 of applicants for the position of police officer. The bill would require
26 the college or university to conduct the investigation in accordance
27 with guidelines promulgated by the State Police.

28 Current law requires the Superintendent of State Police to conduct
29 these investigations. One component of the State Police investigation
30 is a State and federal criminal history record background check of the
31 applicant. Under the bill, the college or university would interview the
32 applicant's former employers, relatives, friends and acquaintances, as
33 well as conduct a criminal history check.

34 Currently, multi-jurisdictional colleges and other educational
35 institutions, including medical universities, may not commission or
36 train a campus police officer until the State Police investigation is
37 completed and the applicant approved. Due to competing priorities,
38 the State Police are not always able to complete the investigation in a
39 timely manner. Meanwhile, college and university public safety
40 departments are forced to function understaffed.

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 1044

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 7, 2005

The Assembly Education Committee favorably reports Senate Bill No. 1044 (1R).

This bill provides that a college or university with an established police agency may conduct an investigation of the criminal history, character, competency, integrity and fitness of applicants for the position of police officer at the institution. Current law requires the chief of police of the municipality in which the college or university is located to conduct these investigations or, if the municipality does not have an organized full-time police department or the institution is located in more than one municipality, the Superintendent of State Police.

Currently colleges and universities may not commission a campus police officer until the investigation is completed by the chief of police or the State Police and the applicant is approved. It is the committee's understanding that due to competing priorities, these investigations are not always completed in a timely manner. Meanwhile, college and university public safety departments are forced to function understaffed.

ASSEMBLY LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

SENATE, No. 1044

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 5, 2005

The Assembly Law and Public Safety Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1044 (1R).

Senate Bill No. 1044 (1R) permits colleges and universities which have established police agencies to conduct the complete background investigation of applicants for appointment as police officers. These background investigations include an examination of the applicant's criminal history, character, competency, integrity and fitness for the position of police officer at the institution.

Under current law, the chief of police of the municipality in which the college or university is located is responsible for conducting these investigations. If, however, the municipality does not have an established full-time police department or if the college or university is located in more than one municipality, the Superintendent of State Police is to conduct the investigation.

It is the committee's understanding that due to competing priorities, these background investigations are not always completed in a timely manner. Since an applicant for appointment as a college or university police officer may not be approved until the background check has been completed and the candidate has been determined to be qualified and fit, these delays have created staffing difficulties for some college and university police departments.

By permitting these colleges and universities to conduct the background checks of their candidates for appointment, this bill should alleviate those delays and enable the institutions to make necessary police officer appointments in a timely manner.

SENATE LAW AND PUBLIC SAFETY AND VETERANS'
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1044

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: SEPTEMBER 27, 2004

The Senate Law and Public Safety and Veterans' Affairs Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 1044.

As amended and released by the committee, this bill permits colleges and universities with established police agencies to investigate the character, competency, integrity and fitness of applicants for the position of police officer.

Current law requires the Superintendent of State Police to conduct these investigations. One component of the State Police investigation is a State and federal criminal history record background check of the applicant. Under the bill's provisions, the college or university would interview the applicant's former employers, relatives, friends and acquaintances, as well as conduct a criminal history check.

Currently, multi-jurisdictional colleges and other educational institutions, including medical universities, may not commission or train a campus police officer until the State Police investigation is completed and the applicant approved. It is the committee's understanding that the State Police, due to competing priorities, are not always able to complete the investigation in a timely manner. Meanwhile, college and university public safety departments are forced to function understaffed.

As introduced, the bill would have required 1) the college or university to conduct the investigation in accordance with guidelines promulgated by the State Police and 2) the State Police to train and certify the persons conducting the investigations. It is the committee's understanding that such guidelines and procedures currently exist, and the committee amendments remove these provisions.