

# ASSEMBLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **ASSEMBLY, No. 4827**

with committee amendments

# **STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

DATED: NOVEMBER 30, 2023

The Assembly Women and Children Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 4827.

As amended by committee, this bill would strengthen the existing State requirements for childhood lead screening by: (1) codifying, in the statutory law, the existing schedule for childhood lead screening that appears in regulations adopted by the Department of Health (DOH); and (2) allowing health care professionals to perform lead screenings at the point-of-care, in the regular course of a well visit.

As amended, the bill would specify, in particular, that every physician, registered professional nurse, or health care facility, agency, or program that is subject to the State's childhood elevated blood lead level prevention laws will be required to perform a lead screening on each patient between six months and 26 months of age to whom services are provided, during the course of a well visit, in accordance with the following schedule:

1) when the child is between nine and 18 months of age; preferably on the date of, or as close as possible to, the child's first birthday; and

2) at least six months after the first lead screening test, when the child is between 18 and 26 months of age; preferably on the date of, or as close as possible to, the child's second birthday.

A physician, registered professional nurse, or health care facility, agency, or program performing a lead screening in accordance with this schedule will be authorized to perform the screening on-site, at the point of care, during the course of a well visit.

The physician, registered professional nurse, or health care facility, agency, or program performing lead screening will be required to record in the child's permanent health record the date on which the lead screening test was administered and the results of the test.

The bill requires the DOH to modify its existing lead screening public information campaign to inform the parents and guardians of small children, as well as physicians, registered professional nurses, and other health care providers, about the lead screening schedule and requirements, and the conditions for initial school enrollment, established by the bill. As amended by the committee, the bill additionally requires the DOH to establish an educational outreach

campaign providing the same information to the same populations. Any information or documentation that is prepared for the public information and educational outreach campaigns is to be posted at a publicly accessible location on the DOH Internet website.

The bill clarifies that any DOH regulations adopted pursuant to P.L.1995, c.316 (C.17:48E-35.10 et al.), concerning the provision of insurance coverage for lead screenings, are to be consistent with the revisions to the State's lead screening laws adopted under the bill.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments replace the outdated term "lead poisoning" with "elevated blood lead levels" throughout the bill.

The committee amendments remove language from the bill concerning federal clinical laboratory waivers for lead screening tests, as these tests are already subject to a federal waiver.

The committee amendments remove the requirement that a child undergo a lead screening immediately prior to enrollment in school and have a current lead screening test on file as a condition of enrollment in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, and removes the definitions in the bill relating to that requirement.

The committee amended the bill to clarify that physicians, registered professional nurses, or health care facilities, agencies, or programs subject to the State's childhood elevated blood lead level prevention laws are to perform a lead screening on patients between the ages of six months and 26 months, instead of between the ages of six months and six years, as originally provided in the bill, since the bill removes the requirement that a child undergo a lead screening and have a current lead screening test as a condition of enrollment in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten.

The committee amendments add a citation to N.J.A.C.8: 8:51A2.-2 to ensure consistency with the bill's provisions, State childhood elevated blood lead level prevention laws, and regulations governing the State's schedule for childhood lead screening.

The committee amended the bill to stipulate that certain requirements under current law related to the DOH's lead screening public information campaign also apply to the educational outreach campaign the DOH is required to implement under the bill.

The committee amendments require the DOH to establish an educational outreach campaign providing the same information to the same populations.

The committee amended the synopsis of the bill to reflect the changes made by committee amendment.

The committee amendments make various technical changes to address issues involving punctuation, grammar, and syntax.