

Bill Summary:

Improving the New Jersey Medical Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill Act, A1880(CONAWAY, JR.)

The Legislation Would Improve New Jersey's Existing Medical Aid in Dying Law:

The *Medical Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill* took effect on August 1, 2019. Under the law, terminally ill, mentally capable adults with six months or less to live are able to request and self-administer medication that allows them to peacefully end their suffering, should they choose.

However, many eligible patients are not able to access the law as a result of unnecessary regulatory requirements. After carefully evaluating how the current law is working in comparison to other authorized jurisdictions, [A1880](#) proposes two modifications to the law that will allow more eligible patients to access medical aid in dying while still protecting medically vulnerable populations:

- Amends the 15-day waiting period between the first and second oral requests, allowing providers to waive the second oral request in certain circumstances. New Jersey's current law requires patients to make two oral requests; patients must wait 15 days between the first and second oral request. This 15-day timeframe has proven to be a barrier for individuals seeking medical aid in dying, rather than a safety feature. [A1880](#) allows providers to waive the second oral request in the case of a patient who, based on reasonable medical certainty, is not expected to survive for 15 days.
- In certain circumstances, shortens the 15-day waiting period between the first oral request and the issuance of the medication prescription. New Jersey's current law requires patients to wait at least 15 days between the first oral request and the issuance of a prescription for the medication. This 15-day timeframe has proven to be a barrier for individuals seeking medical aid in dying, rather than a safety feature. [A1880](#) would amend the 15-day waiting period in the case of a patient who, based on reasonable medical certainty, is not expected to survive for 15 days. In those cases, the waiting period is shortened, requiring at least 48 hours to elapse between the patient's initial oral request and the writing of a prescription.

For More Information

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