

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 4

WHEREAS, New Jerseyans deserve a state government that works and delivers for residents, with services that are accessible, efficient, and focused on results; and

WHEREAS, this Administration is committed to leading a government that is effective, accountable, and transparent—one that saves New Jerseyans time and money, provides high-quality services and programs, and makes it easier to start and grow businesses across the State; and

WHEREAS, achieving progress on key priorities—including lowering energy costs, improving housing affordability, and expanding economic opportunity—requires a coordinated, whole-of-government approach across state agencies with clear leadership and accountability; and

WHEREAS, simplifying and expediting state agencies' permitting and approval processes, with strong coordination from the Governor's Office, will boost economic growth, job creation, and affordability in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, making state government more user-friendly and effective requires strong operational systems, modern digital services, streamlined regulations, and robust performance management; and

WHEREAS, establishing a Chief Operating Officer within the Office of the Governor will provide the leadership needed to drive operational excellence and ensure taxpayer resources translate into real results for New Jerseyans;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, MIKIE SHERRILL, Governor of the State of New Jersey, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and by the Statutes of this State, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT:

1. There is hereby established within the Office of the Governor an Office of the Chief Operating Officer, which will drive strategic priorities forward and improve the operational performance of Executive Branch departments and agencies.

- a. The Chief Operating Officer ("COO") shall be appointed by, serve at the pleasure of, and report directly to the Governor.

2. The COO will serve as the Governor's principal advisor on strategic initiatives, operational performance, and organizational effectiveness, helping ensure the Administration's priorities translate into measurable improvements in residents' lives.

3. The COO shall establish cross-departmental and interdisciplinary working groups to:

- a. Champion customer experience improvements that make New Jersey government more user-friendly for residents and businesses;
- b. Drive operational transformations that modernize government services, enhance organizational performance, and improve service delivery;
- c. Simplify and streamline government processes and regulations to reduce burdens on and improve outcomes for residents and businesses while maintaining essential protections;
- d. Streamline and expedite the permitting, review, and approval process across agencies to reduce project delays and costs; and
- e. Lead performance management processes to monitor the development and progress of priority initiatives.

4. The Office of the COO shall include offices that support work on strategic initiatives and economic opportunity, operational performance, Cabinet affairs, constituent relations, administration, and Governor's Office operations.

5. The COO will drive cross-agency coordination across strategic priorities and operational transformation efforts, including coordinating with the New Jersey Innovation Authority to develop and deliver strategic operational priorities.

6. The Governor may adjust the organizational structure, staffing, and reporting relationships of the Office of the COO as needed to best achieve the objectives of this Order.

7. There is further established within the Office of the COO two new offices, the Strategic Initiatives & Economic Opportunity Office and the Operational Performance Office, to strengthen New Jersey's capacity to deliver better, faster, and more cost-effective public services and economic growth outcomes.

8. The Strategic Initiatives & Economic Opportunity Office shall be responsible for supporting the implementation of the Governor's strategic priorities and economic growth and affordability goals.

9. The Operational Performance Office will be responsible for working with state partners improving government processes in areas such as customer experience, procurement modernization, transparent and capability-based budgeting, digital services, and state workforce; and by driving statewide regulatory simplification.

10. The head of each Executive Branch department or agency shall be responsible for advancing operational effectiveness within their agency, such as by personally observing customer-facing service delivery processes, engaging with frontline staff to identify opportunities for improvement, and championing customer service and continuous improvement.

11. To discharge the duties set forth in this Order, the COO may request that any Executive Branch department or agency provide information or other assistance the COO deems necessary. To the extent not inconsistent with law, Executive Branch departments and agencies shall cooperate with the COO in pursuit of this Order's objectives, including by:

- a. Implementing recommended operational improvements;
- b. Participating in cross-agency working groups and initiatives as directed; and
- c. Designating senior liaisons with decision-making authority as needed.

12. Within 30 days of this Order, each agency shall designate a senior liaison to coordinate with the Office of the COO as it relates to: regulation, procurement, human resources, budget, customer service, and information technology and digital services.

13. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to create a private right of action to enforce any provision of this Order or any rule, guidance, recommendation, or agency action developed pursuant thereto. Nothing in this Order shall be construed to supersede any federal, State, or local law, nor to alter or limit any statutory authority of any Executive Branch department or agency.

14. This Order shall not be construed to require the disclosure of any record or information that is confidential, privileged, advisory, deliberative, or otherwise protected from disclosure by law.

15. This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN, under my hand and seal this
20th day of January,
Two Thousand and Twenty-Six, and
of the Independence of the
United States, the Two Hundred
and Fiftieth.

[seal]

/s/ Mikie Sherrill

Governor

Attest:

/s/ Timothy P. Lydon

Chief Counsel to the Governor