

**State of New Jersey
Executive Department**

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 34

Whereas, It is essential that all persons supplying goods or services to the State of New Jersey, or performing contracts or otherwise executing public works with the assistance of and subject to the approval of the State, must meet a standard of responsibility which assures the State and its citizens that such persons will both compete and perform honestly in their dealings with the State and avoid secret or illicit dealing; and

Whereas, It is essential that such persons be fully informed of policies of the State in this regard, and be afforded procedural safeguards appropriate to circumstances which such policies may occasion; and

Whereas, The courts have affirmed the duty and obligation of State officials to develop and effectuate such policies; and

Whereas, It is essential that such policies be uniformly applied by the various agencies of the Executive Branch, and that uniform procedures be adopted to implement them;

Now, Therefore, I, Brendan T. Byrne, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby ORDER and DIRECT that:

1. Debarment, suspension and disqualification are measures which shall be invoked by the State to exclude or render ineligible certain persons from participation in contracts and subcontracts with the State, or in projects or contracts performed with the assistance of and subject to the approval of the State, on the basis of a lack of responsibility. These measures shall be used for the purpose of protecting the interests of the State and not for punishment. To assure the State the benefits to be derived from the full and free competition between and among such persons and to maximize the opportunity for honest competition and performance these measures shall not be invoked for any time longer than deemed necessary to protect the interests of the State.

2. As used in the Order:

(a) "Debarment" means an exclusion from State contracting, on the basis of a lack of responsibility evidenced by an offense, failure, or indaequacy (sic) of performance, for a reasonable period of time commensurate with the seriousness of the offense, failure, or inadequacy of performance.

(b) "Suspension" means an exclusion from State contracting for a temporary period of time, pending the completion of an investigation or legal proceedings.

(c) "Disqualification" means a debarment or a suspension which denies or revokes a qualification to bid or otherwise engage in State contracting which has been granted or applied for pursuant to statute, or rules and regulations.

(d) "State" means the State of New Jersey, or any of the departments or agencies in the Executive Branch of government with the lawful authority to engage in contracting.

(e) "Person" means any natural person, company, firm, association, corporation, or other entity.

(f) "State contracting" means any arrangement giving rise to an obligation to supply any thing to or perform any service for the State, other than by virtue of State employment, or to supply any thing to or perform any service for a private person where the State provides substantial financial assistance and retains the right to approve or disapprove the nature or quality of the goods or service or the persons who may supply or perform the same.

(g) "Affiliates" means persons having an overt or covert relationship such that any one of them directly or indirectly controls or has the power to control another.

3. The executive head of each department or agency in the Executive Branch, with the lawful authority to engage in State contracting, shall, within 90 days of the date of this Order and in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act (P.L. 1968, c. 410, C. 52:14B-1 et seq.), promulgate rules and regulations governing the causes, conditions and procedures applicable to determinations of debarment, suspension and disqualification by that department or agency. Such rules and regulations shall to the extent consistent with existing law conform to the minimum standards hereinafter set forth, but need not be limited to such standards. In addition to any other filing required by law to be made, each executive head shall file with the Attorney General and the Treasurer a copy of such rules and regulations as may be promulgated.

4. Subject to the conditions hereinafter described, the rules and regulations referred to in Section 3 supra, shall authorize the department or agency to debar a person in the public interest for any of the following causes:

(a) Commission of a criminal offense as an incident to obtaining or attempting to obtain a public or private contract, or subcontract thereunder, or in the performance of such contract or subcontract.

(b) Violation of the Federal Organized Crime Control Act of 1970, or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, perjury, false swearing, receiving stolen property, obstruction of justice, or any other offense indicating a lack of business integrity or honesty.

(c) Violation of the Federal or State Antitrust Statutes, or of the Federal Anti-Kickback Act (18 U.S.C. 874, 40 U.S.C. 276 b, c).

(d) Violations of any of the laws governing the conduct of elections of the State of New Jersey or of its political subdivisions.

(e) Violation of the "Law Against Discrimination" (P.L. 1945, c. 169, C. 10:5-1 et seq., as supplemented by P.L. 1975, c. 172), or of the act banning discrimination in public works employment (C. 10:2-1 et seq.) or of the Act prohibiting discrimination by industries engaged in defense work in the employment of persons therein (C. 114, L. 1942, C. 10:1-10 et seq.).

(f) Violations of any laws governing hours of labor, minimum wage standards, prevailing wage standards, discrimination in wages, or child labor.

(g) Violations of any laws governing the conduct of occupations or professions or regulated industries.

(h) Willful failure to perform in accordance with contract specifications or within contractual time limits.

(i) A record of failure to perform or of unsatisfactory performance in accordance with the terms of one or more contracts, provided that such failure or unsatisfactory performance has occurred within a reasonable time preceding the determination to debar and was caused by acts within the control of the person debarred.

(j) Violation of contractual or statutory provisions regulating contingent fees.

(k) Any other cause affecting responsibility as a State contractor of such serious and compelling nature as may be determined by the department or agency to warrant debarment, including such conduct as may be prescribed by the laws or contracts enumerated in this paragraph even if such conduct has not been or may not be prosecuted as violations of such laws or contracts.

(l) Debarment by some other department or agency in the Executive Branch.

5. The rules and regulations concerning debarment required herein shall include in substance the following conditions:

(a) Debarment shall be made only upon approval of the executive head of the department or agency, except as otherwise provided by law.

(b) The existence of any of the causes set forth in paragraph 4 of the Order shall not necessarily require that a person be disbarred. In each instance, the decision to debar shall be made within the discretion of the head of the department or agency unless otherwise required by law, and shall be rendered in the best interests of the State.

(c) All mitigating factors shall be considered in determining the seriousness of the offense, failure or inadequacy of performance and in deciding whether debarment is warranted.

(d) The existence of a cause set forth in subparagraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) of paragraph 4 of this Order shall be established upon the rendering of a final judgement or conviction by a court of competent jurisdiction or by an administrative agency empowered to render such judgement. In the event an appeal taken from such judgement or conviction results in reversal thereof, the debarment shall be removed upon the request of the debarred person unless other cause for debarment exists.

(e) The existence of a cause set forth in subparagraphs (h), (i), (j), and (k) of paragraph 4 of this Order shall be established by evidence which the department or agency determines to be clear and convincing in nature.

(f) Debarment for the cause set forth in subparagraph (l) of paragraph 4 of the Order shall be proper provided that one of the causes set forth in subparagraph 4(a) through 4(k) was the basis for debarment by the original debarring agency. Such debarment may be based entirely on the record of facts obtained by the original debarring agency, or upon a combination of such facts and additional facts.

6. The rules and regulations concerning debarment required by this Order shall include in substance the following provisions regarding procedures, period of debarment and scope of debarment:

(a) A department or agency seeking to debar a person or his affiliates shall furnish such party with a written notice: (i) stating that debarment is being considered, (ii) setting forth the reasons for the proposed debarment, and (iii) indicating that such party will be accorded an opportunity for a hearing if he so requests within a stated period of time. All such hearings shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act. However, where one department or agency has imposed debarment upon a party, a second department or agency may also impose a similar debarment without according an opportunity for a hearing, provided that the second agency furnishes notice of the proposed similar debarment to that party, and accords that party an opportunity to present information in his behalf to explain why the proposed similar debarment should not be imposed in whole or in part.

(b) Debarment shall be for a reasonable, definitely stated period of time which as a general rule shall not exceed 5 years. Debarment for an additional period shall be permitted provided that notice thereof is furnished and the party is accorded an opportunity to present information in his behalf to explain why the additional period of debarment should not be imposed.

(c) Except as otherwise provided by law, a debarment may be removed or the period thereof may be reduced in the discretion of the debarring agency upon oath, supported by documentary evidence, setting forth substantial and appropriate grounds for the granting of relief, such as newly discovered material evidence, reversal of a conviction or judgement, actual change of ownership, management or control, or the elimination of the causes for which the debarment was imposed.

(d) A debarment may include all known affiliates of a person, provided that each decision to include an affiliate is made on a case by case basis after giving due regard to all relevant facts and circumstances. The offense, failure or inadequacy of performance of an individual may be imputed to a person with whom he is affiliated, where such conduct was accomplished within the course of his official duty or was effected by him with the knowledge or approval of such person.

7. Subject to the conditions hereinafter described, the rules and regulations required by this Order shall authorize the department or agency to suspect a person in the public interest for any cause specified in paragraph 4 of this Order, or upon a reasonable suspicion that such cause exists.

8. The rules and regulations concerning suspension required by this Order shall include in substance the following conditions:

(a) Suspension shall be imposed only upon approval of the executive head of the department or agency and upon approval of the Attorney General, except as otherwise provided by law.

(b) The existence of any cause for suspension shall not require that a suspension be imposed, and a decision to suspend shall be made at the discretion of the executive head of the department and of the Attorney General, and shall be rendered in the best interests of the State.

(c) Suspension shall not be based upon unsupported accusation, but upon adequate evidence that cause exists or upon evidence adequate to create a reasonable suspicion that cause exists.

(d) In assessing whether adequate evidence exists, consideration shall be given to the amount of credible evidence which is available, to the existence or absence of corroboration as to important allegations, and to inferences which may properly be drawn from the existence or absence of affirmative facts.

(e) Reasonable suspicion of the existence of a cause described in subparagraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), and (g) of paragraph 4 of this Order may be established by the rendering of a final judgement or conviction by a court or administrative agency of competent jurisdiction, by grand jury indictment, or by evidence that such violations of civil or criminal law did in fact occur.

(f) A suspension invoked by an agency for any of the causes described in subparagraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), and (l) of paragraph 4 of this Order may be the basis for the imposition of a concurrent suspension by another agency, which may impose such suspension without the approval of the Attorney General.

9. The rules and regulations concerning suspension required by the Order shall include in substance the following provisions regarding procedures, period of suspension and scope of suspension:

(a) A department or agency may suspend a person or his affiliates, provided that within 10 days after the effective date of the suspension, the agency provides such party with a written notice: (i) stating that a suspension has been imposed and its effective date, (ii) setting forth the reasons for the suspension to the extent that the Attorney General determines that such reasons may be properly disclosed, (iii) stating that the suspension is for a temporary period pending the completion of an investigation and such legal proceedings as may ensue, and (iv) indicating that, if such legal proceedings are not commenced or the suspension removed within 60 days of the date of such notice, the party will be given either a statement of the reasons for the suspension and an opportunity for a hearing if he so requests, or a statement declining to give such reasons and setting forth the agency's position regarding the continuation of the suspension. Where a suspension by one agency has been the basis for suspension by another agency, the latter shall note that fact as a reason for its suspension.

(b) A suspension shall not continue beyond 18 months from its effective date unless civil or criminal action regarding the alleged violation shall have been initiated within that period, or unless debarment action has been commenced. Whenever prosecution or debarment action has been initiated, the suspension may continue until the legal proceedings are

completed.

(c) A suspension may include all known affiliates of a person, provided that each decision to include an affiliate is made on a case by case basis after giving due regard to all relevant facts and circumstances. The offense, failure or inadequacy of performance of an individual may be imputed to a person with whom he is affiliated, where such conduct was accomplished within the course of his official duty or was effectuated by him with the knowledge or approval of such person.

10. The rules and regulations required by this Order shall contain such provisions as may be necessary to conform existing practices and procedures under any relevant prequalification statutes to the procedures governing debarment and suspension required herein, to the extent that such existing practices and procedures may concern the disqualification of any person from State contracting.

11. The rules and regulations required by this Order shall provide that the exclusion from State contracting by virtue of debarment, suspension or disqualification shall extend to all State contracting and subcontracting within the control or jurisdiction of the department or agency which imposes the exclusion. However, when it is determined essential to the public interest by the head of the department or agency, and upon filing of a finding thereof with the Attorney General, an exception from total exclusion may be made with respect to a particular State contract.

12. Insofar as practicable, prior notice shall be given to the Attorney General and the Treasurer of any proposed debarment or suspension.

13. The Treasurer shall maintain a current list of the names of all persons suspended or debarred, the effective date and term if any thereof, and the agency or agencies which imposed same. Such list shall be available for public inspection.

14. Departments and agencies required by this Order to promulgate rules and regulations governing debarment and suspension are hereby authorized in connection with any proceedings thereunder to receive such information regarding the criminal conduct or criminal record of any person to the extent that such disclosure is deemed appropriate by the Attorney General, consistent with existing Federal and State law.

15. Nothing required by this Order shall be construed to limit the authority of any department or agency to refrain from contracting within the discretion allowed by law.

[seal] Given, under my hand and seal this 29th day of March, in the year of Our Lord, one thousand nine hundred and seventy-six, of the Independence of the United States, the two hundredth.

/s/ BRENDAN BYRNE,
Governor

Attest:

John J. Degnan,
Executive Secretary to the Governor

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