

STATE OF NEW YORK

10209

IN ASSEMBLY

February 12, 2026

Introduced by M. of A. ZINERMAN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to establishing the office of global public health and international cooperation within the department of health

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature hereby
2 finds and declares that:
3 1. New York state is a global center of travel, commerce, diplomacy,
4 education, and migration, and as such is uniquely vulnerable to the
5 rapid importation and transmission of emerging infectious diseases and
6 other global public health threats; and
7 2. Recent global public health emergencies have demonstrated that
8 early detection, rapid information sharing, and coordinated interna-
9 tional scientific collaboration are essential components of effective
10 disease prevention, preparedness, and response; and
11 3. Technical cooperation, data exchange, and research collaboration
12 between public health authorities, academic institutions, and interna-
13 tional health organizations significantly enhance disease surveillance,
14 workforce training, and emergency preparedness capabilities; and
15 4. Federal disengagement from international public health institutions
16 weakens global disease surveillance networks and increases the risk of
17 delayed detection and response, thereby heightening public health risks
18 for states with high volumes of international travel and commerce; and
19 5. It is therefore in the interest of the people of the state of New
20 York to establish a permanent state-level infrastructure within the
21 department of health to coordinate lawful, non-binding, technical coop-
22 eration with international public health institutions and research part-
23 ners in order to strengthen disease surveillance, public health
24 preparedness, scientific exchange, and emergency response capacity.
25 § 2. The public health law is amended by adding a new section 206-c to
26 read as follows:

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

LBD14760-01-6

1 § 206-c. Office of global public health and international cooperation.

2 1. Definitions. For purposes of this section:

3 (a) "Technical cooperation" shall mean non-binding collaboration
4 related to public health surveillance, data exchange, research, work-
5 force training, scientific education, emergency preparedness, and
6 disease prevention and control.

7 (b) "International public health institution" shall mean a foreign
8 governmental public health authority, international organization, or
9 multilateral technical agency engaged in disease surveillance, epidemio-
10 logical research, or public health preparedness, including but not
11 limited to the World Health Organization and agencies of the United
12 Nations.

13 (c) "Non-binding memorandum of understanding" shall mean a written
14 agreement that does not create legally enforceable obligations, treaty
15 commitments, or international agreements, and that is limited to techni-
16 cal cooperation and information exchange.

17 2. Establishment. There shall be established within the department an
18 office to be known as the office of global public health and interna-
19 tional cooperation, which shall operate under the supervision and direc-
20 tion of the commissioner.

21 3. Powers and duties. The office of global public health and interna-
22 tional cooperation shall have the power and duty to:

23 (a) coordinate international technical cooperation in the fields of
24 public health surveillance, epidemiology, laboratory science, emergency
25 preparedness, and workforce training, consistent with federal law and
26 constitutional limitations;

27 (b) facilitate the exchange of public health data, subject to all
28 applicable state and federal privacy and security laws, for the purposes
29 of disease surveillance, early-warning detection, and emergency
30 preparedness;

31 (c) support and coordinate partnerships between New York-based academ-
32 ic institutions, public health laboratories, hospitals, and interna-
33 tional public health institutions, including those designated as World
34 Health Organization collaborating centers;

35 (d) promote research collaboration and scientific exchange programs to
36 strengthen New York state's public health workforce and technical capac-
37 ity;

38 (e) provide technical assistance and consultation to state agencies
39 and local health departments regarding global disease threats, prepared-
40 ness planning, and emerging public health risks;

41 (f) develop and maintain early-warning systems for emerging infectious
42 diseases and other global public health threats, in coordination with
43 state, federal, and international partners;

44 (g) apply for, accept, and administer grants, gifts, donations, and
45 other funds from public or private sources, including philanthropic
46 organizations, research institutions, and public-private partnerships,
47 consistent with applicable law;

48 (h) enter into non-binding memoranda of understanding for technical
49 cooperation, consistent with subdivision four of this section; and

50 (i) perform such other duties as may be necessary to carry out the
51 purposes of this section.

52 4. Limitations. (a) Nothing in this section shall be construed to
53 authorize the office of global public health and international cooper-
54 ation, the department, or the state to enter into any treaty, compact,
55 or agreement constituting foreign policy, diplomacy, or international
56 relations reserved to the federal government.

1 (b) All memoranda of understanding and cooperative arrangements
2 authorized pursuant to this section shall be strictly limited to non-
3 binding technical cooperation, research collaboration, workforce train-
4 ing, and public health preparedness functions.

5 (c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to impair or supersede
6 the authority of the federal government, including the centers for
7 disease control and prevention, the department of health and human
8 services, or any other federal agency.

9 5. Annual report. The office of global public health and international
10 cooperation shall submit an annual global health risk and preparedness
11 report to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, the
12 speaker of the assembly and the chairs of the senate and assembly health
13 committees, which shall include, but not be limited to:

14 (a) an assessment of emerging global public health risks with poten-
15 tial impact on New York state;

16 (b) a summary of technical cooperation activities, partnerships, and
17 memoranda of understanding;

18 (c) an evaluation of New York state's preparedness capacity to respond
19 to global public health threats;

20 (d) recommendations for legislative, regulatory, or budgetary actions
21 to strengthen public health preparedness; and

22 (e) an accounting of all funds received and expended by such office.

23 6. Staffing. The commissioner may appoint such professional, techni-
24 cal, and administrative staff as may be necessary to carry out the
25 duties of the office of global public health and international cooper-
26 ation, within amounts appropriated therefor.

27 7. Severability. If any provision of this section or its application
28 shall be adjudged invalid, such judgment shall not affect or impair the
29 validity of the remainder of this section or the application thereof to
30 other persons or circumstances.

31 § 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after
32 it shall have become a law.