STATE OF NEW YORK

6751

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 11, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. SIMONE, KELLES, SANTABARBARA -- read once and referred to the Committee on Mental Health

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law and the social services law, in relation to housing navigation services for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities

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

Section 1. The mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new section 13.44 to read as follows:

§ 13.44 Housing navigation services.

(a) The office shall establish and provide housing navigation services for individuals with a developmental or intellectual disability as defined in section 1.03 of this chapter. Housing navigation services shall include but not be limited to:

(1) collaborating with individuals to develop an individualized housing action plan, that at a minimum, shall assist individuals in finding appropriate housing that meets their specific housing goals;

(2) supporting individuals that apply for state and federal assistance programs;

(3) coordinating and assisting housing transitions for individuals, taking into consideration their specific needs; and

(4) collaborating with individuals to craft a housing sustainability plan to ensure that such individuals are able to secure and maintain stable housing, and have access to and are able to utilize the necessary services and support to achieve their housing goals.

(b) (1) The commissioner shall develop and implement a housing navigation curriculum statewide, for the purposes of training applicants in delivering housing navigation services as defined in subdivision (a) of this section. In developing and implementing such curriculum, the commissioner may contract with an entity that has demonstrated appropri-

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

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ate knowledge, expertise, and experience in housing navigator services and training curriculums.

(2) The commissioner, in consultation with the regional offices under such commissioner's jurisdiction shall perform a statewide assessment of the need for housing navigation services, and shall provide additional outreach regarding the availability of housing navigation training in regions of the state where there is the greatest demonstrated need.

(c) (1) The commissioner shall establish a housing navigation task force to perform tasks that will help to ensure the successful implementation of the housing navigation services established by this section. The task force shall be co-chaired by the commissioner or such commissioner's designee, the commissioner of the office of temporary and disability assistance or such commissioner's designee, the commissioner of the office of mental health or such commissioner's designee, the commissioner of the office of addiction services and supports or such commissioner's designee, and a representative of New York state homes and community renewal. Ensuring adequate geographic representation, an additional ten individuals shall be selected for the task force. Such individuals shall have professional experience in the fields of affordable housing development, banking, financial planning, and in delivering housing services for individuals with developmental or intellectual disabilities as a non-profit provider. The members shall be selected by the commissioner in consultation with the other state agency representatives on the task force.

(2) The task force shall meet as often as is necessary, but no less than three times per year, and under circumstances as are appropriate to fulfilling its duties as required under this section.

(3) Members of the task force shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed for actual costs incurred for participation on such task force.

(4) The task force shall:

(i) coordinate with the commissioner and the regional offices to help ensure access to housing navigation services in the regions of the state with the greatest demonstrated need;

(ii) create or utilize written information that may be used as a resource for increasing public awareness of housing navigation resources as well as educating parents, individuals, provider agencies and other stakeholders about the opportunities for non-certified housing in all five regions of the office;

(iii) provide recommendations on the appropriateness of and ways to implement a housing navigator train-the-trainer program using the housing navigator training curriculum;

(iv) assist in the development of research methods which measure the correlation between the housing navigator model and social determinants of health;

(v) evaluate housing navigation as a reimbursable service and measuring outcomes based on value-based payment methodologies and arrangements; and

(vi) examine the feasibility of expanding housing navigation services to other systems of care that are involved in the delivery of housing services, including but not limited to high utilization Medicaid service enrollees who reside in the state of New York.

§ 2. Section 366 of the social services law is amended by adding a new subdivision 7-d to read as follows:

7-d. The commissioner of health in consultation with the commissioner of the office for people with developmental disabilities is authorized

to submit the appropriate waivers, including but not limited to, those authorized pursuant to section eleven hundred fifteen of the federal social security act, in order to achieve the purpose of high-quality housing navigation services pursuant to section 13.44 of the mental hygiene law for a population of persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities, as such terms are defined in section 1.03 of the mental hygiene law.

§ 3. Subdivision (b) of section 5.07 of the mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new paragraph 6 to read as follows:

(6) The commissioner of the office for people with developmental disabilities shall include the following in the portion of the statewide comprehensive plan required by this subdivision for services provided to persons with developmental or intellectual disabilities: (i) information related to progress implementing and the effectiveness of housing navigation services as defined in section 13.44 of this chapter, and (ii) any other information deemed appropriate by such commissioner.

§ 4. This act shall take effect April 1, 2027. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.