

850--A

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N   S E N A T E

(PREFILED)

January 9, 2013

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Introduced by Sen. PARKER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications -- recommitted to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the public service law, in relation to mandating directory information or assistance for certain eligible persons at no cost to such persons

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

- 1     Section 1. The public service law is amended by adding a new section  
2     92-h to read as follows:  
3     S 92-H. DIRECTORY ASSISTANCE FOR ELIGIBLE PERSONS. 1. THE COMMISSION  
4     SHALL REQUIRE ALL TELEPHONE CORPORATIONS TO PROVIDE DIRECTORY INFORMA-  
5     TION OR ASSISTANCE TO ELIGIBLE PERSONS, AS PROVIDED IN SUBDIVISION TWO  
6     OF THIS SECTION, AT NO COST TO SUCH PERSONS. THE COMMISSION SHALL  
7     ESTABLISH PROCEDURES BY WHICH FREE ACCESS TO SUCH INFORMATION OR ASSIST-  
8     ANCE FOR SUCH PERSONS IS AUTOMATICALLY REGISTERED AS EXEMPT FROM ALL  
9     CHARGES.  
10    2. THE FOLLOWING PERSONS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICE PURSUANT TO THIS  
11    SECTION:  
12    (A) BLIND PERSONS WHOSE VISUAL ACUITY, AS DETERMINED BY COMPETENT  
13    AUTHORITY, IS 20/200 OR LESS IN THE BETTER EYE WITH CORRECTING LENSES,  
14    OR WHOSE WIDEST DIAMETER OF VISUAL FIELD SUBTENDS ANGULAR DISTANCE NO  
15    GREATER THAN TWENTY DEGREES.  
16    (B) OTHER PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED PERSONS ARE ELIGIBLE AS FOLLOWS:  
17    (I) PERSONS WHOSE VISUAL DISABILITY, WITH CORRECTION AND REGARDLESS OF  
18    OPTICAL MEASUREMENT, IS CERTIFIED BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY AS PREVENTING  
19    THE READING OF STANDARD PRINTED MATERIAL.

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

LBD02865-02-4

1 (II) PERSONS CERTIFIED BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY AS UNABLE TO READ OR  
2 UNABLE TO USE STANDARD PRINTED MATERIAL AS A RESULT OF PHYSICAL LIMITA-  
3 TIONS.

4 (III) PERSONS CERTIFIED BY COMPETENT AUTHORITY AS HAVING A READING  
5 DISABILITY RESULTING FROM ORGANIC DYSFUNCTION AND OF SUFFICIENT SEVERITY  
6 TO PREVENT THEIR READING OF PRINTED MATERIAL IN A NORMAL MANNER.

7 (C) CERTIFYING AUTHORITY:

8 (I) IN CASES OF BLINDNESS, VISUAL IMPAIRMENT, OR PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS,  
9 "COMPETENT AUTHORITY" IS DEFINED TO INCLUDE DOCTORS OF MEDICINE; DOCTORS  
10 OF OSTEOPATHY; OPHTHALMOLOGISTS; OPTOMETRISTS; REGISTERED NURSES; THERA-  
11 PISTS; AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF OF HOSPITALS, INSTITUTIONS, AND PUBLIC OR  
12 PRIVATE WELFARE AGENCIES (E.G., SOCIAL WORKERS, CASEWORKERS, COUNSELORS,  
13 REHABILITATION TEACHERS, AND SUPERINTENDENTS).

14 (II) IN THE CASE OF READING DISABILITY FROM ORGANIC DYSFUNCTION,  
15 COMPETENT AUTHORITY IS DEFINED AS DOCTORS OF MEDICINE AND DOCTORS OF  
16 OSTEOPATHY WHO MAY CONSULT WITH COLLEAGUES IN ASSOCIATED DISCIPLINES.

17 S 2. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after  
18 it shall have become a law. Any rules and regulations necessary for the  
19 timely implementation of this act on its effective date shall be promul-  
20 gated on or before such date.