

STATE OF NEW YORK

245

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 5, 2017

Introduced by M. of A. HEVESI -- read once and referred to the Committee on Social Services

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to resource exemptions for applicants for public assistance programs; and to amend chapter 436 of the laws of 1997, constituting the welfare reform act of 1997, in relation to the effectiveness thereof

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

Section 1. Section 131-n of the social services law, as amended by section 16 of part B of chapter 436 of the laws of 1997, subdivision 1 as amended by section 1 of part X of chapter 54 of the laws of 2016 and subdivision 3 as amended by chapter 207 of the laws of 2001, is amended to read as follows:

§ 131-n. Exemption of income and resources. 1. The resources identified in subdivision two of this section shall be exempt and disregarded at application in calculating the amount of benefits of any applicant for any public assistance program. At recertification, resources delineated in subdivision two of this section shall not be taken into consideration when determining eligibility or calculating the amount of benefits of any recipient for any public assistance program.

2. The following resources shall be exempt and disregarded in calculating the amount of benefits of any ~~household under~~ applicant for any public assistance program: (a) cash and liquid or nonliquid resources up to ~~two~~ three thousand dollars, or ~~three~~ four thousand five hundred dollars in the case of households in which any member is sixty years of age or older, (b) an amount up to ~~four thousand six hundred fifty~~ seven thousand fifty dollars in a separate bank account established by an individual while currently in receipt of assistance for the sole purpose of enabling the individual to purchase a first or replacement vehicle for the recipient to seek, obtain or maintain employment, so long as the funds are not used for any other purpose, (c) an amount ~~up~~

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

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~~to one thousand four~~] equal to the greater of five thousand one hundred
sixty-five dollars or the maximum tuition assistance program award
available for the current academic year in a separate bank account
established by an individual while currently in receipt of assistance
for the purpose of paying tuition at a two-year or four-year accredited
post-secondary educational institution, so long as the funds are not
used for any other purpose, (d) the home which is the usual residence of
the household, (e) one automobile, up to ten thousand dollars fair
market value, through March thirty-first, two thousand seventeen; one
automobile, up to eleven thousand dollars fair market value, from April
first, two thousand seventeen through March thirty-first, two thousand
eighteen; and one automobile, up to twelve thousand dollars fair market
value, beginning April first, two thousand eighteen and thereafter, or
such other higher dollar value as the local social services district may
elect to adopt, (f) one burial plot per household member as defined in
department regulations, (g) bona fide funeral agreements ~~[up to a total~~
~~of one thousand five hundred dollars in equity value]~~ per household
member, (h) funds in an individual development account established in
accordance with subdivision five of section three hundred fifty-eight of
this chapter and section four hundred three of the social security act
~~[and],~~ (i) ~~[for a period of six months,]~~ any real property which the
household is making a good faith effort to sell, in accordance with
department regulations and tangible personal property necessary for
business or for employment purposes in accordance with department regu-
lations, (j) retirement accounts, including but not limited to individ-
ual retirement accounts, 401(k)'s, 403(b)'s, and keogh plans; and (k)
all 529 college savings plans. If federal law or regulations require
the exemption or disregard of additional income and resources in deter-
mining need for family assistance, or medical assistance not exempted or
disregarded pursuant to any other provision of this chapter, the depart-
ment may, by regulations subject to the approval of the director of the
budget, require social services officials to exempt or disregard such
income and resources. Refunds resulting from earned income tax credits
shall be disregarded in public assistance programs. Court ordered child
support which is paid or withheld from income shall not be considered
available income.

~~[2-]~~ 3. If and to the extent permitted by federal law and regulations,
amounts received under section 105 of Public Law 100-383 as reparation
payments for internment of Japanese-Americans and payments made to indi-
viduals because of their status as victims of Nazi persecution as
defined in P.L. 103-286 shall be exempt from consideration as income or
resources for purposes of determining eligibility for and the amount of
benefits under any program provided under the authority of this chapter
and under title XX of the Social Security Act.

4. Ownership of all other personal property not exempt in subdivisions
two and three of this section, shall be evaluated based upon its equity
value.

~~[3-]~~ 5. The department is authorized to establish regulations defining
income and resources, consistent with this section. ~~[The department is~~
~~further authorized to promulgate regulations it deems necessary to~~
~~prevent the improper establishment and use of accounts for purchase of~~
~~first or replacement vehicles.]~~

§ 2. Subdivision (c) of section 153 of part B of chapter 436 of the
laws of 1997, constituting the welfare reform act of 1997, as amended by
chapter 187 of the laws of 2015, is amended to read as follows:

1 (c) Section sixteen of this act shall take effect November 1, 1997
2 [~~and expire and be deemed repealed August 22, 2017~~].
3 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, that
4 section one of this act shall take effect on the first of April next
5 succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.