

STATE OF NEW YORK

2868

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 18, 2017

Introduced by Sen. PARKER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Energy and Telecommunications

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 § 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.

20 (ii) Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or
21 unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limita-
22 tions.

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

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1 (iii) Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading
2 disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity
3 to prevent their reading of printed material in a normal manner.

4 (c) Certifying authority:

5 (i) In cases of blindness, visual impairment, or physical limitations,
6 "competent authority" is defined to include doctors of medicine; doctors
7 of osteopathy; ophthalmologists; optometrists; registered nurses; thera-
8 pists; and professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or
9 private welfare agencies (e.g., social workers, caseworkers, counselors,
10 rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents).

11 (ii) In the case of reading disability from organic dysfunction,
12 competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine and doctors of
13 osteopathy who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

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