# STATE OF NEW YORK

4880

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

# IN SENATE

March 3, 2017

Introduced by Sens. DIAZ, MONTGOMERY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Aging

AN ACT to amend the elder law, in relation to requiring establishment of model community programs for local agencies, including a model telephone reassurance program and a model visiting program for elders

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

Section 1. The elder law is amended by adding a new section 203-a to read as follows:

**§ 203-a. Model community programs. In order to encourage the development of activities and programs that promote aging with dignity in communities, the office shall develop model community programs to be distributed upon request to local area agencies on aging and community based organizations. Such model community programs shall include the following:**

**1. A model telephone reassurance program shall be developed to provide for the following:**

**(a) phone calls by the organization maintaining the program to participating seniors at an agreed upon time each day;**

**(b) a secondary contact, where applicable, to be contacted if the senior does not answer the initial call and before local law enforcement are contacted;**

**(c) coordination with local law enforcement to ensure an appropriate response in the event the senior cannot be contacted;**

**(d) advance consent to access to the home by local law enforcement to determine the status of the senior if contact with the senior could not be made; and**

**(e) increased coordination between the seniors utilizing the program and program operators to reduce incidents resulting in unnecessary law enforcement response.**

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

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2. A model visiting program shall be developed to provide seniors with a visitor who can offer contact on a regular basis and companionship for seniors who lack a network of family and friends in their communities. The model visiting program shall include:

(a) methods to obtain volunteers including by partnering with local educational institutions;

(b) systems to screen volunteers to both ensure a good match and protect seniors involved in the program;

(c) systems to periodically check on both volunteers and the seniors; and

(d) responses to problems that may arise.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.