STATE OF NEW YORK

10319

IN ASSEMBLY

April 22, 2020

Introduced by M. of A. PEOPLES-STOKES -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Operations

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to establishing the office of racial equity and social justice

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

Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new article 15-D to read as follows:

ARTICLE 15-D
OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Section 328-e. Definitions.
328-f. Office of racial equity and social justice; director, organization and employees.
328-g. Functions, powers and duties of the office.

§ 328-e. Definitions. As used in this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "Office" means the office of racial equity and social justice.

2. "Director" means the director of the office of racial equity and social justice.

3. "Equity" means fair and just opportunities and outcomes for all individuals.

4. "Social justice" means every individual deserves to benefit from the same economic, political and social rights and opportunities, free from health disparities, regardless of race; socioeconomic status; age; sex, including on the basis of gender identity or orientation; religion; disability; or other characteristics.

5. "Race" means a social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance, including color; ancestral heritage; cultural affiliation; cultural history; ethnic classification; and the social, economic and political needs of a society at a given period.

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

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6. "Inequity" means systematic and patterned differences in well-being that disadvantage one group in favor of another caused by past and current decisions, systems of power and privilege, and policies.

7. "Individual racism" means explicit or implicit pre-judgment bias or discrimination by an individual based on race.

8. "Institutional racism" means policies, practices, and procedures that work better for some members of a community than others based on race.

9. "Racial equity and social justice" means changes in policy, practice and allocation of state resources so that race or social justice constructs do not predict an individual's success, while also improving opportunities and outcomes for all people.

§ 328-f. Office of racial equity and social justice; director, organization and employees. 1. The office of racial equity and social justice is hereby created within the executive department to have and exercise the functions, powers and duties provided by the provisions of this article and any other provision of law.

2. The head of the office shall be the director of the office, who shall serve as the chief equity officer for the state of New York and shall be designated as management confidential in the noncompetitive class in accordance with the civil service law. The director shall be the chief executive officer of and in sole charge of the administration of the office. The director shall be entitled to receive reimbursement for expenses actually and necessarily incurred by him or her in the performance of his or her duties.

3. The director may, from time to time, create, abolish, transfer and consolidate bureaus and other units within the office not expressly established by law as he or she may determine necessary for the efficient operation of the office, subject to the approval of the director of the budget.

4. The director may appoint, in accordance with the civil service law, such deputies, assistants, and other officers and employees, committees and consultants as he or she may deem necessary, prescribe their powers and duties, fix their compensation, and provide for reimbursement of their expenses within the amounts appropriated therefor.

5. The director may request and receive from any department, division, board, bureau, commission or other agency of the state or any political subdivision thereof or any public authority, staff and other assistance, information, and resources as will enable the office to properly carry out its functions, powers and duties.

§ 328-g. Functions, powers and duties of the office. The office shall have the following functions, powers and duties:

1. To act as the official state planning and coordinating office for changes in policy, practice and allocation of state resources so that race or social justice constructs do not predict an individual's success, while also improving opportunities and outcomes for all people, and performing all necessary and appropriate services required to fulfill these duties.

2. To establish, oversee, manage, coordinate and facilitate the planning, design and implementation of the state's racial equity and social justice action plan, such plan shall incorporate and embed racial equity and social justice principles and strategies into operations, programs, service policies and community engagement to eliminate inequity, institutional racism and individual racism in the state, and shall include racial equity and social justice training for all state employees.

3. To advise and assist the state agencies in developing policies, plans and programs for eliminating institutional racism and improving racial equity and social justice.

4. To perform racial equity and social justice reviews and make recommendations for improving management and program effectiveness pertaining to racial equity and social justice, including, but not limited to, an annual racial equity and social justice impact statement which shall accompany the executive budget.

5. To establish, oversee, manage a racial equity and social justice advisory committee, the composition and duties of such committee as determined by the director.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall have become a law.