

STATE OF NEW YORK

6718--A

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 15, 2019

Introduced by M. of A. THIELE, PALUMBO, GALEF, MIKULIN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse -- recommitted to the Committee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse in accordance with Assembly Rule 3, sec. 2 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to the creation of a recovery living task force

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

Section 1. The mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new section 19.04 to read as follows:

§ 19.04 Recovery living task force.

1. Definitions. As used in this section:

"Recovery living residence" shall mean any residence located in New York state where the owner or operator of such residence holds the residence out to the public as an alcohol and drug free living environment for persons recovering from a chemical dependency, where no formal treatment services are provided on-site.

2. The recovery living task force is hereby created, which pursuant to the provisions of this section, shall establish best practice guidelines for recovery living residences that illustrate the most appropriate and effective environment for persons recovering from a chemical dependency.

3. The task force shall study and utilize reliable evidence and information collected from organizations and programs both in New York state and throughout the country to:

(a) Document the number of recovery residences operating in the state;

(b) Issue recommendations and guidelines establishing best practices for recovery living residences in order to provide an alcohol and drug free recovery living environment, with a focus on least restrictive means of benefiting the person in recovery. In developing guidelines, the task force shall consider the role of local and state government in

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

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oversight and other areas; siting challenges; geographic variations in what housing currently exists and in barriers to creating new suitable housing; optimal standards for living space, privacy and nutrition; personal financial participation by tenants; work requirements, including adequacy of compensation; reimbursement opportunities; discharge planning, the participant's legal protections against removal from the residence; what information must be provided to the participant at admission, including due process rights of the participant for removal from the residence; appropriate responses to relapse with the goal of protecting both the person who has relapsed and other residents of the residence; how to ensure access to medication assisted treatment; the needs of women, and of women with children; the use of drug testing; and options and requirements for formal or self-help treatment services;

(c) Study and issue findings regarding health and safety concerns related to the occupancy and operation of recovery living residences for the person in recovery;

(d) Study and issue findings regarding the impacts of occupancy and operation of recovery living residences on neighborhoods and surrounding areas;

(e) Issue recommendations on the feasibility of licensing, regulating, registering or certifying recovery living residences in New York state; and

(f) Issue recommendations for any other program or policy initiative that the task force deems relevant.

4. (a) The members of the task force shall include ten members consisting of the commissioner or his or her designee; the commissioner of the office of mental health or his or her designee; the commissioner of the office of temporary and disability assistance or his or her designee; the commissioner of the office of homes and community renewal or his or her designee; two members appointed by the temporary president of the senate, at least one of whom shall be a current or former resident of a recovery living residence; two members appointed by the speaker of the assembly, at least one of whom shall be a current or former resident of a recovery living residence; and two members appointed by the governor. The task force shall include at least one operator of a recovery living residence with at least five years of experience in the field who must demonstrate, to the extent practicable, that the residences they operate have had minimal code violations within the preceding three years. Appointments must ensure geographic representation, to the extent practicable. The commissioner shall be designated the chairperson of such task force and shall select a vice-chairperson and a secretary from the designees appointed by the legislature or the governor;

(b) The members of the task force shall receive no compensation for their services but shall be reimbursed for expenses actually and necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties;

(c) No civil action shall be brought in any court against any member of the recovery living task force for any act or omission necessary to the discharge of his or her duties as a member of the task force, except as provided herein. Such member may be liable for damages in any such action if he or she failed to act in good faith and exercise reasonable care. Any information obtained by a member of the task force while carrying out his or her duties as prescribed in subdivision three of this section shall only be utilized in their capacity as a member of the task force.

1 5. No later than one year after the effective date of this section,
2 the task force shall provide a report containing the results of the
3 study, including evidence used as a basis in making such report, and its
4 recommendations, if any, together with drafts of legislation necessary
5 to carry out its recommendations by filing said report, documentation,
6 and draft legislation, with the governor, the temporary president of the
7 senate, the minority leader of the senate, the speaker of the assembly,
8 and the minority leader of the assembly. The task force shall also make
9 the report, documentation, and draft legislation public by posting a
10 copy on the website maintained by the office.

11 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.