

STATE OF NEW YORK

5018

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

February 22, 2021

Introduced by Sens. PARKER, ADDABBO, BAILEY, COMRIE -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs

AN ACT to amend the executive law, the social services law, and the mental hygiene law, in relation to providing veterans' housing

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

1 Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 354-f
2 to read as follows:

3 § 354-f. Veterans' housing. 1. For purposes of this section, the
4 following terms shall have the following meanings: a. "Veteran" means a
5 resident of this state, who has served in the active military, naval or
6 air service of the United States or the national guard and who has been
7 released from such service without regard to the duration of service or
8 manner of discharge, or citizenship;

9 b. "Transitional housing" means temporary housing for veterans and
10 shall include bridge housing and service-intensive transitional housing.

11 c. "Bridge housing" means transitional housing in which a veteran may
12 await permanent housing placement. No veteran shall be required to spend
13 more than ninety days in bridge housing.

14 d. "Service-intensive housing" means transitional housing in which
15 veterans are provided support and resources to actively seek permanent
16 housing. Service-intensive housing shall provide veterans with general-
17 ized case-management, clinically appropriate care, and job training.

18 e. "Permanent housing" means long-term housing and shall not include
19 bridge housing or service-intensive housing. Permanent housing may be
20 supported through a local, state, or federal housing program.

21 f. "Homeless" means a person who is undomiciled or unsheltered, and is
22 unable to secure permanent or stable housing without special assistance,
23 as determined by the division.

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

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1 g. "Housing first principles" means the approach articulated by the
2 United States department of housing and urban development that prior-
3 itizes placement of homeless individuals in housing without precondi-
4 tions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service
5 participation requirements.

6 2. In consultation with the division of housing and community renewal,
7 the office for temporary disability assistance, the office of mental
8 health, and the office for alcoholism and substance abuse, the division
9 shall ensure that homeless veterans are housed according to federal
10 housing first principles.

11 3. The division shall provide immediate housing to every homeless
12 veteran who requests to be housed. Such housing may be transitional
13 housing or permanent housing and shall not be contingent on sobriety,
14 minimum income requirements, absence of a criminal record, or any other
15 conditions deemed unnecessary by the state director. Long-term service-
16 intensive housing shall only be provided in limited instances and only
17 when the veteran specifically chooses to remain in service-intensive
18 housing despite the availability of permanent housing. Any veteran who
19 chooses long-term service-intensive housing shall be provided a monthly
20 review of all available services and housing options. Absent a veteran's
21 choice to remain in service-intensive housing, all homeless veterans
22 shall be placed in permanent housing at the first available opportunity
23 using federal housing first principles.

24 4. The division shall prepare and publish an annual report on its
25 website detailing the resources, plans, partnerships, and system capaci-
26 ty for housing homeless veterans. The report shall identify all sources
27 of data upon which it relied and shall contain recommendations on how to
28 better provide housing and related services to homeless veterans.

29 § 2. Section 353 of the executive law is amended by adding a new
30 subdivision 7-c to read as follows:

31 7-c. The division shall consult with the division of housing and
32 community renewal, the office of temporary disability assistance, the
33 office of mental health, and the office of alcoholism and substance
34 abuse to provide housing services to homeless veterans pursuant to
35 section three hundred fifty-four-f of this article. The division may
36 consult with members of the community devoted to helping veterans obtain
37 housing, employment and general services for the same purpose.

38 § 3. Section 20 of the social services law is amended by adding a new
39 subdivision 9 to read as follows:

40 9. The office of temporary and disability assistance shall consult
41 with the state director of the division of veterans affairs, the commis-
42 sioner of the division of housing and community renewal, the commis-
43 sioner of the office of temporary disability assistance, the commissioner of
44 the office of mental health, and the commissioner of the office of alco-
45 holism and substance abuse to provide housing services to homeless
46 veterans pursuant to section three hundred fifty-four-f of the executive
47 law.

48 § 4. Section 7.07 of the mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new
49 subdivision (i) to read as follows:

50 (i) The office shall consult with the state director of the division
51 of veterans affairs, the commissioner of the division of housing and
52 community renewal, the commissioner of the office of temporary disabili-
53 ty assistance, and the commissioner of the office of alcoholism and
54 substance abuse to provide housing services to homeless veterans pursu-
55 ant to section three hundred fifty-four-f of the executive law.

1 § 5. Section 19.07 of the mental hygiene law is amended by adding a
2 new subdivision (n) to read as follows:

3 (n) The office shall consult with the state director of the division
4 of veterans affairs, the commissioner of the division of housing and
5 community renewal, the commissioner of the office of temporary disabili-
6 ty assistance, and the commissioner of the office of mental health to
7 provide housing services to homeless veterans pursuant to section three
8 hundred fifty-four-f of the executive law.

9 § 6. This act shall take effect immediately.