STATE OF NEW YORK

8194

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

October 27, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. SEPTIMO -- read once and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

AN ACT to amend the state finance law, in relation to establishing a fund to support localities which voluntarily shelter and provide direct services to a significant population of newly arrived asylum seekers

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

Section 1. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 98-e to read as follows:

§ 98-e. Temporary relocation assistance for asylum seekers fund. 1. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the comptroller and the commissioner of taxation and finance a special fund to be known as the temporary relocation assistance for asylum seekers fund.

2. Such fund shall consist of all moneys appropriated for the purposes of such fund, all other moneys required to be paid into or credited to such fund, and all moneys received by the fund or donated to it by any source. Any funds expended by a locality for services or programs supporting the newly arrived asylum seekers as set forth in this section shall be matched up to two hundred percent by the state. Out of any federal funds received by the state for such purposes, expenditures by a local government shall be matched up to three hundred percent.

3. (a) The purpose of the fund shall be to support counties and other municipalities with a significant population of newly arrived asylum seekers with providing direct services to such individuals. For the purposes of this section, "significant population" shall mean five thousand asylum seekers for a county or municipality with a population of over one million, and a number of asylum seekers which is at least two percent of the population for any other county or municipality.

(b) For the purposes of this section "direct services" shall include, but are not limited to: healthcare, housing, free and/or subsidized

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

LBD13337-01-3

legal services for low-income individuals, education and language services such as English as a second language (ESL) classes, adult continuing education programs including General Equivalency Diploma (GED) instruction, free and/or subsidized child care programs, and job training and trade certificate programs.

(c) Services are not required to be limited exclusively to newly arrived asylum seekers; provided that the majority of the services which are funded under this section shall be provided directly to newly arrived asylum seekers.

(d) To be eligible for funds under this section, localities may not impose any limits or conditions, including age, on asylum seekers which are accepted and served by such locality.

4. Upon the conclusion of any programs or services provided by a county or municipality to asylum seekers, any remaining monies in the fund may be applied to reduce any indebtedness or obligations incurred to effectuate the purposes of this section.

5. For the purposes of this section "asylum seeker" shall refer to an individual who changes their country of usual residence to seek temporary or permanent residence in another country, and who has applied for asylum under 8 U.S. Code § 1158 or is eligible to apply; or who is a refugee as defined by section 101(a)(42) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA).

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.