

STATE OF NEW YORK

9026

IN ASSEMBLY

February 5, 2024

Introduced by M. of A. SOLAGES -- read once and referred to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to the creation of a community doula expansion grant program; and to amend the state finance law, in relation to the community doula expansion grant program fund

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

1 Section 1. Legislative findings. The legislature hereby declares that
2 poor maternal and infant health outcomes, especially when it comes to
3 racial disparities, are a public health crisis that pose a threat to the
4 health, welfare, and quality of life of child bearing people, infants
5 and their families. The legislature hereby acknowledges that community-
6 based doula care is one solution in addressing this public health
7 crisis. The legislature also acknowledges imbalances in how doula care
8 is accessed in different communities. The legislature also acknowledges
9 how doulas in the BIPOC community are integrated, or lack integration
10 into the maternal health continuum. The legislature acknowledges that
11 those seeking to become community-based doulas face a multitude of
12 barriers, including institutional barriers, within the healthcare
13 continuum. The legislature hereby finds the importance in establishing a
14 dedicated fund to support community-based doulas and community-based
15 doula organizations. This fund would be assisting those trying to navigate the Federal and State Medicaid frameworks for doula care to become
16 community-based doulas. Which would be one step in solving the existing
17 barriers to those seeking equitable prenatal, intranatal, and postpartum
18 care services.

20 § 2. Article 25 of the public health law is amended by adding a new
21 title 3-A to read as follows:

TITLE III-A

COMMUNITY DOULA EXPANSION PROGRAM

Section 2560. Community doula expansion grant program.

2561. Definitions.

2562. Rules and regulations.

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

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1 2563. Report.

2 § 2560. Community doula expansion grant program. The community doula
3 expansion grant program is established within the department.

4 § 2561. Definitions. As used in this title:

5 1. "Eligible providers" shall mean community-based organizations
6 providing for the recruitment, training, licensing, supporting, and/or
7 mentoring of community-based doulas.

8 2. "Community-based doula" shall mean a certified doula that provides
9 culturally sensitive pregnancy and childbirth education, early linkage
10 to health care, and aids birthing persons in navigating other services
11 and supports that they may need to be healthy.

12 § 2562. Rules and regulations. 1. The commissioner shall establish a
13 community doula expansion grant program for eligible providers to
14 receive funding in the performance of recruitment, training, licensing,
15 supporting, and/or mentoring of community-based doulas. Such eligible
16 providers shall meet professionally recognized training standards,
17 comply with applicable state law and regulations, and shall be capable
18 of providing culturally congruent care.

19 2. The commissioner is authorized, within amounts appropriated for
20 such purpose, to make grants in accordance with this subdivision. Such
21 grants may be used for but not limited to the administration, faculty
22 recruitment and development, start-up costs and other costs incurred for
23 providing recruitment, training, licensing, supporting, and/or mentoring
24 of community-based doulas.

25 3. There shall be an emphasis of appropriating grants to eligible
26 providers that specifically train, recruit, and employ doulas from
27 historically vulnerable communities, BIPOC doulas, and bilingual doulas.
28 This can include grants for doula apprentice programs.

29 4. The commissioner shall create and maintain an awareness and
30 outreach program. The awareness and outreach program shall be estab-
31 lished for the purpose of providing education and awareness of the
32 available grants and funds to eligible providers in the state.

33 § 2563. Report. The commissioner shall establish a comprehensive list
34 of reporting metrics to be included in a report due on December thirty-
35 first, two thousand twenty-four and annually thereafter, to the gover-
36 nor, to the temporary president of the senate, and to the speaker of the
37 assembly. The report shall include the comprehensive list of reporting
38 metrics and shall include, but not be limited to, the total amount of
39 grants issued, the number of eligible providers, and the region of the
40 state where the eligible provider is located.

41 § 3. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 99-rr to
42 read as follows:

43 § 99-rr. Community doula expansion grant program fund. 1. There is
44 hereby established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and
45 commissioner of taxation and finance a special fund to be known as the
46 "Community doula expansion grant program fund".

47 2. Such fund shall consist of all monies appropriated thereto from any
48 other fund or source pursuant to law. Nothing contained in this section
49 shall prevent the state from receiving grants, gifts or bequests for the
50 purposes of the fund as defined in this section and depositing them into
51 the fund according to law.

52 3. Monies shall be payable from the fund on the audit and warrant of
53 the comptroller on vouchers approved and certified by the commissioner
54 of health.

1 4. The monies in such fund shall be expended for the community doula
2 expansion grant program in accordance with the provisions of section
3 twenty-five hundred sixty-two of the public health law.

4 § 4. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall
5 have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or
6 repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of
7 this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed
8 on or before such effective date.