STATE OF NEW YORK

10434

IN ASSEMBLY

March 6, 2026

Introduced by M. of A. ZINERMAN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Governmental Employees

AN ACT to amend the civil service law and the executive law, in relation to establishing the "public civil rights accountability act" requiring civil rights compliance certification and training for public employees

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

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "public civil rights accountability act".

§ 2. Legislative findings. The legislature finds that public employees serve all residents of the state of New York and must uphold the civil rights protections guaranteed under federal and state law, including but not limited to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the New York state human rights law.

The legislature further finds that unlawful discrimination undermines public trust, causes harm to individuals and communities, and interferes with the ability of public institutions to fulfill their missions.

The legislature declares that it is necessary to ensure that all public employees receive clear notice of their obligations under civil rights law and are held accountable for violations.

§ 3. The civil service law is amended by adding a new section 159-e to read as follows:

§ 159-e. Civil rights compliance certification. 1. Definition. For purposes of this section, "public employee" shall mean any officer or employee of the state, a public authority, public benefit corporation, state university, city university, public school district, or any political subdivision of the state.

2. Certification requirement. Every public employer shall require each newly hired public employee to complete a civil rights compliance certification as a condition of employment. Such certification shall include written acknowledgment that such employee:

(a) has received notice of federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination, including but not limited to:

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

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(i) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and
(ii) the New York state human rights law;
(b) understands their legal obligation to comply with such laws; and
(c) understands that unlawful discrimination, harassment, or creation of a hostile work or educational environment may result in disciplinary action, including termination.
3. Training requirement. (a) All public employees shall complete civil rights and anti-discrimination training:
(i) within ninety days of hire; and
(ii) annually.
(b) Such training shall include prevention of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and any other protected class under law.
4. Enforcement. (a) Failure to complete certification or training required under this section may result in administrative action, including suspension until compliance is achieved.
(b) Violation of civil rights laws in the course of public employment shall constitute misconduct and may result in disciplinary action pursuant to section seventy-five of this chapter and other applicable laws.

§ 4. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 296-e to read as follows:

§ 296-e. Civil rights compliance in public employment. All public employers shall implement policies and procedures to comply with section one hundred fifty-nine-e of the civil service law.

§ 5. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part thereof directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the legislature that this act would have been enacted even if such invalid provisions had not been included herein.

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