STATE OF NEW YORK

10457

IN ASSEMBLY

March 6, 2026

Introduced by M. of A. SANTABARBARA -- read once and referred to the Committee on Housing

AN ACT to amend the private housing finance law, in relation to enacting the "employer-assisted housing matching grant act"

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 "employer-assisted housing matching grant act".

§ 2. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature hereby finds that the ability of New York's human services workforce to live near their place of employment is essential to the stability of programs that support individuals with disabilities, mental health needs, substance use disorders, and other vulnerable populations. Non-profit provider agencies certified, licensed, or contracted by the state face chronic workforce shortages, exacerbated by the high cost of housing. To address these challenges, this act establishes a program to match employer-provided housing assistance for care workers, thereby helping such workers to remain stably housed and employed.

§ 3. The private housing finance law is amended by adding a new section 47-f to read as follows:

§ 47-f. Employer-assisted matching grant program. 1. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Eligible employee" shall mean an individual employed by an eligible employer:

(i) who is employed in a qualifying care workforce position, including but not limited to direct support professionals, certified nursing assistants, licensed practical nurses, registered nurses, behavioral health or human services staff, and early intervention and special education therapists;

(ii) who works a minimum average of twenty hours per week;

(iii) whose household income does not exceed one hundred fifty percent of area median income, or such lower limit as may be set by the employer; and

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

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(iv) who maintains a primary residence in the state of New York.

(b) "Eligible employer" means a nonprofit agency that is funded, approved, certified, licensed, or contracted by the office for people with developmental disabilities, the office of mental health, or the office of addiction services and supports.

(c) "Employer contribution" shall mean cash assistance provided directly by an eligible employer or reimbursed to an eligible employee for documented housing costs, but shall not include in-kind benefits.

(d) "Program" means the employer-assisted housing match grant program established pursuant to subdivision two of this section.

2. Establishment. The division of housing and community renewal, in consultation with the office for people with developmental disabilities, the office of mental health, and the office of addiction services and supports, shall establish and administer an employer-assisted housing matching grant program for nonprofit provider agencies qualifying as eligible employers as described in this section.

3. Eligible employers. Eligible employers shall be eligible to participate in the program. Two or more eligible employers may apply jointly through a collaborative or umbrella organization.

4. Fund uses. Matching grant funds distributed by the program shall be applied toward:

(a) residential security deposits;

(b) first month's rent;

(c) emergency rental arrears; or

(d) down payment and closing costs for a primary residence, provided that the eligible employee agrees to maintain such residence for not less than one year after purchase.

5. State match. (a) The state shall provide a matching grant equal to fifty percent of the employer contribution made by an eligible employer under the program on behalf of an eligible employee, up to a maximum of three thousand dollars per eligible employee in any rolling twelve-month period.

(b) Funds under the program shall be disbursed to the eligible employer upon submission of documentation demonstrating payment to a landlord, property manager, or settlement agent, as applicable.

(c) Eligible employees may receive assistance in multiple years, provided that the aggregate does not exceed the rolling cap.

6. Administration. (a) The division of housing and community renewal shall promulgate regulations and guidance governing the administration of the program, including application procedures, documentation standards, allowable uses, and reporting requirements.

(b) The division of housing and community renewal may advance funds to participating eligible employers or reimburse after eligible employer payment, and may reallocate unused funds among eligible employers.

(c) Eligible employers participating in the program shall submit annual reports detailing the number of eligible employees assisted, the type of assistance provided, the aggregate amount of such eligible employer's and state funds disbursed, and eligible employee retention outcomes to the extent practicable.

(d) The division of housing and community renewal is authorized to audit eligible employers' records and recover funds improperly used.

7. Coordination with other programs. Eligible employees under this section shall not be prohibited from receiving other housing assistance solely for their participation in the program.

8. Outreach and access. (a) The division of housing and community renewal shall develop and disseminate informational materials to eligi-

ble employers and eligible employees regarding the availability of the program.

(b) Application procedures shall ensure accessibility, including language access and availability of evening and weekend assistance.

9. Appeals. The division of housing and community renewal shall establish an administrative process for review of determinations denying employer or employee eligibility under the program.

§ 4. Severability clause. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, or section 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, or section 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.

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