STATE OF NEW YORK

4987

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 10, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. RAGA -- read once and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs

AN ACT to amend the veterans' services law, in relation to enacting the "New York veteran digital navigator program 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 "New York veteran digital navigator program act".

§ 2. The veterans' services law is amended by adding a new section 29-c to read as follows:

§ 29-c. New York veteran digital navigator program. 1. The state commissioner shall establish a program to promote digital citizenship, through which the state commissioner shall award grants to eligible entities to enable those eligible entities to carry out the activities described in subdivision three of this section.

2. An eligible entity seeking a grant under the program required by subdivision one of this section shall submit to the state commissioner an application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the state commissioner may require, including, at a minimum the following:

(a) a description of the activities the eligible entity intends to carry out with the grant funds;

(b) an estimate of the costs associated with such activities; and

(c) such other information and assurances as the state commissioner may require.

3. An eligible entity shall use the amount of a grant awarded under the program required by subdivision one of this section to carry out one or more of the following activities to promote cybersecurity best practices and increase digital literacy among veterans:

(a) develop competencies in cybersecurity best practices; and

(b) develop digital citizenship competencies by promoting veterans':

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

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(1) research and information fluency;
(2) critical thinking and problem solving skills;
(3) technology operations and concepts;
(4) information and technological literacy;
(5) concepts of digital representation and stereotyping;
(6) understanding of explicit and implicit digital messages;
(7) understanding of values and points of view that are included and excluded in digital content;
(8) understanding of how digital content may influence ideas and behaviors;
(9) understanding how information on digital platforms can be altered through algorithms, editing, and augmented reality;
(10) ability to create digital content in civically and socially responsible ways; and
(11) understanding of influence campaigns conducted by foreign adversaries and the tactics employed by foreign adversaries for conducting influence campaigns.

4. (a) Each recipient of a grant under the program required by subdivision one of this section shall, not later than one year after the date on which the recipient first receives funds pursuant to the grant, submit to the state commissioner a report describing the activities the recipient carried out using grant funds and the effectiveness of those activities.

(b) Not later than ninety days after the date on which the state commissioner receives the last report the state commissioner expects to receive under paragraph (a) of this subdivision, the state commissioner shall submit to the legislature a report describing the activities carried out under this section and the effectiveness of those activities.

5. The state commissioner shall:

(a) establish and maintain a list of eligible entities that receive a grant under the program required by subdivision one of this section, and individuals designated by those eligible entities as participating individuals; and

(b) make that list available to those eligible entities and participating individuals in order to promote communication and further exchange of information regarding sound digital citizenship practices among recipients of grants under the program required by subdivision one of this section.

6. For the purposes of this section:

(a) "cybersecurity best practices" means practices and steps that users of computers and other internet connected devices take to maintain and improve online security, maintain the proper functioning of computers devices, and protect computers and devices from cyberattacks and unauthorized use;

(b) "digital citizenship" means the ability to:

(1) safely, responsibly, and ethically use communication technologies and digital information technology tools and platforms;

(2) create and share media content using principles of social and civic responsibility and with awareness of the legal and ethical issues involved; and

(3) participate in the political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of life related to technology, communications, and the digital world by consuming and creating digital content, including media;

(c) "eligible entity" means:

(1) a civil society organization, including community groups, nongovernmental organizations, nonprofit organizations, labor organizations, indigenous groups, charitable organizations, professional associations, and foundations; and

(2) congressionally chartered veterans' service organizations.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after it shall have become a law.