STATE OF NEW YORK

63

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. HEVESI, SHIMSKY -- read once and referred to the Committee on Children and Families

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to establishing the child and family well-being program; to amend the state finance law, in relation to the child and family well-being fund; and providing for the repeal of such provisions upon expiration thereof

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

Section 1. The social services law is amended by adding a new section 393-a to read as follows:

§ 393-a. The child and family well-being program. 1. The child and family well-being program is hereby established as a flexible innovative statewide funding program to support local efforts led by smaller nonprofit community-based providers to respond to children's and families' needs in communities, with avenues for community input and accountability. The program shall focus on funding primary prevention and resources for families in communities with the highest levels of child protective involvement in each region.

2. The program shall be overseen by an advisory board made up of eight members to be appointed by the commissioner, consisting of a diverse group of people with policy expertise in children and families and people with personal experience in child welfare and other public systems. One board member shall serve as a full-time director, to be determined by the commissioner.

3. The board shall disburse grants to eligible nonprofit community-based providers from the child and family well-being fund established pursuant to section ninety-seven-aaaa of the state finance law.

4. The board shall determine criteria to provide technical assistance to small nonprofit community-based providers in order to diversify and strengthen the array of organizations that can support families in

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

LBD00081-01-5

communities with the highest levels of child protective involvement, including:

(a) Developing a concept paper through a process designed to (i) ensure that smaller nonprofit community-based providers groups in communities with the highest levels of child protective involvement are aware of this program, (ii) elicit guidance from both community groups and state and local agencies to direct resources to communities with weak grassroots infrastructure around family life and to address community and family issues that are implicated in local child protective involvement, and (iii) ensure that the child and family well-being fund's capacity-building and learning design will address needs.

(b) Disbursing grants of twenty thousand to two hundred thousand dollars to small nonprofit community-based providers that increase access to existing resources;

(c) Establish four regional backbone nonprofit partners to work to increase community capacity through investment in technical assistance, capacity-building, evaluation and facilitation of a community of practice among grantees and build a format for local input on grants distributed by the child and family well-being fund; and

(d) Produce annual public reports to the legislature that identify recommendations for broad structural realignments and investments at the state and county level to increase capacities of grassroots, community-led organizations around its public health strategy for family well-being.

5. For purposes of this section:

(a) "Communities with the highest levels of child protective involvement" shall mean communities with zip codes with the highest investigation and child removal rates.

(b) "Smaller nonprofit community-based providers" shall mean local organizations with budgets under two million dollars annually who offer voluntary networks of care through services or resources to families or parents that are not duplicative of existing funding streams around prevention services, mental health, and/or that enhance the capacity of a community to access existing resources, such as through transportation, cash resources, peer navigators, home-based supports, or opening of a satellite site; that affirmatively address local racial disparities; community-based organizations with a record of providing quality services to children and families in such communities, including by families impacted by child protective services; have a demonstrated capacity to voluntarily engage families; and have developed a proposal to meet specific local needs associated with child protective involvement.

(c) "Regional backbone organization" shall mean one of up to four nonprofit organizations to act as regional coordinators of the child and family well-being fund working to increase community capacity through investment in technical assistance, capacity-building, evaluation and facilitation of a community of practice among grantees and build a format for local input on grants distributed by the child and family well-being fund. The regional backbone organization shall not have concurrent service contracts with local departments of social services within their region.

6. The board shall annually report to the legislature on the progress of the child and family well-being program and disbursements under the child and family well-being fund.

§ 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 97-aaaa to read as follows:

§ 97-aaaa. Child and family well-being fund. 1. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the state comptroller and the commissioner of taxation and finance a special revenue fund to be known as the child and family well-being fund.

2. The child and family well-being fund shall consist of moneys appropriated, credited or transferred thereto from any other fund or source.

3. Moneys of the child and family well-being fund, following appropriation by the legislature and allocation by the director of the budget, shall be made available to the advisory board for the child and family well-being program for grants to nonprofit community-based providers to respond to children's and families' needs in certain communities as established by section three hundred ninety-three-a of the social services law.

4. The advisory board for the child and family well-being program shall submit a report to the governor and the legislature by January thirty-first, two thousand twenty-seven and annually thereafter detailing all expenditures made from the child and family well-being fund during the previous year.

§ 3. This act shall take effect January 1, 2026 and shall expire and be deemed repealed January 1, 2031. 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.