

STATE OF NEW YORK

7099

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 20, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. BICHOTTE HERMELYN, LEVENBERG, EPSTEIN, WALKER, GIBBS -- read once and referred to the Committee on Codes

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to enacting the "Michael K. Williams law" to establish a grant program to incentivize counties and municipalities to reduce prison populations; and making an appropriation therefor

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

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "Michael K. Williams law".

3 § 2. Article 35 of the executive law is amended by adding a new
4 section 837-y to read as follows:

5 § 837-y. Michael K. Williams grant program. 1. There is hereby created
6 within the division of criminal justice services a decarceration grant
7 program to be administered by the attorney general acting through the
8 commissioner to award grants to county governments for the implementa-
9 tion of evidence-based programs designed to reduce crime rates and
10 incarcerations.

11 2. A grant may be awarded upon the submission of an application to the
12 attorney general which:

13 (a) demonstrates the ability to collect and analyze local criminal
14 justice and incarceration data including data on racial and ethnic
15 disparities;

16 (b) establishes benchmarks to track decarceration, a clear methodology
17 to account for the number of people in custody and growth rate over the
18 past three calendar years;

19 (c) provides a means to develop a strategic, collaborative plan to
20 decrease local jail/prison populations which shall be public facing and
21 outline how funds, if awarded, shall be used to reduce the prison/jail
22 population in the county over time;

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

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1 (d) sets goals for the reduction of racial and ethnic jail incarceration
2 disparities;

3 (e) demonstrates that the crime rate within the municipality did not
4 increase by more than three percent.

5 3. If a grant is awarded upon the submission of an application, funds
6 cannot be used to construct new jails or correctional centers.

7 4. Financial savings created through decreased incarceration shall be
8 used to sustain programmatic and community-based efforts to reduce jail
9 incarceration.

10 5. Grantees shall consult with municipal, county and state law
11 enforcement agencies, courts, public defense practitioners and communi-
12 ty-based organizations to plan, implement and evaluate.

13 6. If a grantee fails to meet the incarceration rate and racial and
14 ethnic disparities reduction requirements under subdivision two of this
15 section in any two consecutive years of the award, the attorney general,
16 acting through the commissioner, shall terminate the award.

17 § 3. The sum of seven million dollars (\$7,000,000), or so much thereof
18 as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the Michael K. Williams
19 grant program as established pursuant to section 847 of the executive
20 law from any moneys in the state treasury not otherwise appropriated and
21 made immediately available to the division of criminal justice services
22 for distribution to municipalities for the purposes of carrying out the
23 provisions of this act. Such moneys shall be payable on the audit and
24 warrant of the comptroller on vouchers certified or approved by the
25 commissioner of criminal justice services in the manner prescribed by
26 law.

27 § 4. Any financial assistance in the form of a grant may be provided
28 for any amount from funds appropriated specifically therefor up to and
29 including the amount of three hundred fifty thousand dollars.

30 § 5. Each county may submit no more than one application annually.

31 § 6. This act shall take effect immediately.