

STATE OF NEW YORK

7549

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

April 1, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. E. BROWN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to the revocation of university or college degrees for certain acts and establishes the degree revocation registry

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 "degree integrity and accountability act".

3 § 2. Legislative findings and intent. The legislature finds that indi-
4 viduals who engage in serious misconduct, including criminal activity,
5 terrorism advocacy, or severe violations of institutional policies,
6 should not benefit from academic credentials that falsely represent
7 their character and qualifications. Universities have the authority to
8 revoke degrees in cases of fraud or academic dishonesty, but there is no
9 clear process to ensure transparency and accountability in cases of
10 severe post-graduation misconduct.

11 To prevent bad actors from misrepresenting their academic credentials
12 and deceiving employers, this act establishes a public registry of
13 degree revocations, ensuring employers can verify whether a degree has
14 been rescinded.

15 § 3. The education law is amended by adding two new sections 6436-a
16 and 6436-b to read as follows:

17 § 6436-a. Mandatory degree revocation for criminal and ethical
18 violations. 1. The trustees or other governing board of every college
19 chartered by the regents or incorporated by special act of the legisla-
20 ture and which maintains a campus, unless otherwise provided, shall
21 adopt written rules for implementing all policies required pursuant to
22 this section and for the maintenance of public order on college campuses
23 and other college property used for educational purposes and provide a
24 program for the enforcement thereof.

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

LBD11104-02-5

1 2. A degree-granting institution shall revoke the degree of any indi-
2 vidual who has:

3 (a) been convicted of a violent felony offense as defined in subdivi-
4 sion one of section 70.02 of the penal law, terrorism-related offense
5 under article four hundred ninety of the penal law, or hate crime under
6 section 485.05 of the penal law;

7 (b) engaged in acts that constitute material support for terrorist
8 organizations, including advocacy, incitement, or financial aid;

9 (c) participated in or led organized efforts to disrupt educational
10 institutions through unlawful occupation, destruction of property, or
11 threats of violence; or

12 (d) been found guilty of severe misconduct by a university discipli-
13 nary board, including academic fraud, falsification of credentials
14 pursuant to section two hundred twenty-five of this chapter, or any act
15 that would have prevented graduation had it been known at the time.

16 3. All degree-granting institutions shall report any degree revocation
17 to the department within thirty days of such revocation.

18 4. Any degree-granting institution that fails to report a degree revo-
19 cation may face fines up to five hundred thousand dollars per instance
20 and may lose eligibility for state funding.

21 5. Any employer found to knowingly conceal or misrepresent a revoked
22 degree in official records may face civil penalties.

23 § 6436-b. Degree revocation registry. 1. The department shall estab-
24 lish and maintain an online database listing students whose degrees have
25 been revoked, including, but not limited to, the:

26 (a) Name of the individual;

27 (b) Institution from which the degree was revoked;

28 (c) Date of revocation; and

29 (d) General reason for revocation.

30 2. Employers, academic institutions, and government agencies shall
31 have unrestricted access to the database.

32 3. Students whose names appear on such registry may appeal for removal
33 only if they receive legal exoneration or demonstrate a wrongful inclu-
34 sion.

35 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.