

STATE OF NEW YORK

9005

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

August 13, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. SLATER -- read once and referred to the Committee on Social Services

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to establishing a waiver program allowing for longer stays at domestic violence shelters

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

1 Section 1. Section 459-b of the social services law, as amended by
2 chapter 7 of the laws of 2016, is amended to read as follows:

3 § 459-b. Residential services for victims of domestic violence. 1. In
4 accordance with section one hundred thirty-one-u of this chapter and the
5 regulations of the office of children and family services, a social
6 services district shall offer and provide necessary and available emer-
7 gency shelter and services for up to ninety days at a residential
8 program for victims of domestic violence to a victim of domestic
9 violence who was residing in the social services district at the time of
10 the alleged domestic violence whether or not such victim is eligible for
11 public assistance. Two forty-five day extensions of necessary and avail-
12 able emergency shelter may be granted beyond the maximum length of stay
13 at a residential program for victims of domestic violence for residents
14 who continue to be in need of emergency services and temporary shelter.
15 If the victim of domestic violence has a service animal as such term is
16 defined in section one hundred twenty-three-b of the agriculture and
17 markets law, or therapy dog as such term is defined in section one
18 hundred eight of the agriculture and markets law, respectively, such
19 service animal or therapy dog shall be allowed to accompany the victim
20 at the residential program authorized pursuant to this section, so long
21 as such accompaniment would not create an undue burden as defined by
22 section two hundred ninety-six of the executive law.

23 Where such accompaniment would constitute an undue burden, the resi-
24 dential program shall make reasonable efforts to facilitate placement of
25 such animal at an off-site animal care facility or if reasonable efforts

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

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1 fail, provide referral to one or more off-site animal care facilities.
2 Such off-site animal care may include, but not be limited to, boarding
3 at a veterinary hospital or under the auspices of a duly incorporated
4 humane society, or duly incorporated animal protection association
5 approved for such purpose by the department of agriculture and markets.

6 2. (a) Notwithstanding the duration of stay limitations set forth in
7 subdivision one of this section, a social services district, through the
8 office of children and family services, will grant waivers allowing
9 domestic violence residential programs to serve victims who need a
10 length of stay in excess of the maximum one hundred eighty days upon a
11 showing that circumstances prevent such victims from moving to safe,
12 alternative housing, and require the length of stay to be exceeded.

13 (b) A domestic violence residential program shall apply to the office
14 of children and family services for a waiver enabling a victim of domes-
15 tic violence to remain at the program's shelter for a period exceeding
16 one hundred eighty days; provided that, no such waiver shall allow for a
17 stay that shall exceed an additional ninety days. Such residential
18 program shall make a written request for a waiver by emailing the social
19 services district. A waiver must be requested by the residential program
20 for each resident requiring a stay in excess of one hundred eighty days.

21 (c) When applying for a waiver, the domestic violence residential
22 program shall include a description of the following:

23 (i) the circumstances leading to the request;

24 (ii) the length of the waiver requested;

25 (iii) if and how the request will affect the program's ability to
26 continue to provide services.

27 (d) Requests for a waiver will be reviewed and decided by the office
28 of children and family services within two business days of receipt of
29 the request. The office of children and family services will email both
30 the domestic violence residential program and the social services
31 district or districts that contract with the domestic violence program
32 to advise of any approved waivers. The granting of a waiver shall not
33 affect the process for obtaining reimbursement for emergency shelter.
34 Once a waiver for an extended length of stay is granted, a social
35 services district shall, in accordance with the provisions of section
36 one hundred thirty-one-u of this chapter, provide timely reimbursement
37 for the entirety of such length of stay.

38 3. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit any rights or
39 obligations provided pursuant to federal or state law, including but not
40 limited to providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with
41 disabilities.

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