

STATE OF NEW YORK

10367

IN SENATE

May 15, 2026

Introduced by Sen. SEPULVEDA -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Judiciary

AN ACT to amend the judiciary law and the general business law, in relation to the unlawful practice of law

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

1 Section 1. Section 476-a of the judiciary law, as added by chapter 310
2 of the laws of 1962, subdivision 1 as amended by chapter 709 of the laws
3 of 1965, the opening paragraph of subdivision 1 and subdivision 2 as
4 amended by chapter 91 of the laws of 2010, is amended to read as
5 follows:

6 § 476-a. Action for unlawful practice of the law. 1. The attorney-
7 general may maintain an action upon [~~his or her~~] the attorney-general's
8 own information or upon the complaint of a private person or of a bar
9 association organized and existing under the laws of this state against
10 any person, partnership, corporation, or association, and any employee,
11 agent, director, or officer thereof who commits any act or engages in
12 any conduct prohibited by law as constituting the unlawful practice of
13 the law. The term "action" as used in this subdivision shall be
14 construed to include both civil actions and criminal actions.

15 2. The term "unlawful practice of the law" as used in this article
16 shall include, but is not limited to,

17 (a) any act prohibited by [~~penal law sections two~~] section four
18 hundred [~~seventy~~] seventy-eight, [~~two~~] four hundred [~~seventy-a~~] seven-
19 ty-nine, [~~two~~] four hundred [~~seventy-e~~] eighty-three, [~~two~~] four hundred
20 [~~seventy-one~~] eighty-four, [~~two~~] four hundred [~~seventy-five~~] eighty-nine,
21 [~~two~~] four hundred [~~seventy-five-a~~] ninety, [~~two~~] four
22 hundred [~~seventy-six~~] ninety-one, [~~two hundred eighty~~] or [~~fourteen~~]
23 four hundred [~~fifty-two~~] ninety-five of this article, or section three
24 hundred thirty-seven of the general business law, or

25 (b) any other act forbidden by law to be done by any person not regu-
26 larly licensed and admitted to practice law in this state, or

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

LBD15885-01-6

1 (c) any act punishable by the supreme court as a criminal contempt of
2 court under subdivision B of section seven hundred [~~fifty-B~~] fifty of
3 this chapter.

4 [~~2-~~] 3. Such a civil action may also be maintained by a bar associ-
5 ation organized and existing under the laws of the state of New York,
6 upon an application to the supreme court of the state of New York, or a
7 justice thereof, for leave to bring the same by such bar association on
8 good cause shown therefor and proof that a written request was made upon
9 the attorney-general to bring such an action and that more than twenty
10 days have elapsed since the making of such request and [~~he or she~~] the
11 attorney-general has failed or refused to bring such an action.

12 § 2. Section 496 of the judiciary law, as added by chapter 706 of the
13 law of 1979, is amended to read as follows:

14 § 496. Statement to be filed by organizations offering legal services.

15 An organization described in subdivision seven of section four hundred
16 ninety-five of this article shall file with the appellate division
17 department in which its principal office is located a statement describ-
18 ing the nature and purposes of the organization, the composition of its
19 governing body, the type of legal services being made available, and the
20 names and addresses of any attorneys and counselors-at-law employed by
21 the organization or with whom commitments have been made. An updating of
22 this information shall be furnished the appropriate appellate division
23 on or before July first of each year and the names and addresses of
24 attorneys and counselors-at-law who rendered legal services during that
25 year shall be included.

26 § 3. Section 336-b of the general business law, as added by chapter
27 495 of the laws of 1991, is renumbered section 336-c.

28 § 4. Section 337 of the general business law, as added by chapter 1031
29 of the laws of 1965, is amended to read as follows.

30 § 337. Advertising to procure divorces. Whoever prints, publishes,
31 distributes or circulates, or causes to be printed, published, distrib-
32 uted or circulated any circular, pamphlet, card, hand bill, advertise-
33 ment, printed paper, book, newspaper or notice of any kind offering to
34 advise on laws of any foreign state, nation or jurisdiction for the
35 express purpose of procuring or aiding in procuring any divorce, sever-
36 ance, dissolution, or annulment [~~ex~~] of any marriage, or offering to
37 procure or to aid in procuring any divorce, or the severance, dissol-
38 ution, or annulment of any marriage, or offering to engage, appear or
39 act as attorney or counsel in any suit for alimony or divorce or the
40 severance, dissolution or annulment of any marriage, either in this
41 state or elsewhere, is guilty of a misdemeanor. This section shall not
42 apply to the printing or publishing of any notice or advertisement
43 required or authorized by any law of this state.

44 § 5. This act shall take effect on the first of January next succeed-
45 ing the date on which it shall have become a law.