

STATE OF NEW YORK

10389

IN SENATE

May 15, 2026

Introduced by Sen. SANDERS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Mental Health

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to requiring mental health evaluations for participants in substance use disorder treatment programs

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

1 Section 1. Section 19.09 of the mental hygiene law is amended by
2 adding a new subdivision (m) to read as follows:

3 (m)(1) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the
4 commissioner shall require all certified substance use disorder treat-
5 ment-related programs approved by the office to provide program partic-
6 ipants with a mental health evaluation conducted by a licensed profes-
7 sional whose scope of practice includes the diagnosis of mental health
8 disorders who shall, if appropriate, refer the participant for outpa-
9 tient mental health treatment. Transportation services to such outpa-
10 tient treatment shall be provided to a participant.

11 (2) The office shall establish a bureau of qualified licensed provid-
12 ers for all licensed professionals as defined in paragraph one of this
13 subdivision who shall provide such evaluation pursuant to this subdivi-
14 sion.

15 (3) As an alternative to the provisions of paragraph one of this
16 subdivision, programs certified by the office may choose to utilize
17 their own employees or independent contractors to provide both the eval-
18 uation referred to in paragraph one of this subdivision and the treat-
19 ment of persons with co-occurring disorders. Notwithstanding any law,
20 rule, or regulation to the contrary, the commissioner is authorized to
21 certify such programs for the outpatient treatment of patients diagnosed
22 with co-occurring disorders provided in OASAS-certified facilities,
23 provided that such programs shall use only providers of the type
24 described in paragraph one of this subdivision.

25 (4) No primary diagnosis shall be required for a person to be treated
26 in a program for co-occurring disorders. A mental health diagnosis shall

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

LBD03378-01-5

1 not be a basis for the denial of admission to, or the expulsion from, a
2 certified substance use disorder treatment facility.

3 (5) The commissioner shall endeavor to ensure that all existing
4 provisions of this chapter are complied within the establishment of
5 programs for persons with co-occurring disorders, but the commissioner
6 may, in the course of the regulatory process, determine that any such
7 provisions are an obstacle to fulfillment of effective treatment of
8 co-occurring disorders and, as such, shall not be part of the certif-
9 ication process under this article.

10 (6) Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the
11 bureau established pursuant to paragraph two of this subdivision and the
12 programs for co-occurring disorders described in paragraph three of this
13 subdivision, shall have access to all prior substance abuse and mental
14 health treatment records for use in the evaluation prescribed in para-
15 graph one of this subdivision and all other treatment related purposes.

16 (7) The commissioner shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary
17 for the effectuation of this section, including the use of telehealth
18 services, appropriate reimbursement for the transportation referred to
19 in this subdivision, and appropriate billing requirements and reimburse-
20 ment for programs providing integrated services to individuals with
21 co-occurring disorders in an OASAS-certified outpatient facility,
22 including medical, psychiatric and clinical services.

23 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.