

STATE OF NEW YORK

10720

IN SENATE

October 9, 2026

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

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to increasing knowledge of tickborne illnesses in the state of New York

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

Section 1. Article 2 of the public health law is amended by adding a new title 9 to read as follows:

TITLE 9

TICKBORNE ILLNESS EDUCATION

Section 269-a. Tickborne illness education.

§ 269-a. Tickborne illness education. 1. The department, in consultation with public universities, healthcare professionals, and experts in tickborne illnesses shall create an open access learning module to provide education on tickborne illnesses.

2. The open access learning module shall be a short video course which provides education on the following topics, including, but not limited to:

(a) challenges in diagnosing tickborne illnesses, including an exploration of the differing perspectives on how long an infected tick must be attached before bacteria or pathogens are transmitted;

(b) understanding the various ways tickborne illnesses presents and affects patients, including the following topics: early vs. disseminated signs; recognizing classic erythema migrans rashes versus atypical or absent rashes; atypical manifestations and how to distinguish them from flu-like symptoms, neurological complications (neuroborreliosis), cardiac involvement (lyme carditis), and severe coinfections like babesiosis-induced hemolysis;

(c) biology and distribution of ticks across New York and the northeast including: description of how vector-borne diseases are carried from host animals to humans, statistics on increases in number and type of tickborne diseases;

(d) information about tick testing, including direct links to accredited labs where ticks may be sent for testing, and a discussion of how

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

LBD16367-02-6

1 tick testing might be a useful tool for healthcare providers in diagno-
2 sis, treatment plans, and in understanding the range of tickborne patho-
3 gens across the state;

4 (e) discussion of the varying opinions of criteria for single-dose
5 doxycycline prophylaxis after high-risk tick bites and potential useful-
6 ness of follow-up bloodwork;

7 (f) discussion on limitations of current testing protocols, especially
8 with respect to Lyme disease, and balancing immediate versus delayed
9 antibiotic use; and

10 (g) discussion of screening for tickborne disease as part of chil-
11 dren's annual wellness appointments given their increased risk of tick
12 exposure and their higher rates of infection.

13 3. The learning module shall be provided at no charge to all medical
14 colleges and universities and county departments of health, and shall be
15 made available at no charge on the department's website.

16 4. The module shall include a link for users to provide feedback on
17 the content and usefulness of tickborne illness education. The depart-
18 ment shall undergo periodic review of such responses and shall undertake
19 revision and updates as of the module each year at a minimum. The
20 department shall notify all medical institutions and county departments
21 of health when updated versions of the module become available.

22 § 2. This act shall take effect one year after it shall have become a
23 law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any
24 rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its
25 effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such
26 date.