

# STATE OF NEW YORK

1161

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

January 8, 2025

Introduced by Sen. LIU -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Investigations and Government Operations

AN ACT to amend the executive law and the banking law, in relation to establishing the banking bill of rights

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

1 Section 1. Legislative intent. Across New York, financial institutions  
2 terminate individuals' bank accounts or deny their applications with no  
3 reason provided or recourse allowed. These banking practices dispropor-  
4 tionately impact immigrant communities, resulting in unbanked or under-  
5 banked New Yorkers. Such practices harm consumers' credit scores and  
6 histories, creating barriers to housing, education and access to the  
7 financial industry altogether; they also block millions of dollars of  
8 donations to charitable organizations. Furthermore, these unfair and  
9 discriminatory practices create a chilling effect on local economies  
10 statewide. Personal finance deserves due process, and it is the intent  
11 of the legislature to ensure fundamental banking rights for all New  
12 Yorkers. Requiring financial institutions to disclose the reasons for  
13 adverse actions with respect to credit and deposit accounts will prevent  
14 discrimination ex ante, in addition to giving consumers an opportunity  
15 to improve their credit or financial status and rectify mistakes that  
16 may occur from misinformation or inadequate information; it will also  
17 create a beneficial competitive effect on the financial industry.

18 § 2. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 296-b to  
19 read as follows:

20 § 296-b. Banking bill of rights. 1. Definitions. For the purposes of  
21 this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

22 a. "Financial institution" shall mean any corporation organized under  
23 and subject to the provisions of the banking law, including any bank,  
24 trust company, savings bank, savings and loan association, credit union,

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

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1 mortgage broker, mortgage banker, or other investment entity, whether  
2 headquartered within or outside the state, which provides credit or a  
3 deposit account to a customer in the state.

4 b. "Deposit account" shall mean any demand deposit account, including  
5 but not limited to, a checking account, time deposit account, certifi-  
6 cate of deposit (CD), savings account, passbook account, share account,  
7 money market account, or other similar account maintained by a financial  
8 institution.

9 c. "Adverse action" shall mean a termination or closure of an account  
10 or an unfavorable change in the terms of an account that does not affect  
11 all or substantially all of a class of the financial institution's cred-  
12 it or deposit accounts, including but not limited to, loss of privi-  
13 leges. The term "adverse action" shall not include a change in the terms  
14 of an account expressly agreed to by an account holder, or any action or  
15 forbearance relating to an account taken in connection with inactivity,  
16 default, or delinquency of such account.

17 2. Due process requirements. Notwithstanding any other provision of  
18 law or rule or regulation to the contrary, a financial institution  
19 shall:

20 a. provide written notice of:

21 (1) all the specific reasons for denial of an application for credit  
22 or a deposit account to an applicant within ten days of such denial; and

23 (2) any adverse action of an existing customer's credit or deposit  
24 account and all the specific reasons for such adverse action at least  
25 thirty days prior to taking such adverse action; provided, however, that  
26 where such adverse action is a refusal or failure to authorize an  
27 account transaction at a point of sale, or whereby fraud or potentially  
28 unlawful activity is detected, written notice shall be provided as soon  
29 as reasonably possible but no later than five days after such adverse  
30 action is taken.

31 b. provide a reasonable opportunity for an applicant for credit or a  
32 deposit account or a customer with existing credit or a deposit account  
33 to contest or correct any information that the financial institution may  
34 have relating to denial of an application for credit or a deposit  
35 account or any pending adverse action relating to a customer's existing  
36 credit or deposit account; and

37 c. consider any information provided by an applicant for credit or a  
38 deposit account or a customer with existing credit or a deposit account  
39 pursuant to paragraph b of this subdivision in making a final decision  
40 regarding denial of an application for credit or a deposit account or  
41 any pending adverse action related to existing credit or a deposit  
42 account.

43 3. Enforcement. a. Any financial institution that violates subpara-  
44 graph one or two of paragraph a of subdivision two of this section shall  
45 be liable to such applicant or customer for the following:

46 (1) ten thousand dollars for each such violation;

47 (2) actual damages resulting from such violation, including consequen-  
48 tial and incidental damages;

49 (3) reasonable attorneys' fees; and

50 (4) in the case of repeat violations or violators, punitive damages.

51 b. A violation pursuant to paragraph a of this subdivision shall  
52 create a presumption of unlawful discriminatory practice pursuant to  
53 sections two hundred ninety-six and two hundred ninety-six-a of this  
54 article in favor of the applicant or customer.

55 c. Any applicant or customer seeking to enforce the provisions of this  
56 section, in lieu of the procedure set forth in section two hundred nine-

1 ty-seven of this article, may file a verified complaint with the super-  
2 intendent of financial services; provided, however, that the filing of  
3 such complaint with either the superintendent of financial services or  
4 the division shall bar subsequent recourse to the other agency, as well  
5 as to any local commission on human rights, with respect to the griev-  
6 ance complained of. In the case of a verified complaint filed with the  
7 superintendent of financial services, the procedure set forth in para-  
8 graphs a and b of subdivision seven of section two hundred ninety-six-a  
9 of this article shall apply. If the superintendent of financial services  
10 finds that a violation of this section has occurred, such superintendent  
11 shall issue an order determining liability pursuant to paragraph a of  
12 this subdivision.

13 4. Preemption. Nothing in this section shall be construed to preempt  
14 any other state or federal law prohibiting the disclosure of certain  
15 protected consumer information or limit the ability of financial insti-  
16 tutions to make reasonable business judgments.

17 5. Rules and regulations. The superintendent of financial services is  
18 authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the  
19 provisions of this section.

20 § 3. Paragraph a of subdivision 4 of section 296-a of the executive  
21 law, as amended by chapter 632 of the laws of 1976, is amended to read  
22 as follows:

23 a. [~~if so requested by~~] A creditor shall furnish an applicant for  
24 credit[, ~~a creditor shall furnish such applicant~~] with a statement of  
25 the specific reasons for rejection of the applicant's application for  
26 credit pursuant to section two hundred ninety-six-b of this article.

27 § 4. Section 9-d of the banking law, as added by chapter 173 of the  
28 laws of 1974 and as further amended by section 104 of part A of chapter  
29 62 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as follows:

30 § 9-d. Enforcement of [~~section~~] sections two hundred ninety-six-a and  
31 two hundred ninety-six-b of the executive law. In addition to the powers  
32 conferred upon the superintendent of financial services by this chapter,  
33 he or she shall enforce [~~section~~] sections two hundred ninety-six-a and  
34 two hundred ninety-six-b of the executive law by taking such action as  
35 is therein authorized.

36 § 5. This act shall take effect immediately.