STATE OF NEW YORK

184--A

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

Introduced by Sens. PERSAUD, RAMOS, SCARCELLA-SPANTON -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Social Services -- recommitted to the Committee on Social Services in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- reported favorably from said committee and committed to the Committee on Finance -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the social services law, in relation to establishing a full year youth employment immersion pilot program; and in relation to creating a youth or young adult employment immersion pilot program in three social services districts

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

Section 1. The social services law is amended by adding a new section 131-y to read as follows:

§ 131-y. Youth employment immersion pilot program. 1. For the purposes of this section, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "Office" means the office of temporary and disability assistance.

(b) "Program" means the youth employment immersion pilot program established under this section.

(c) "Eligible youths and young adults" means economically disadvantaged state residents who are between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four who are not currently employed, and (i) for those age sixteen through eighteen, are enrolled in high school or a high school equivalency program, or (ii) for those age nineteen through twenty-four, have graduated from high school or received high school equivalency. The term "eligible youths and young adults" shall not include individuals who have completed, or are currently enrolled in, post-secondary education, or a business, professional, vocational, technical, or trade school licensed or approved by the regents, or an apprenticeship program.

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

LBD00868-02-6

(d) "Economically disadvantaged" means state residents who are currently receiving safety net or family assistance or who reside in a household that would be eligible for receipt of safety net or family assistance based on means testing.

(e) "Professional and transferable skills" shall include, but not be limited to:

(i) collaboration;

(ii) communication;

(iii) creativity;

(iv) critical thinking; and

(v) self-advocacy.

2. The office shall establish a youth employment immersion pilot program. The program shall be administered by the local social services districts with supervision and regulation by the office. The program shall be for eligible youths and young adults which shall include:

(a) up to twenty-five percent of an eligible youth or young adult's time with the program being spent on education and employment readiness, including, but not limited to:

(i) attending programs which teach workforce readiness, skill development, financial literacy, or digital literacy;

(ii) earning a certification or license; or

(iii) being provided with job placement and retention services; and

(b) at least seventy-five percent of an eligible youth or young adult's time with the program being spent engaging in paid employment that builds professional and transferable skills.

3. The program shall permit eligible youths and young adults to apply for participation in the program for a period of up to one year. Youth and young adults shall not be permitted to remain as a participant in the program if they (i) are ages age sixteen through eighteen and drop out of high school; or (ii) otherwise enter post-secondary education, or a business, professional, vocational, technical, or trade school licensed or approved by the board of regents or an apprenticeship program while enrolled in the program.

4. Youths and young adults who complete a full year of the program shall have the option of re-applying to extend their participation in the program by one year if they remain eligible youths and young adults pursuant to the criteria set forth in subdivision three of this section.

5. The program shall perform outreach to eligible youths and young adults at: high school equivalency programs; high schools, specifically reaching out to students who do not have plans after graduation; and public assistance work readiness programs. The program shall also reach out to youths and young adults who are being released by the criminal justice system or non-secure placement programs.

6. The program may provide employers with subsidies of up one-third of the gross wages for up to one year for the hiring of a participant in the program.

7. Program participants shall be compensated for employment, education and employment readiness components at a rate equal to two hundred sixty-five percent of the federal poverty line.

§ 2. 1. A youth or young adult employment immersion pilot program is hereby established by the office. The office shall select three local social services districts, with one being located in the city of New York, and the others reflecting geographic diversity. The pilot program shall be established and operational within 9 months of the effective date of this act and remain operational for a minimum of 24 months to

provide eligible youth and young adults with services and employment or connection to employment for the full duration of the pilot.

(a) The local social services district may operate the program in coordination with the applicable local youth bureau.

(b) Nothing in this section shall limit a local social services district or youth bureau from contracting with a not-for-profit entity to effectuate the youth employment immersion pilot program.

2. Throughout the pilot, the local social services district shall evaluate program participants and report the following information to the office, on a schedule determined by the office, which does not include any personally identifying information of any pilot program participant:

(a) the number of participants and the length of time each participant was in the pilot program;

(b) the number of participants who obtained certifications and/or credentials during their participation in the pilot program;

(c) the number of participants who obtained gainful employment during the course of the pilot program; and

(d) any other information requested by the office.

3. The office shall prepare and submit the report, containing the data analyzation, annually to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the chair of the assembly committee on social services, and the chair of the senate committee on social services no later than ninety days following the conclusion of the two year pilot program.

4. For the purposes of this section, the term "office" shall mean the office of temporary and disability assistance.

§ 3. Subparagraph (ix) of paragraph (a) of subdivision 8 of section 131-a of the social services law, as added by section 1 of subpart D of part XX of chapter 55 of the laws of 2020, is amended to read as follows:

(ix) all of the income derived from participation in the summer youth employment program **or youth employment immersion pilot program**, provided however, that such income shall be exempt only for an individual who is not older than age twenty-four at the time of enrollment in the summer youth employment program **or youth employment immersion pilot program** and such disregard must be applied for the length of the individual's participation in such program. **The commissioner shall seek any federal waiver necessary to effectuate the one-time earned income disregard pursuant to this subdivision.**

§ 4. The office of temporary and disability assistance shall submit to the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service any amendments to the state plan which are necessary to effectuate the provisions of this act.

§ 5. This act shall take effect immediately; provided, however, that:

(a) sections one, two and three of this act shall take effect upon approval by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service of the amendments to the state plan submitted by the office of temporary and disability assistance pursuant to section four of this act;

(b) the office of temporary and disability assistance shall notify the legislative bill drafting commission upon the occurrence of the approval of the amendments in the state plan provided for under paragraph (a) of this section in order that the commission may maintain an accurate and

timely effective data base of the official text of the laws of the state of New York in furtherance of effectuating the provisions of section 44 of the legislative law and section 70-b of the public officers law; and

(c) effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.