

STATE OF NEW YORK

7894

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

May 13, 2025

Introduced by Sen. SALAZAR -- 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 establishing a master of social work paid field work pilot program

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

1 Section 1. The mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new section
2 7.49 to read as follows:

3 § 7.49 Master of social work paid field work pilot program.

4 (a) The office shall establish and administer a master of social work
5 paid field work pilot program to provide stipends, within appropriations
6 therefor, to students who are enrolled in a master of social work
7 program of study at a program registered by the department of education
8 and accredited by the Council of Social Work Education, or determined by
9 the department of education to be the substantial equivalent of such a
10 program, and who are required to perform services as part of the field
11 work component of such program.

12 (b) Commencing with the fall two thousand twenty-five semester, the
13 pilot program shall provide stipends for field work during the first
14 four hundred fifty hours of field work for students completing a
15 required field work component as part of their course of study in a
16 master of social work program of study.

17 (1) Such pilot program shall be available to all students who:

18 (i) are enrolled in a master of social work program of study at a
19 program registered by the department of education and accredited by the
20 Council of Social Work Education, or determined by the department of
21 education to be the substantial equivalent of such a program, and who
22 are required to perform services as part of the field work component of
23 such program; and

24 (ii) perform their field work in New York state.

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

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1 (2) Students who are eligible for this pilot program shall receive a
2 stipend of four thousand five hundred dollars, at a rate of ten dollars
3 per hour, while completing their first four hundred fifty hours of field
4 work as part of their required field work component. Such stipend shall
5 be distributed monthly and shall automatically renew annually until
6 either the student completes four hundred fifty hours of field work or
7 the end of the spring semester in two thousand twenty-nine, whichever
8 occurs first. Students who receive such funding shall agree to work in
9 New York state in a social work capacity for one year upon graduating.

10 (i) Students who receive funding of four thousand five hundred dollars
11 or more relating to the completion of such field work from any other
12 source, including, but not limited to, grants, scholarships, fellow-
13 ships, or work-based placements, shall be ineligible for a stipend
14 pursuant to this program.

15 (ii) Students who receive funding of less than four thousand five
16 hundred dollars relating to the completion of such field work from any
17 other source, including, but not limited to, grants, scholarships,
18 fellowships, or work-based placements shall be eligible for a stipend
19 for the difference between their existing funding and four thousand five
20 hundred dollars.

21 (c) The office shall provide informational materials about the pilot
22 program to schools in the state who offer a master of social work
23 program of study that are registered by the department of education and
24 accredited by the Council of Social Work Education, or determined by the
25 department of education to be the substantial equivalent of such a
26 program. Such schools shall conduct a public awareness campaign inform-
27 ing students and prospective students that their first four hundred
28 fifty hours of required field work in a master of social work program of
29 study will be compensated. Monies for the public awareness campaign
30 shall not be deducted from monies designated for student interns pursu-
31 ant to this section.

32 (d) The office shall collect data annually and make such data public
33 on their website to assess:

34 (1) changes in the number of licensed master social worker applica-
35 tions during the pilot program compared to before the pilot program;

36 (2) statewide enrollment trends in master of social work programs
37 during the pilot program compared to before the pilot program;

38 (3) changes in demographics of students enrolled in master of social
39 work programs, including age, race, socioeconomic status, gender identi-
40 ty, sexual orientation, ability, geographic, religion, representation,
41 and any other demographic factor that the office deems relevant;

42 (4) changes in master of social work programs' retention, attrition,
43 dropout rates, and degree conferral rates. For the purposes of this
44 paragraph:

45 (i) "retention rate" means the number of students who continue enroll-
46 ment in their program between specified terms;

47 (ii) "attrition rate" means the number of students who leave enroll-
48 ment between specified points in time;

49 (iii) "dropout rate" means the number of students who discontinue
50 their master of social work program without earning a degree; and

51 (iv) "degree conferral rate" means the number of students who complete
52 their master of social work program;

53 (5) the impact on matriculation rates and enrollment status;

54 (6) the impact on student debt by evaluating how stipend funding
55 affected master of social work student debt levels;

1 (7) the impact field work funding has on social work wages and work-
2 force retention after graduation;

3 (8) the impact on field work sites by assessing how funding stipends
4 influenced field work sites' ability to provide services to clients and
5 communities;

6 (9) impacts on students' mental, emotional, physical and financial
7 health;

8 (10) cost-benefit analysis of field work funding relative to services
9 provided and preventative measures implemented, which shall include, but
10 is not limited to, the economic value of services performed by interns
11 (e.g., based on market rates for similar services);

12 (11) the impact field work funding has on local economies and economic
13 development; and

14 (12) any other metric or area of study the office deems relevant.

15 (e) The office shall conduct a study and produce a report on the effi-
16 cacy of the pilot program based on the data collected pursuant to subdi-
17 vision (d) of this section and shall submit such report to the governor
18 and the legislature, and be made public, no later than December first,
19 two thousand twenty-nine. Such report shall include recommendations on
20 how to expand the pilot program to increase the number of social workers
21 in the state, improve representation in the field of social work, miti-
22 gate student debt and improve labor conditions for social workers upon
23 graduation.

24 (f) Amounts made available to the master of social work paid field
25 work pilot program shall be subject to annual appropriations therefor.
26 Such appropriations shall be adjusted each fiscal year to provide fund-
27 ing to students enrolled in a qualifying master of social work program
28 pursuant to this section and to reflect the variance between current
29 enrollment numbers for master of social work programs and enrollment in
30 the previous fiscal year.

31 § 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025. Effective immediately,
32 the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation neces-
33 sary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are
34 authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.