

# STATE OF NEW YORK

8339

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

June 3, 2025

Introduced by Sen. COMRIE -- 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 providing an exception to hospital visitation rules for members of the clergy

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

1 Section 1. The public health law is amended by adding a new section  
2 2805-qq to read as follows:

3 § 2805-qq. Hospital visitation by clergy. 1. No patient shall be  
4 denied visitation by a clergy member from such patient's religious enti-  
5 ty's established congregation, provided:

6 (a) the patient, or the patient's legal representative if the patient  
7 is unable to express such patient's wishes, requests or consents to such  
8 visitation;

9 (b) such visitation is consistent with the hospital's ability to  
10 receive visitors at the time of the visitation and on the unit in which  
11 the patient is hospitalized;

12 (c) such visitation does not interfere with the treatment of the  
13 patient or of other patients; and

14 (d) such visitation does not pose a health or safety risk to the  
15 patient or other individuals present at the hospital, including hospital  
16 personnel and other patients.

17 2. If the hospital's policy restricts the number of visitors a  
18 patient may have at one time, the presence of a single clergy member at  
19 the patient's bedside along with the maximum specified number of other  
20 visitors shall not be deemed a violation of such policy, provided the  
21 visit does not exceed one hour.

22 3. In the event the patient suffers a life-threatening emergency or  
23 is at the end of the patient's life, a clergy member from such patient's  
24 religious entity's established congregation may visit the patient at any

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

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1 hour, provided such visitation complied with the provisions of subdivi-  
2 sion one of this section except as to normal hours of visitation.

3 4. Nothing in this section shall be construed to:

4 (a) prevent a hospital from restricting visitation by any person when  
5 such visitation would pose a health or safety risk to the patient or  
6 other individuals present at the hospital, including hospital personnel  
7 and other patients;

8 (b) prevent a hospital from restricting visitation by any person in  
9 hospital areas in which no visitation or restricted visitation is  
10 allowed, including, but not limited to transmissible disease units and  
11 burn units;

12 (c) prevent a hospital from requiring the clergy member to provide  
13 identification and take any other measures the hospital requires for  
14 visitation; or

15 (d) require any member of the clergy to provide visitation as  
16 described in this section.

17 § 2. This act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after it shall  
18 have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or  
19 repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of  
20 this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed  
21 on or before such effective date.