

STATE OF NEW YORK

8615

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

December 12, 2025

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

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to establishing the election security navigator program

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

1 Section 1. Legislative findings and declaration. The legislature here-
2 by finds that New York's elections are administered by a decentralized
3 network of state and county boards of elections, many of which face
4 resource constraints and limited technical staffing capacity. In light
5 of growing cybersecurity threats, sophisticated disinformation
6 campaigns, and physical threats to election infrastructure and opera-
7 tional disruptions, coordinated state support is necessary to safeguard
8 New York's election systems. To ensure that local boards of elections
9 receive technical guidance, training, and response assistance tailored
10 to their specific vulnerabilities and resource levels, the legislature
11 declares that the public interest requires that a dedicated election
12 security navigator program be established with funding adequate to
13 support the maximum number of county boards of elections who seek such
14 support.

15 § 2. The election law is amended by adding a new section 3-113 to read
16 as follows:

17 § 3-113. Election security navigator program. 1. For the purposes of
18 this section:

19 (a) "Navigator program" shall mean the election security navigator
20 program established pursuant to this section.

21 (b) "Program director" shall mean the director of the navigator
22 program.

23 2. (a) There is hereby established within the state board of elections
24 an election security navigator program. The head of such program shall
25 be the program director who shall be appointed by the state board of

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

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1 elections. The program director shall have expertise in election
2 cybersecurity, operational security, and personnel management.

3 (b) The navigator program shall have the following functions, powers
4 and duties:

5 (i) provide assistance on a voluntary basis for local boards of
6 elections in mitigating cybersecurity threats, improving physical and
7 operational preparedness, and enhancing public confidence in the integ-
8 egrity of elections;

9 (ii) develop and operate the navigator program based on a system that
10 prioritizes requests for allocation of services that considers local
11 boards of elections' need, risk, and available resources, as determined
12 by the state board of elections;

13 (iii) employ or contract election security navigators to carry out the
14 functions and duties of the navigator program with respect to local
15 boards of elections and local jurisdictions and serve as a liaison
16 between the state board of elections, local jurisdictions, and local
17 boards of elections;

18 (iv) facilitate information sharing between the state board of
19 elections, local jurisdictions, and local boards of elections on
20 election threats, vulnerabilities, and incident reports;

21 (v) conduct or coordinate ongoing risk assessments for election
22 offices and infrastructure;

23 (vi) assist with incident response planning, continuity of operations
24 planning, and tabletop exercises;

25 (vii) provide training and standardized guidance materials to support
26 local preparedness;

27 (viii) coordinate access to appropriate and trustworthy international,
28 federal, state, multi-state, and private cybersecurity resources that
29 currently exist or have yet to be formed;

30 (ix) assist local boards of elections in applying for funding opportu-
31 nities or deploying available funds related to election security includ-
32 ing, but not limited to, federal grants under the Help America Vote Act,
33 the Homeland Security Grant Program, and the State and Local Cybersecur-
34 ity Grant Program; and

35 (x) develop an election security navigators student program in part-
36 nership with the state university of New York.

37 3. No later than three months after the effective date of this
38 section, the state board of elections shall commence the process of
39 designing the election security navigator program through a needs-based
40 assessment considering:

41 (a) state election security support and services;

42 (b) the capabilities and needs of local jurisdictions as regards local
43 boards of elections, including the needs for: cybersecurity expertise,
44 incident response coordination, incident response plan development, and
45 exercises that include incident response scenarios;

46 (c) direct consultation with a representative sample of local boards
47 of elections; and

48 (d) consultation with:

49 (i) the state office of information technology services;

50 (ii) the state division of homeland security and emergency services;

51 (iii) current and former staff of the federal Cybersecurity and
52 Infrastructure Security Agency;

53 (iv) officials administering election cybersecurity programs in other
54 states; and

55 (v) private sector, non-profit, and academic experts in cyber and
56 election security.

1 Any information contained in a needs-based assessment for any local
2 board of elections or local jurisdiction conducted under this subdivi-
3 sion shall be kept confidential and shall not be made available for
4 disclosure or inspection under the freedom of information law unless a
5 subpoena or other court order directs the state board of elections or
6 relevant local board of elections to release such assessment.

7 4. (a) No later than three months after the completion of the needs
8 assessment pursuant to subdivision three of this section, the state
9 board of elections shall promulgate regulations establishing the naviga-
10 tor program with the functions, powers and duties as set forth in subdivi-
11 vision two of this section.

12 (b) The state board of elections shall conduct no fewer than two
13 public hearings to elicit comment and feedback on the proposed regu-
14 lation establishing the navigator program, with one hearing held in
15 Albany and at least one held in New York city. Before finalizing the
16 regulations establishing the navigator program, the board of elections
17 shall consider the comments and feedback received, modify the proposed
18 regulation as appropriate in light of the comments and feedback
19 received, and issue a report indicating the manner in which it responded
20 to the comments received before finalizing its regulations establishing
21 the election security navigator program.

22 5. (a) The state board of elections shall publish on its publicly
23 available website and submit to the governor, the temporary president of
24 the senate, and the speaker of the assembly, an annual report regarding
25 the activities and performance of the election security navigator
26 program no later than March first of each year. The content of the
27 report shall include, but not be limited to:

28 (i) aggregate performance metrics;
29 (ii) services provided;
30 (iii) the types of existing and emerging risks identified;
31 (iv) any recommendations for changes to state statutes or regulations
32 affecting the navigator program; and
33 (v) any budgetary requests or other changes to navigator program
34 financing.

35 (b) In the annual report provided pursuant to this subdivision, begin-
36 ning with the report covering the second year of the program, the state
37 board of election shall report on progress in developing an election
38 security navigators student program in partnership with the state
39 university of New York.

40 6. (a) The navigator program shall be funded through a separate gener-
41 al budget allocation to the state board of elections in an amount suffi-
42 cient to provide assistance to the local boards of elections. The
43 program director shall annually submit a budget request for an amount
44 not less than three million dollars, adjusted annually for inflation.

45 (b) The state board of elections shall be authorized to apply for and
46 receive additional federal and private sources of funding and may enter
47 into agreements with federal and state agencies to facilitate and carry
48 out the functions, powers and duties of the navigator program.

49 § 3. Severability. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision,
50 section or part of this act shall be adjudged by any court of competent
51 jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or
52 invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation
53 to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part thereof
54 directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have
55 been rendered. It is hereby declared to be the intent of the legislature
56 that this act would have been enacted even if such invalid provisions

1 had not been included herein. The provisions of this act shall be sever-
2 able and if any portion thereof or the applicability thereof to any
3 person or circumstance shall be held to be invalid, the remainder of
4 this act and the application thereof shall not be affected thereby.
5 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.