STATE OF NEW YORK

9093

IN SENATE

February 2, 2026

Introduced by Sen. FERNANDEZ -- 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 lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning plus crisis hotline

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

Section 1. The mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new section 36.08 to read as follows:

§ 36.08 Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning plus crisis hotline.

(a) The commissioner shall establish a twenty-four hour, toll-free hotline and website for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning plus (LGBTQ+) individuals who are experiencing emotional distress, suicidal ideation, or crisis-related challenges, which shall provide immediate support, referrals, resource lists, and other information to such individuals, including, but not limited to, the location and phone number of relevant services or programs in the area of the state where the individual is located, such as mental health clinics, suicide-prevention programs, gender-affirming care providers, peer-support centers, shelters and safe-housing options, public transportation, LGBTQ+ community centers, reproductive and sexual health clinics, immigration support services, veteran's assistance programs, disability services, domestic violence and crime-victim services, addiction counseling, legal aid offices, and medical clinics.

(b) The hotline shall ensure strict confidentiality and anonymity for all callers and users, except where disclosure is required by law. The hotline and website shall be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities, including hearing- and speech-impaired users, and shall provide multilingual, linguistically competent, and culturally competent support, with specialized training for staff in serving high-risk LGBTQ+ populations. The hotline shall include text-messaging, web-chat, and other digital communication options to ensure broad accessibility.

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

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(c) The department shall coordinate with local crisis-intervention organizations, LGBTQ+ community centers, mental health providers, and relevant state and local agencies to maintain an accurate and up-to-date statewide referral network.

(d) The department shall compile and publish on its website an annual disaggregated data report, including call volume, issues presented, referrals made, and other service access metrics, for the purpose of evaluating program effectiveness and identifying gaps in service delivery.

§ 2. This act shall take effect on the first of January next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law.