

STATE OF NEW YORK

5563

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 14, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. SIMON, SANTABARBARA, TAPIA -- read once and referred to the Committee on Mental Health

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to the development of a public anti-stigma mental health education program

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

Section 1. Subdivision (1) of section 7.09 of the mental hygiene law, as separately amended by section 15 of part PP of chapter 56 and chapter 363 of the laws of 2022, is amended to read as follows:

(1) ~~[Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the]~~ (1) The commissioner, in conjunction with the commissioner of the office of addiction services and supports ~~[and]~~, the director of the department of veterans' services and the commissioner of agriculture and markets shall develop a public education ~~[initiative designed to eliminate stigma and misinformation about mental illness and substance use among service members, veterans, and their families,]~~ anti-stigma program targeting the general public and underserved populations which shall include but not be limited to: black, Latina and Latino adolescents; members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community; persons of Asian descent; service members, veterans; and individuals who reside in rural communities, and any other group deemed appropriate by the commissioner.

(2) The goal of the program is to reduce stigma and misinformation among the general public and underserved populations listed in paragraph one of this subdivision about mental illness, improve their understanding of symptoms for mental health and substance use disorders ~~[and]~~, the existence and benefits of effective treatment, and provide information regarding available resources and how to access them. These public education ~~[initiatives]~~ programs may ~~[include the use of the internet, including the use of social networking sites]~~ utilize public forums, social media and mass media, including but not limited to internet,

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

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1 radio, and print advertising and shall include educational materials
2 and information on the office's website.

3 (3) The development of any program under this section shall be in
4 consultation with local community stakeholders; consumer advocates;
5 local organizations and institutions, to ensure the programs are
6 culturally and linguistically appropriate and meet the specific needs of
7 each underserved population.

8 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.