

STATE OF NEW YORK

7416

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 25, 2025

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

AN ACT to amend the state finance law, in relation to enacting the "9/11
first responders and survivors' emergency healthcare access act"; to
establish the 9/11 first responders and survivors' emergency health-
care access act task force; and making an appropriation therefor

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

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "9/11 first responders and survivors' emergency healthcare access
3 act".

4 § 2. The state finance law is amended by adding a new section 99-ss to
5 read as follows:

6 § 99-ss. The 9/11 first responders and survivors' emergency healthcare
7 access fund. 1. There is hereby established in the joint custody of the
8 state comptroller and the commissioner of health a special fund to be
9 known as the 9/11 first responders and survivors' emergency healthcare
10 access fund.

11 2. Such fund shall consist of all moneys appropriated thereto from any
12 other fund or source pursuant to law. Nothing contained in this section
13 shall prevent the state from receiving grants, gifts or bequests for the
14 purposes of the fund as defined in this section and depositing them into
15 the fund according to law.

16 3. The monies of the fund, after annual appropriation by the legisla-
17 ture, shall be available to the commissioner of health for distribution,
18 through an application process to be determined by the commissioner of
19 health, to 9/11 first responders and survivors for medical treatments,
20 prescriptions, and essential care services when:

21 (a) a federal claim is delayed;

22 (b) a federal benefit is under appeal; and

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

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1 (c) an urgent health-related need arises while awaiting federal
2 response.

3 4. On or before January first of each year, the department of health
4 shall provide a written report detailing how the monies of the fund were
5 utilized during the preceding fiscal year. Such report shall be provided
6 to the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly,
7 the chair of the senate finance committee, the chair of the assembly
8 ways and means committee, the chair of the senate committee on health,
9 the chair of the assembly health committee, and the state comptroller.
10 Such report shall be posted on the department of health's website and
11 shall include:

12 (a) the amount of money available and disbursed from the fund over the
13 previous twelve months; and

14 (b) a description on how such monies were used.

15 5. For the purposes of this section, "9/11 first responders and survi-
16 vors" shall mean:

17 (a) those individuals who participated in World Trade Center rescue,
18 recovery or cleanup operations as such term is defined in section two of
19 the retirement and social security law; and

20 (b) those individuals who lived and worked within the World Trade
21 Center site as such term is defined in section two of the retirement and
22 social security law.

23 § 3. 1. A 9/11 first responders and survivors' emergency healthcare
24 access act task force is hereby created which shall consist of the
25 following nine members:

26 (a) two members from the assembly appointed by the speaker of assem-
27 bly;

28 (b) two members from the senate appointed by the temporary president
29 of the senate;

30 (c) one representative from the department of health appointed by the
31 governor;

32 (d) one representative from the World Trade Center (WTC) Health
33 Program appointed by the governor;

34 (e) one representative from the September 11th Victim Compensation
35 Fund (VCF) appointed by the governor;

36 (f) one medical professional with expertise in 9/11-related health
37 conditions appointed by the governor; and

38 (g) one advocate representing 9/11 first responders and survivors
39 appointed by the governor.

40 2. The task force shall:

41 (a) monitor the administration of health care benefits and ensure that
42 funding from the 9/11 first responders and survivors' emergency health-
43 care access fund established pursuant to section 99-ss of the state
44 finance law is allocated appropriately and promptly;

45 (b) investigate delays and disruptions in healthcare access for eligi-
46 ble 9/11 responders and survivors;

47 (c) make policy recommendations to the legislature and governor on
48 improving healthcare access and funding mechanisms;

49 (d) oversee data collection on healthcare outcomes and access issues
50 to inform future policy decisions; and

51 (e) submit annual reports to the legislature and governor detailing
52 the task force's findings, recommendations, and an evaluation of the
53 program's effectiveness.

54 § 4. The sum of five million dollars (\$5,000,000), or so much thereof
55 as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated to the 9/11 first responders
56 and survivors' emergency healthcare access fund as established pursuant

1 to section 99-ss of the state finance law from any moneys in the state
2 treasury not otherwise appropriated and made immediately available to
3 the department of health for the purposes of carrying out the provisions
4 of this act. Such moneys shall be payable on the audit and warrant of
5 the comptroller on vouchers certified or approved by the commissioner of
6 health in the manner prescribed by law.

7 § 5. This act shall take effect April 1, 2026.