STATE OF NEW YORK

7548

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

April 1, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. HYNDMAN -- read once and referred to the Committee on Economic Development

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to establishing a mental health first aid training program for licensed cosmetologists and barbers

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

Section 1. Legislative intent. It shall be the intent of this legislature to promote the general health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the state by requiring beauty professionals who provide services directly to the public to undergo training in the provision of mental health first aid. Beauty professionals interact with the public daily, build relationships with their clients, and have a strong connection to the community they live and work in.

It is the judgment of this legislature that prompt and effective first aid for mental illness should be a top priority for the state. Mental health first aid training is customarily an eight-hour course of instruction which educates participants in the methods of effectively recognizing, identifying, understanding and responding to signs and behavioral manifestations of mental illness and substance abuse disorders. This legislature recognizes that mental health illnesses and substance abuse disorders often go undetected, and as such, beauty professionals who have frequent contact with the community that they live in should receive mental health first aid training to potentially avert tragedies attributable to suicidal, harmful or aggressive behaviors related to mental illness, reduce the stigma of mental health issues, and de-escalate and refer individuals who are suffering from a mental illness to receive the medical and emotional care and support they need.

§ 2. The general business law is amended by adding a new section 408-c to read as follows:

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

LBD11184-01-5

§ 408-c. Mental health first aid training. 1. All licensees and applicants for a license or renewal pursuant to this article shall be required to receive eight hours of a mental health first aid training program, as detailed in subdivision two of this section.

2. The mental health first aid training program shall be an eight-hour course specifically designed to educate individuals eighteen years and older in effective approaches to assisting such individuals experiencing a mental health related crisis or problem such as anxiety, depression, psychosis, and addiction. Additionally, such program shall be designed to include, but, not be limited to accomplishing the following objectives: recognizing the symptoms of common mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders, de-escalating crisis situations safely and initiating timely referral to mental health and substance abuse resources available in the community. Upon completion of the mental health first aid training program, such licensee or applicant shall be issued a certificate of completion, which shall be effective for the duration of their license.

3. All new licensees and applicants for a license or renewal shall be required to complete a training course, pursuant to subdivision two of this section, either through a certified online or in-person mental health first aid training program as directed by the secretary.

4. The secretary shall promulgate rules and regulations to implement and administer the provisions of this section.

§ 3. The general business law is amended by adding a new section 436-a to read as follows:

§ 436-a. Mental health first aid training. 1. All licensees and applicants for a license or renewal pursuant to this article shall be required to receive eight hours of a mental health first aid training program, as detailed in subdivision two of this section.

2. The mental health first aid training program shall be an eight-hour course specifically designed to educate individuals eighteen years and older in effective approaches to assisting such individuals experiencing a mental health related crisis or problem such as anxiety, depression, psychosis, and addiction. Additionally, such program shall be designed to include, but, not be limited to accomplishing the following objectives: recognizing the symptoms of common mental illnesses and substance abuse disorders, de-escalating crisis situations safely and initiating timely referral to mental health and substance abuse resources available in the community. Upon completion of the mental health first aid training program, such licensee or applicant shall be issued a certificate of completion, which shall be effective for the duration of their license.

3. All new licensees and applicants for a license or renewal shall be required to complete a training course, pursuant to subdivision two of this section, either through a certified online or in-person mental health first aid training program as directed by the secretary.

4. The secretary shall promulgate rules and regulations to implement and administer the provisions of this section.

§ 4. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall have become a law.