STATE OF NEW YORK

860

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

(Prefiled)

January 8, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. ROSENTHAL, FORREST, SEAWRIGHT, BICHOTTE HERMELYN, CLARK, SIMON, JACKSON, MITAYNES, REYES, CRUZ, GONZALEZ-ROJAS, GALLAGHER, SHIMSKY, LEVENBERG, DAVILA, TAPIA, KELLES, SHRESTHA, HEVESI, R. CARROLL, EPSTEIN, OTIS, CUNNINGHAM, RAGA, BURDICK, DINOWITZ, WEPRIN, MAMDANI -- read once and referred to the Committee on Health

AN ACT to amend the public health law, in relation to prohibiting drug, cannabis or alcohol testing and screening of pregnant or postpartum individuals and newborns

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

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Maternal Health, Dignity and Consent act".

§ 2. The public health law is amended by adding a new section 2509-b to read as follows:

§ 2509-b. Drug, cannabis or alcohol testing and screening for pregnant or postpartum individuals; prohibited. 1. For purposes of this section:

(a) "drug" shall mean a controlled substance as that term is defined in section thirty-three hundred six of this chapter.

(b) "cannabis" shall mean cannabis or concentrated cannabis as those terms are defined in section 222.00 of the penal law.

(c) "drug, cannabis or alcohol test" shall mean a test using a biological sample, including, but not limited to, urine or hair, for the presence of drugs, cannabis or alcohol.

(d) "drug, cannabis or alcohol screen" shall mean the use of a validated verbal or written tool or questionnaire by a health care professional licensed, certified, or authorized under title eight of the education law to determine use of drugs, cannabis or alcohol by a pregnant or postpartum person.

2. No health care professional licensed, certified, or authorized under title eight of the education law shall:

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

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(a) perform a drug, cannabis or alcohol test on a person who is pregnant or up to one year postpartum unless:

(i) the pregnant or postpartum individual gives prior written and oral informed consent specific to the drug, cannabis or alcohol test; and

(ii) the performance of the drug, cannabis or alcohol test is within the scope of medical care being provided to the individual, cannabis.

(b) perform a drug, cannabis or alcohol screen in a hospital on a person who is pregnant or up to one year postpartum unless:

(i) the pregnant or postpartum individual gives prior written and oral informed consent specific to the drug, cannabis or alcohol screen; and

(ii) the performance of the drug, cannabis or alcohol screen is within the scope of medical care being provided to the individual.

(c) perform a drug, cannabis or alcohol screen outside a hospital on a person who is pregnant or up to one year postpartum unless:

(i) the pregnant or postpartum individual gives prior oral informed consent specific to the drug, cannabis or alcohol screen; and

(ii) the performance of the drug, cannabis or alcohol screen is within the scope of medical care being provided to the individual.

3. No health care professional licensed, certified or authorized under title eight of the education law shall:

(a) perform a drug, cannabis or alcohol test on a newborn unless:

(i) the individual authorized to consent for the newborn, as defined by subdivision two of section twenty-five hundred four of this title, gives prior written and oral informed consent specific to the drug, cannabis or alcohol test; and

(ii) the performance of the drug, cannabis or alcohol test is within the scope of medical care being provided to the newborn;

(b) perform a drug, cannabis or alcohol screen in a hospital on a newborn unless:

(i) the individual authorized to consent for the newborn, as defined by subdivision two of section twenty-five hundred four of this title, gives prior written and oral informed consent specific to the drug, cannabis or alcohol screen; and

(ii) the performance of the drug, cannabis or alcohol screen is within the scope of medical care being provided to the newborn;

(c) perform a drug, cannabis or alcohol screen outside a hospital on a newborn unless:

(i) the individual authorized to consent for the newborn, as defined by subdivision two of section twenty-five hundred four of this title, gives prior oral informed consent specific to the drug, cannabis or alcohol screen; and

(ii) the performance of the drug, cannabis or alcohol screen is within the scope of medical care being provided to the newborn.

4. Written and oral informed consent to a drug, cannabis or alcohol test or drug or alcohol screen shall occur at the time of testing, in language understandable to the pregnant or postpartum individual, or the individual authorized to consent for the newborn, under circumstances that provide such individual sufficient opportunity to consider whether or not to authorize the drug, cannabis or alcohol test or drug, cannabis or alcohol screen and minimize the possibility of coercion or undue influence, and shall consist of oral authorization and written authorization that is dated, signed and includes the following:

(a) a statement explaining that consenting to a drug, cannabis or alcohol test or drug, cannabis or alcohol screen is voluntary and

requires written and oral informed consent, except when conditions under subdivision five of this section are met;

(b) a statement that testing or screening positive for drugs, cannabis or alcohol could have legal consequences, including, but not limited to, a report to a local child protective services agency, and that the individual may want to consult with legal counsel prior to or after consenting to a drug, cannabis or alcohol test or drug, cannabis or alcohol screen;

(c) a statement explaining the extent of confidentiality of the test or screen results;

(d) a statement of the medical purpose of the test or screen; and

(e) a general description of the test or screen.

5. Drug, cannabis or alcohol testing or drug, cannabis or alcohol screening may be performed without consent of the patient or the individual authorized to consent for a newborn when, in the health care professional's judgment, an emergency exists and the patient or newborn is in immediate need of medical attention, and an attempt to secure consent would result in delay of treatment that could increase the risk to the patient's or newborn's life or health. In the case that drug, cannabis or alcohol testing or drug or alcohol screening is performed under these circumstances, the test or screen results shall be discussed with the patient or the individual authorized to consent for the newborn, in language understandable to the patient or individuals authorized to consent for the newborn and shall consist of oral notification and written notification that is dated, signed and includes the following:

(a) a statement that testing or screening positive for drugs, cannabis or alcohol could have legal consequences, including but not limited to a potential report to a local child protective services agency, and that the patient or individual authorized to consent for the newborn may want to consult with legal counsel;

(b) a statement in the medical record with a description of the emergency that necessitated unconsented drug, cannabis or alcohol testing or drug, cannabis or alcohol screening; and

(c) a statement explaining the extent of confidentiality of the test or screen results.

6. No health care professional licensed, certified, or authorized under title eight of the education law shall refuse to treat an individual who is pregnant or up to one year postpartum or a newborn because of the patient or individuals authorized to consent for the newborn's refusal to submit to a drug, cannabis or alcohol test or drug, cannabis or alcohol screen.

7. Nothing in this section shall diminish any other requirement to obtain informed consent for a drug, cannabis or alcohol test or drug, cannabis or alcohol screen or any other procedure.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.