

STATE OF NEW YORK

9379--B

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

December 19, 2025

Introduced by M. of A. SIMON, BERGER, LUPARDO, STECK, TAPIA, LEVENBERG, EACHUS, BICHOTTE HERMELYN, SAYEGH, ZACCARO -- read once and referred to the Committee on Mental Health -- recommitted to the Committee on Mental Health in accordance with Assembly Rule 3, sec. 2 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- reported and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to establishing a master of social work paid field practicum pilot program

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

1 Section 1. The mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new section
2 7.51 to read as follows:

3 § 7.51 Master of social work paid field practicum pilot program.

4 (a) The office shall establish and administer a master of social work
5 paid field practicum pilot program to provide stipends, within appropri-
6 ations therefor, to students who are enrolled in a master of social work
7 program at a program registered by the state education department and
8 accredited by the Council of Social Work Education, and who are required
9 to perform services as part of the field practicum component of such
10 program.

11 (b) Commencing with the fall two thousand twenty-six semester, the
12 pilot program shall provide stipends for the field practicum during the
13 first four hundred fifty hours of field practicum for students complet-
14 ing a required field practicum component as part of their course of
15 study in a master of social work program.

16 (1) Such pilot program shall be available to all students who:

17 (i) are enrolled in a master of social work program in accordance with
18 subdivision (a) of this section; and

19 (ii) perform their field practicum in New York state.

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

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1 (2) Students who are eligible for this pilot program shall receive a
2 stipend of four thousand five hundred dollars, at a rate of ten dollars
3 per hour, while completing their first four hundred fifty hours of a
4 field practicum as part of their required field practicum component.
5 Such stipend shall be distributed monthly and shall automatically renew
6 annually until either the student completes four hundred fifty hours of
7 a field practicum or the end of the spring semester in two thousand
8 thirty, whichever occurs first. Students who receive such funding shall
9 agree to work in New York state in a social work capacity for one year
10 upon graduating.

11 (i) Students who receive funding of four thousand five hundred dollars
12 or more relating to the completion of such field practicum from any
13 other source, including, but not limited to, grants, scholarships,
14 fellowships, or work-based placements, shall be ineligible for a stipend
15 pursuant to this program.

16 (ii) Students who receive funding of less than four thousand five
17 hundred dollars relating to the completion of such field practicum from
18 any other source, including, but not limited to, grants, scholarships,
19 fellowships, or work-based placements shall be eligible for a stipend
20 for the difference between their existing funding and four thousand five
21 hundred dollars.

22 (c) The office shall provide informational materials about the pilot
23 program to schools in the state who offer a master of social work
24 program that are registered by the state education department and
25 accredited by the Council of Social Work Education. Such schools shall
26 post such informational materials in the same manner as other available
27 scholarships, fellowships, or other stipend programs on the school's
28 official website for the purpose of informing students and prospective
29 students of the master of social work paid field practicum pilot program
30 established under this section.

31 (d) In accordance with state and federal confidentiality and privacy
32 laws, the office shall collect data annually from any college, universi-
33 ty, or field practicum setting that has students participating in the
34 pilot program and make such data public on their website. The data shall
35 be used to assess:

36 (1) the correlation of any increase in applications received for
37 admission to a university or college master in social work program and
38 the number of students who apply to the pilot program;

39 (2) statewide enrollment trends in master of social work programs
40 resulting from students' participation in the pilot program compared to
41 before the pilot program, including, but not limited to:

42 (i) demographics of students enrolled in master of social work
43 programs, including age, race, socioeconomic status, gender identity,
44 sexual orientation, ability, geographic, religion, representation, and
45 any other demographic factor that the office deems relevant;

46 (ii) impacts on retention, attrition, dropout rates, and degree
47 conferral rates. For the purposes of this subparagraph:

48 (A) "retention rate" means the number of students who continue enroll-
49 ment in their program between specified terms;

50 (B) "attrition rate" means the number of students who leave enrollment
51 between specified points in time;

52 (C) "dropout rate" means the number of students who discontinue their
53 master of social work program without earning a degree; and

54 (D) "degree conferral rate" means the number of students who complete
55 their master of social work program;

1 (3) the impact on a student's financial stability and their ability to
2 satisfy their cost of living needs, including a student's debt levels;

3 (4) the impact field practicum funding has on workforce retention for
4 participating field practicum settings once the pilot program work
5 requirement is completed;

6 (5) the impact on field practicum settings' ability to meet service
7 demands of their clients and communities in which they provide services
8 and supports; and

9 (6) any other metric or area of study the office deems relevant.

10 (e) The office shall produce a report on the efficacy of the pilot
11 program based on the data collected pursuant to subdivision (d) of this
12 section and shall submit such report to the governor and the legisla-
13 ture, and be made public, no later than December first, two thousand
14 thirty. Such report shall include an analysis of the data collected
15 pursuant to subdivision (d) of this section and recommendations on how
16 to expand the pilot program to increase the number of social workers in
17 the state, improve representation in the field of social work, mitigate
18 student debt and improve labor conditions for social workers upon gradu-
19 ation.

20 (f) Amounts made available to the master of social work paid field
21 practicum pilot program shall be subject to annual appropriations there-
22 for. Such appropriations shall be adjusted each fiscal year to provide
23 funding to students enrolled in a qualifying master of social work
24 program pursuant to this section and to reflect the variance between
25 current enrollment numbers for master of social work programs and
26 enrollment in the previous fiscal year.

27 § 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026. Effective immediately,
28 the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation neces-
29 sary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are
30 authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.