

# STATE OF NEW YORK

3610

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

January 29, 2025

Introduced by Sens. HELMING, BORRELLO, BROUK, GALLIVAN, MAY, OBERACKER, O'MARA, ORTT, STEC, TEDISCO, WALCZYK, WEBB -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Mental Health

AN ACT to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to creating the rural suicide prevention council

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 7.48 to read as follows:

3 § 7.48 Rural suicide prevention council.

4 (a) There shall be established by the office, a council on rural  
5 suicide prevention, to consist of twelve members:

6 1. two members shall be appointed by the commissioner;

7 2. two members shall be appointed by the commissioner of health;

8 3. two members shall be appointed by the commissioner of agriculture  
9 and markets;

10 4. two members shall be appointed by the speaker of the assembly;

11 5. two members shall be appointed by the temporary president of the  
12 senate;

13 6. one member shall be appointed by the minority leader of the assem-  
14 bly; and

15 7. one member shall be appointed by the minority leader of the senate.

16 (b) The commissioner shall designate the chair of the council from  
17 among such twelve members. Vacancies in the membership of such council  
18 shall be filled by the appropriate appointing authority. The membership  
19 of the council may include, but not be limited to, representatives of  
20 the state conference of local mental hygiene directors, psychiatric and  
21 psychological practitioners, substance use and mental health profes-  
22 sionals with experience in the delivery of treatment and prevention  
23 services in rural areas, persons with expertise in public health issues,

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

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1 any group, association, or university with expertise in financial or  
2 economic analysis, business planning, and providing supports for farmers  
3 and other individuals residing in rural areas, and others whose profes-  
4 sional expertise includes rural affairs related to the duties of the  
5 council.

6 (c) The council shall focus its efforts and work on "rural areas" as  
7 such term is defined in section four hundred eighty-one of the executive  
8 law.

9 (d) Duties of the council shall include, but not be limited to:

10 1. examining the causes and conditions related to rural suicides or  
11 suicide attempts and the prevalence of suicide among certain professions  
12 including, but not limited to, farmers and agricultural workers;

13 2. identifying policies, practices, resources, services, and potential  
14 legislation that may result in the reduction of rural suicide and rural  
15 suicide attempts;

16 3. offering recommendations on policies and procedures to improve the  
17 coordination of services and resources among agencies involved in the  
18 delivery of mental health, substance use, or suicide prevention  
19 services; and

20 4. making recommendations on funding initiatives to increase access to  
21 mental health, substance use, and suicide prevention services in rural  
22 areas and facilitate the use of innovative intervention strategies  
23 specific to individuals residing in rural areas.

24 (e) The rural suicide prevention council shall meet not less than two  
25 times annually, or as deemed necessary by the chair of the council or  
26 the commissioner.

27 (f) The members of the rural suicide prevention council shall receive  
28 no compensation for their services, but shall be allowed their actual  
29 and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

30 (g) The council shall prepare and submit a report no later than the  
31 first of January next succeeding the effective date of this section, and  
32 biennially thereafter, to the governor and the legislature that recom-  
33 mends policies, legislation, and funding needed to implement any of the  
34 findings in the council's report.

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