

STATE OF NEW YORK

6224

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 6, 2025

Introduced by Sen. C. RYAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Disabilities

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to requiring the state interagency coordinating council for services to persons who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing to develop and implement a training program to educate first responders on effective communication with deaf and hard of hearing individuals in emergency situations

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

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 the "deaf and hard of hearing emergency communications act".

3 § 2. Section 559 of the executive law is amended by adding a new
4 subdivision 6 to read as follows:

5 6. The state interagency coordinating council for services to persons
6 who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hard of hearing shall, in collaboration
7 with the department of health, develop and implement a comprehensive
8 language access training program for first responders, designed to
9 educate first responders on strategies to communicate effectively with
10 deaf and hard of hearing individuals in emergency situations. In addi-
11 tion to developing and implementing such language access training
12 program, the state interagency coordinating council shall:

13 (a) create and distribute informational materials, including but not
14 limited to brochures or pamphlets, to educate the general public on how
15 to communicate effectively with deaf and hard of hearing individuals
16 during emergencies;

17 (b) establish a system to allow deaf and hard of hearing individuals
18 to provide feedback on their experiences with first responders and to
19 suggest potential improvements to the language access training program;

20 (c) conduct regular reviews and evaluations of the effectiveness of
21 the language access training program for first responders and any neces-
22 sary changes to the program to ensure its ongoing improvement;

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

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1 (d) develop and implement a system for tracking and documenting inci-
2 dents involving deaf and hard of hearing individuals to identify trends,
3 challenges, and areas for improvement; and

4 (e) establish a protocol for dispatch centers to efficiently identify
5 and relay information about a deaf or hard of hearing individual's
6 communication preferences to responding first responders.

7 § 3. This act shall take effect immediately.