STATE OF NEW YORK

6913

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

March 26, 2025

Introduced by Sen. HARCKHAM -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Social Services

AN ACT to amend the social services law and the mental hygiene law, in relation to the 2-1-1 essential community services hotline system

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

Section 1. The social services law is amended by adding a new article 9 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 9
2-1-1 ESSENTIAL COMMUNITY SERVICES HOTLINE SYSTEM

Section 467. Definitions.
467-a. Oversight of the 2-1-1 essential community services hotline system.
467-b. Availability and scope of information.
467-c. Responsibilities of 2-1-1 call centers.
467-d. Reporting.

§ 467. Definitions. As used in this article:

1. "2-1-1 essential community services hotline system" or "2-1-1" means the three digit phone number designated by the federal communications commission for the purpose of connecting individuals and families with community resource and referral services.

2. "2-1-1 call center" means a center receiving calls from 2-1-1 operated by 2-1-1 New York, the not-for-profit organization designated for such purpose by the public service commission in two thousand ten.

3. "Community resource specialist" means an individual employed by a 2-1-1 call center, who has trained in quality indicators for professional information and referrals and received an accreditation from Inform USA, or its successor organization, to assist individuals with help finding community resources and other service-related needs,

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

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including during times of crisis, a natural disaster or other weather-related events.

§ 467-a. Oversight of the 2-1-1 essential community services hotline system. The office of children and family services shall have oversight of the 2-1-1 essential community services hotline system and shall designate 2-1-1 New York, the not-for-profit organization designated by the public service commission in two thousand ten, to operate such hotline system, within amounts appropriated.

§ 467-b. Availability and scope of information. 1. 2-1-1 shall be available statewide, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week and shall provide a language assistance line to assist limited and non-English language speakers.

2. Community resource specialists shall provide community resource and referral information for at least the following services, as needed:

a. basic human needs, such as food and clothing banks, temporary housing assistance, including emergency housing assistance, rent and utility assistance, the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP), the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children (WIC) and other public benefit programs;

b. physical and behavioral health resources, such as health insurance programs including, but not limited to, medicaid, medicare, the essential plan and child health plus, maternal health resources, behavioral health services, crisis intervention services and, if appropriate, transferring individuals to the 9-8-8 suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis hotline or the 9-1-1 emergency response system;

c. work support, such as job training programs or education and literacy assistance, tax preparation, and transportation programs;

d. children, youth and family support, including child care, after-school programs and summer camps, family resource centers, mentoring and child protective services;

e. support for older adults and persons with disabilities, including community and medically tailored meals, respite care, home health care, transportation services and adult protective services; and

f. access services for limited and non-English speakers, such as translation and interpretation services.

§ 467-c. Responsibilities of 2-1-1 call centers. 2-1-1 call centers shall be responsible for:

1. maintaining an up-to-date database of providers and services available in the community, that is validated annually to ensure accurate information;

2. ensuring individuals can access 2-1-1 through various platforms, including via telephone, text or the internet; and

3. accepting calls from and coordinating with the 9-8-8 suicide prevention and behavioral health crisis hotline and the 9-1-1 emergency response system, as appropriate.

§ 467-d. Reporting. 1. The office of children and family services, in consultation with 2-1-1 New York, shall establish a comprehensive list of reporting metrics regarding the use of 2-1-1, which shall include, but not be limited to:

a. the total number of requests for assistance statewide, as well as by region, that 2-1-1 call centers receive annually;

b. the categories of services and referrals that are requested each year; and

c. the average length of time taken to respond to each request for assistance and the aggregate number of call abandonments for the year.

2. The office of children and family services shall compile an annual report on the data collected pursuant to subdivision one of this section and shall submit such report to the governor, the temporary president of the senate, the speaker of the assembly, the minority leader of the senate, and the minority leader of the assembly, annually, beginning no later than April first, next succeeding the effective date of this section.

§ 2. Paragraph 5 of subdivision (c) of section 36.03 of the mental hygiene law, as added by section 2 of part EE of chapter 57 of the laws of 2022, is amended to read as follows:

(5) A designated hotline center shall ensure coordination between the 9-8-8 crisis hotline centers, 9-1-1, behavioral health crisis services, **the 2-1-1 essential community services hotline system,** and, when appropriate, other specialty behavioral health warm lines and hotlines and other emergency services. If a law enforcement, medical, or fire response is also needed, 9-8-8 and 9-1-1 operators shall coordinate the simultaneous deployment of those services with mobile crisis services.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred twentieth day after it shall have become a law.