

# STATE OF NEW YORK

7894--A

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

## IN SENATE

May 13, 2025

Introduced by Sens. SALAZAR, CLEARE, FERNANDEZ, GONZALEZ, JACKSON, MYRIE, RAMOS, SEPULVEDA, WEBB, ZELLNER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Mental Health -- recommitted to the Committee on Mental Health in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- 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.

20 (2) Students who are eligible for this pilot program shall receive a  
21 stipend of four thousand five hundred dollars, at a rate of ten dollars

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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