

# STATE OF NEW YORK

9734

## IN SENATE

April 2, 2026

Introduced by Sen. KAVANAGH -- 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, in relation to the payment of shelter and rent arrears

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

1 Section 1. The social services law is amended by adding a new section  
2 131-ww to read as follows:

3 § 131-ww. Shelter arrears. 1. Applicants may receive an emergency  
4 grant to pay for rent, property taxes or mortgage arrears once every  
5 year unless the district determines at its discretion that additional  
6 shelter arrears payments are necessary based on the individual circum-  
7 stances.

8 2. In an application for an allowance to pay shelter arrears, an  
9 applicant shall not be required to demonstrate an ability to repay shel-  
10 ter expenses, rent, property taxes, or mortgage payments going forward,  
11 nor shall a district consider an applicant's ability to make payments  
12 under any repayment agreement.

13 3. Unrepaid shelter expenses shall have no bearing on an applicant's  
14 eligibility to receive additional loans.

15 4. The commissioner shall promulgate regulations consistent with this  
16 section.

17 § 2. Section 131-w of the social services law, as added by chapter 41  
18 of the laws of 1992, is amended to read as follows:

19 § 131-w. Limitations in the payment of rent arrears. Districts shall  
20 not provide assistance to pay rent arrears, property taxes or mortgage  
21 arrears for persons not eligible for home relief, aid to dependent chil-  
22 dren, emergency assistance to needy families with children or emergency  
23 assistance for aged, blind and disabled persons, except to persons who  
24 are without income or resources immediately available to meet the emer-  
25 gency need[~~r~~] and whose gross household income does not exceed [~~one~~  
26 ~~hundred twenty-five~~] two hundred percent of the federal income official  
27 poverty line [~~and who sign a repayment agreement agreeing to repay the~~  
28 ~~assistance in a period not to exceed twelve months. The districts shall~~

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

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1 ~~enforce the repayment agreements by any legal method available to a~~  
2 ~~creditor, in addition to any rights it has pursuant to this chapter].~~

3 The department shall promulgate regulations to implement this section  
4 which shall, among other things, [~~establish standards for the contents~~  
5 ~~of repayment agreements and~~] establish standards to ensure that assist-  
6 ance is provided only in emergency circumstances.

7 § 3. Subdivision 1 of section 131-r of the social services law, as  
8 added by chapter 81 of the laws of 1995 and as designated by chapter 340  
9 of the laws of 2003, is amended to read as follows:

10 1. Any person who is receiving or has received, within the previous  
11 [~~ten~~ five] years, public assistance pursuant to the provisions of this  
12 article, and who wins a lottery prize of [~~six hundred~~ twenty thousand  
13 dollars or more shall reimburse the department from the winnings, for  
14 all such public assistance benefits paid to such person during the  
15 previous [~~ten~~ five] years; provided, however, that such crediting to the  
16 department shall in no event exceed fifty percent of the amount of the  
17 lottery prize. The commissioner shall enter into an agreement with the  
18 director of the lottery, pursuant to section sixteen hundred thirteen-b  
19 of the tax law, for the crediting of lottery prizes against public  
20 assistance benefits. Nothing herein shall limit the ability of a social  
21 services district to make recoveries pursuant to section [~~104~~ one  
22 hundred four] or section [~~106-b~~ one hundred six-b] of this chapter.

23 § 4. This act shall take effect immediately.