§ 19.01 Declaration of policy.

The legislature declares the following:

Alcoholism, substance abuse and chemical dependence pose major health and social problems for individuals and their families when left untreated, including family devastation, homelessness, and unemployment. It has been proven that successful prevention and treatment can dramatically reduce costs to the health care, criminal justice and social welfare systems.

The tragic, cumulative and often fatal consequences of alcoholism and substance abuse are, however, preventable and treatable disabilities that require a coordinated and multi-faceted network of services.

The legislature recognizes locally planned and implemented prevention as a primary means to avert the onset of alcoholism and substance abuse. It is the policy of the state to promote comprehensive, age appropriate education for children and youth and stimulate public awareness of the risks associated with alcoholism and substance abuse. Further, the legislature acknowledges the need for a coordinated state policy for the establishment of prevention and treatment programs designed to address the problems of chemical dependency among youth, including prevention and intervention efforts in school and community-based programs designed to identify and refer high risk youth in need of chemical dependency services.

Substantial benefits can be gained through alcoholism and substance abuse treatment for both addicted individuals and their families. Positive treatment outcomes that may be generated through a complete continuum of care offer a cost effective and comprehensive approach to rehabilitating such individuals. The primary goals of the rehabilitation and recovery process are to restore social, family, lifestyle, vocational and economic supports by stabilizing an individual's physical and psychological functioning. The legislature recognizes the importance of varying treatment approaches and levels of care designed to meet each client's needs. Relapse prevention and aftercare are two

primary components of treatment that serve to promote and maintain recovery.

The legislature recognizes that the distinct treatment needs of special populations, including women and women with children, persons with HIV infection, persons diagnosed with mental illness, persons who abuse chemicals, the homeless and veterans with posttraumatic stress disorder, merit particular attention. It is the intent of the legislature to promote effective interventions for such populations in need of particular attention. The legislature also recognizes the importance of family support for individuals in alcohol or substance abuse treatment and recovery. Such family participation can provide lasting support to the recovering individual to prevent relapse and maintain recovery. The intergenerational cycle of chemical dependency within families can be intercepted through appropriate interventions.

The state of New York and its local governments have a responsibility in coordinating the delivery of alcoholism and substance abuse services, through the entire network of service providers. To accomplish these objectives, the legislature declares that the establishment of a single, unified office of alcoholism and substance abuse services will provide an integrated framework to plan, oversee and regulate the state's prevention and treatment network. In recognition of the growing trends and incidence of chemical dependency, this consolidation allows the state to respond to the changing profile of chemical dependency. The legislature recognizes that some distinctions exist between the alcoholism and substance abuse field and where appropriate, those distinctions may be preserved. Accordingly, it is the intent of the state to establish one office of alcoholism and substance abuse services in furtherance of a comprehensive service delivery system.