

**LOCAL LAWS  
OF  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
FOR THE YEAR 1992**

**No. 9**

Introduced by Council Members Alter, Maloney and the Speaker (Council Member Vallone); also Council Members Castaneira-Colon, Dear, DeMarco, Dryfoos, Eisland, Fields, Fisher, Foster, Greitzer, Harrison, Horwitz, Koslowitz, Leffler, McCaffrey, Michels, O'Donovan, Pinkett, Povman, Robles, Spigner, Ward, Williams, Wooten and Cerullo III. (Passed under a Message of Necessity from the Mayor.)

**A LOCAL LAW**

**To amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York in relation to the establishment of a senior citizens bill of rights.**

*Be it enacted by the Council as follows:*

Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. The City Council finds that many of the city's elderly regard senior citizen centers as a second home and their fellow center members as family. The City Council also finds that senior citizens should be treated with dignity and respect in deference to their many contributions to society. Accordingly, the City Council finds that the city's elderly should be guaranteed certain rights at all senior citizen centers which are operated by the city or operated by an entity that has contracted with the department for the aging.

§ 2. Section 21-101 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended to read as follows:

§ 21-101. Definitions. Whenever used in this [title] *chapter* the following words shall have the following meanings:

- a. "Commissioner" shall mean the commissioner of social services of the city.
- b. "Department" shall mean the department of social services of the city.
- c. "Institution" shall include any charitable corporation, one of the objects of which is the care of children or the placing of children in families.

§ 3. Title 21 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new chapter 2 to read as follows:

**CHAPTER 2**

**DEPARTMENT FOR THE AGING**

§ 21-201. Definitions. Whenever used in this chapter, the following words shall have the following meanings:

- a. "Commissioner" shall mean the commissioner of the department for the aging.
- b. "Department" shall mean the department for the aging.
- c. "Regularly scheduled activities" shall mean all activities which are funded in whole or in part by the city of New York.

d. "Senior center" shall mean facilities operated by the city of New York or operated by an entity that has contracted with the department to provide services to senior citizens on a regular basis including, but not limited to meals, recreation and counseling.

§ 21-202 a. Bill of rights required. The commissioner shall require that every senior center adopt a statement of the rights of all senior citizens who participate in activities and take advantage of services provided by such senior center and treat all senior citizens in accordance with the provisions of such statement.

b. Contents of bill of rights. Such statement of rights shall include the following:

1. Every senior citizen who otherwise qualifies for participation shall have the right to participate as a member of a senior center.

2. Every senior citizen shall have the right to participate in all regularly scheduled activities and take advantage of services provided by the center to the extent that funding and space limitations permit.

3. Every senior center shall have a senior advisory council which will be comprised of senior citizens from the senior center membership. Such advisory council shall advise the senior center's management of the needs of the senior citizens.

4. Every senior citizen attending a senior center's regularly scheduled meal period shall be offered a balanced and nutritious meal to the extent that funding and space limitations permit. Those senior citizens that do not receive a balanced and nutritious meal shall be offered nourishment during a senior center's regularly scheduled meal period to the extent that funding permits.

5. Every senior citizen attending a senior center shall have the opportunity to make a financial contribution which shall be voluntary and anonymous and shall be used by the senior center to enhance and increase services to senior citizens.

6. Every senior citizen shall be treated courteously, fairly and respectfully at a senior center.

7. Every senior citizen shall have the right not to be discriminated against based upon his or her actual or perceived race, creed, color, national origin, age, gender, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, alienage or citizenship status, in violation of the human rights law of the city of New York.

8. Every senior citizen shall have the right to be informed of those senior centers that are handicapped accessible.

9. Every senior citizen shall have the right to present grievances on behalf of himself or herself to the senior center's staff, board of directors or executive committee, or elected or other government officials, without fear of reprisal from officers or employees of the senior center.

c. Posting required. Every senior center shall post conspicuously:

(i) in or near the entrance to such center a sign that states the rights of senior citizens as provided in this section;

(ii) all regularly scheduled activities as defined in this section; and

(iii) the department's phone number.

d. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the department's authority to promulgate rules regarding matters within its jurisdiction pursuant to applicable law.

§ 4. This local law shall take effect 90 days after its enactment into law.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK, OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK, S.S.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a local law of The City of New York, passed by the Council on December 19, 1991, and approved by the Mayor on January 7, 1992.

CARLOS CUEVAS, City Clerk, Clerk of the Council

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO MUNICIPAL HOME RULE LAW § 27

Pursuant to the provisions of Municipal Home Rule Law § 27, I hereby certify that the enclosed local law (Local Law 9 of 1992, Council Int. No. 784-A) contains the correct text and:

Received the following vote at the meeting of the New York City Council on December 19, 1991: 34 for, 0 against.

Was approved by the Mayor on January 6, 1992.

Was returned to the City Clerk on January 7, 1992.

JEFFREY D. FRIEDLANDER, Acting Corporation Counsel