



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 855-B

By Council Members Kallos, Rosenthal, Reynoso, Rose, Richards, Rodriguez, Menchaca, Perkins, Lander, Williams, Van Bramer, Johnson, Chin, Levin, Palma, Adams, Barron and the Public Advocate (Ms. James)

A Local Law to amend administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to a study regarding the feasibility of notifying individuals who may be eligible for public assistance

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Subchapter 1 of chapter 1 of title 3 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 3-120 to read as follows:

§ 3-120 Study on notification of public assistance eligibility a. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Notice. The term “notice” means a written communication sent through the mail or by electronic means.

Public assistance. The term “public assistance” means all forms of public benefits provided by the federal government, state of New York, or city of New York for which an individual may apply through the city including but not limited to: cash assistance; the home energy assistance program; medicaid; rent increase exemptions; child care subsidies; and the supplemental nutrition assistance program.

Renewal. The term “renewal” means the automatic or affirmative act of recertifying or re-applying for public assistance, as may be required on a periodic basis, for an individual already receiving such public assistance.

City administrative data. The term “administrative data” means data, including but not limited to individually identifiable data, that is maintained in databases managed by the city of New York, including but not limited to those maintained by the department of social services, the department of finance, the

administration for children’s services, the department of small business services and the department of housing preservation and development.

Office. The term “office” means the office of operations established pursuant to section 15 of the charter or any other office or agency designated by the mayor.

b. By December 31, 2018, the office, in collaboration with relevant agencies, shall complete a study regarding the feasibility and cost to the city of utilizing city administrative data to identify individuals who are likely eligible for public assistance and providing notice to such individuals of their likely eligibility. Such study shall include, but need not be limited to:

1. Assessing the city’s technical ability to collect, disclose, and electronically transmit city administrative data, in a manner that complies with applicable law and city and agency policies, including data provided by every individual who submits an application for public assistance or is in receipt of public assistance, in order to determine likely qualification for additional public assistance using eligibility screening tool(s);

2. Identifying and assessing the means available to provide notice to an individual of any public assistance or additional public assistance for which an the individual may qualify. Such notice may include a copy of the relevant applications and instructions on how to apply for such public assistance. In instances where public assistance may be applied for or renewed online, the office shall consider how notice may include a link to access the application or renewal online, and the option for individuals to decline receiving applications or renewals in paper form;

3. Assessing the technical ability to provide pre-filled applications with information obtained from an individual’s initial public assistance application or other existing city administrative data, in a manner that complies with applicable law and city and agency policies, such assessment considering: (i) renewal applications where an individual is already receiving such public assistance, (ii) in instances where public assistance may be applied for or renewed online, how an individual may be provided with a link to securely

access the applicable public benefit application online that has been pre-filled with information obtained from such individual's last public benefit application along with instructions, and (iii) the implications of enabling individuals to decline receiving applications or renewals in paper form;

4. Considering the implications of notifying individuals of their likely eligibility for certain public assistance benefits that, if claimed, may affect their eligibility for existing or other public assistance benefits;

5. Identifying additional options for the city to provide individuals with assistance in completing public assistance applications, including but not limited to online, over the phone through 311 and at a city agency accepting public assistance applications.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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