



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 1580

By Council Members Rose, Kallos, Louis, Ampy-Samuel and Ayala

A Local Law in relation to the creation of a task force on public burial and related issues

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Public burial task force. a. There shall be a task force that shall review the laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures related to public burial and to consider and make recommendations regarding changes to such laws, rules, regulations, policies and procedures.

b. A representative of the New York city health and hospitals corporation shall be invited to join the task force. In addition, the task force shall consist of the following members, or their designees:

1. The commissioner of health and mental hygiene;

2. The commissioner of social services;

3. The commissioner of correction;

4. The chief medical examiner;

5. Three members appointed by the mayor;

6. At least two advocates who specialize in issues related to public burial or Hart Island, appointed by the speaker of the council;

7. At least one member of the public who has opted for public burial of a deceased person, appointed by the speaker of the council; and

8. Two council members, appointed by the speaker of the council.

c. Members of the task force shall serve for a term of 1 year, to commence after the appointment of the

final member of the task force. All members shall be appointed to the task force within 60 days of the effective date of this local law.

d. All members of the task force shall serve without compensation, and the task force shall meet, at a minimum, once every two months.

e. No member of the task force shall be removed except for cause and upon notice and hearing by the official who appointed that member. In the event of a vacancy, a successor shall be appointed in the same manner as the original appointment to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

f. The task force shall issue a report to the mayor and council no later than 12 months after the final member of the task force is appointed. Such report shall include, but need not be limited to, analysis and recommendations regarding the following:

1. The process for identifying, finding and contacting next of kin when a deceased individual is identified for public burial;
2. Support for and communication with next of kin who are considering public burial or burial assistance programs, including what information is provided regarding public burial and Hart Island;
3. Procedures for burial of individuals with court-appointed guardians;
4. The department of social service's burial assistance program;
5. The feasibility of implementation of a cremation assistance program or providing cremation as an alternative to public burial;
7. The feasibility or potential feasibility of public burial in locations other than Hart Island, both inside and outside of the city; and
8. Recommendations for promoting efficiency and accessibility to the public of existing and proposed programs in connection with public burial.

g. Such task force shall dissolve 90 days after the final submission of the report required pursuant to

subdivision f.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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