



Legislation Text

---

**File #:** Int 1968-2020, **Version:** \*

---

Int. No. 1968

By Council Members Eugene, Kallos and Chin

A Local Law in relation to providing mental health counseling to healthcare professionals who provided healthcare services during the COVID-19 pandemic, and providing for the expiration and repeal of such requirement

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Mental health counseling for COVID-19 healthcare professionals. a. Definitions. For purposes of this local law, the following terms have the following meanings:

COVID-19. The term “COVID-19” means the 2019 novel coronavirus or 2019-nCoV.

Healthcare professional. The term “healthcare professional” means any physician, physician assistant, specialist assistant, nurse practitioner, licensed registered professional nurse, licensed practical nurse, certified first responder or emergency medical technician who provided healthcare services in the city of New York at any time during which an executive order of the governor of the state of New York declaring a state disaster emergency to address COVID-19 was in effect, or any time during which an order of the mayor of the city of New York declaring a local state of emergency to address COVID-19 was in effect.

b. Subject to appropriation, the mayor shall establish a program for the purpose of providing mental health counseling at no cost to healthcare professionals, or reimbursements to healthcare professionals for the unreimbursed expenses of such counseling.

c. Upon establishment of the program pursuant to subdivision b of this section, the mayor shall designate an administering agency for the purpose of administering such program. Such agency shall have the authority to promulgate rules to administer such program. In promulgating such rules, such agency shall take

into account barriers to access to mental health counseling and demonstrated financial need among healthcare professionals. Such rules shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. Procedures to receive and address requests from healthcare professionals to participate in such program; and

2. Criteria, in addition to those set forth in this section, to establish eligibility for participation in such program, including criteria relating to the ongoing eligibility of participating healthcare professionals in such program.

d. The program established pursuant to subdivision b of this section shall terminate upon the mayor's determination that the program is no longer necessary to promote access to mental health counseling among healthcare professionals who may be dealing with the negative mental health effects, including but not limited to post-traumatic stress disorder, of providing healthcare services at any time during which an executive order of the governor of the state of New York declaring a state disaster emergency to address COVID-19 was in effect, or any time during which an order of the mayor of the city of New York declaring a local state of emergency to address COVID-19 was in effect.

§ 2. This local law takes effect 120 days after it becomes law and expires and is deemed repealed upon the mayor's determination to terminate the program pursuant to subdivision d of this local law. Upon such determination, the mayor shall notify the city clerk for the purpose of transmitting the fact of such repeal to the New York state legislative bill drafting commission in furtherance of effectuating the provisions of section 70-b of the public officers law, and the mayor shall notify the corporation counsel for the purpose of effectuating the provisions of section 7-111 of the administrative code of the city of New York. The failure to provide the notifications described in this section shall not affect the effective date of any provision of this local law.