



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 190

By the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams) and Council Members Salamanca, Cabán, Stevens, Hanif, Ayala, Won, Restler, Krishnan, Hudson, Williams, Lee, Sanchez, Dinowitz and Schulman

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to the creation and distribution of a homeless bill of rights

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 3 of title 21 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 21-324 to read as follows:

§ 21-324 Homeless bill of rights. a. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the term “shelter” means any temporary emergency housing provided to homeless adults, adult families and families with children by the department or by a provider under contract or similar agreement with the department.

b. The department shall create a homeless bill of rights. Such homeless bill of rights shall include information regarding the rights of individuals and families experiencing homelessness and services available for such people, including:

1. The right to shelter;
2. Access to legal services;
3. The right to request an interpreter and to have documents translated into other languages when interacting with city agencies;
4. Educational options for children experiencing homelessness;
5. Voting rights, voter registration and how to find polling places;
6. How to file a complaint and protections against retaliation for filing complaints;

7. Housing and financial assistance;

8. Protections against discrimination;

9. The right to request accommodations for disabilities;

10. Rights of individuals in shelters, including to:

(a) Meet privately with advocates and legal representatives;

(b) Leave and return to the shelter outside of curfew hours and request early and late passes;

(c) Participate in recreational activities;

(d) Be placed in a room with a person who identifies as the same gender;

(e) A private room with a lock for families experiencing homelessness;

(f) A secure locker for single adults experiencing homelessness;

(g) Access to bathrooms;

(h) Access to washing machines and dryers or to money for laundry;

(i) Access to space and equipment to bathe and change babies and small children; and

(j) Meals and accommodations for dietary needs and restrictions; and

11. Any other information the department deems appropriate.

c. No later than 90 days after the effective date of the local law that added this section, such homeless bill of rights shall be made available on the department's website in each of the designated citywide languages, as defined in section 23-1101, and copies shall be provided to each agency office, as defined in section 21-190, and each shelter for distribution to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The department shall update such bill of rights to reflect any changes in law or procedure.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

Session 12

NAB

LS #3740/4164

2/17/22

Session 11

NAB

LS #13295/14048