



Legislation Text

File #: Int 0400-2022, Version: *

Int. No. 400

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A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to establishing a warming centers program

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 1 of title 17 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 17-199.19 to read as follows:

§ 17-199.19 Warming centers program. a. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Age group. The term “age group” means the range of ages of the visitors, as determined by the department.

Code blue alert. The term “code blue alert” means a weather emergency notice that the city issues when the temperature is 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below.

Visitor. The term “visitor” means an individual who visits a warming center.

Vulnerable population. The term “vulnerable population” means a group of persons in the city who are more sensitive to, or at a greater health risk, than the general population from the conditions of a cold blue alert.

b. Program established. The commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of emergency management, shall establish a warming centers program to provide accessible spaces in each borough for the public to obtain refuge during a code blue alert. As part of such program, the commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of emergency management, shall do the following:

1. Create a list of at least 10 locations in each borough to be used as warming centers, based on criteria, including, but not limited to, the areas where vulnerable populations reside and the areas most accessible to such populations;

2. Identify and coordinate the details of such centers, including, but not limited to, the hours of operation, the amenities offered to visitors, the staff at such centers and staff training;

3. Provide culturally appropriate electronic and non-electronic notification in advance of the opening of such centers to individuals, including, but not limited to, prior visitors, those in vulnerable populations and those who lack internet access;

4. During a code blue alert, operate at least two warming centers in each borough from the list required by paragraph 1 of this subdivision, operating additional centers based on demand and other factors that the commissioner determines by rule; and

5. At least annually survey the visitors regarding the warming centers and utilize the results of such survey to improve such program and centers.

c. Outreach. The commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of emergency management, shall conduct culturally appropriate outreach on the warming centers program established by subdivision b of this section to create awareness of such program and the opening of such centers. Such outreach shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. Creating a page about the program established by subdivision b of this section on the department website and the office of emergency management website, which shall provide information, including, but not limited to, the hours of operation and the location of the warming centers that the department operates;

2. Collaborating with churches, community-based organizations and government stakeholders, particularly those that serve vulnerable populations and populations who lack internet access, to enhance awareness of the warming centers; and

3. Posting information on relevant government websites and in public spaces, including, but not limited

to, community centers, New York city housing authority buildings, public libraries and senior centers, which shall be made available in the designated citywide languages as defined in section 23-1101.

d. Reporting. No later than one year after the effective date of the local law that added this section, and annually thereafter, the commissioner shall report on the warming centers program required by subdivision b of this section to the mayor and the speaker of the council and post such report on the department's website. Such annual reports shall include, but not be limited to, the following anonymized information:

1. The list of warming centers required by paragraph 1 of subdivision b of this section, and a description of the criteria that the department considered in creating such list;

2. The total number of warming centers that the department operated;

3. The total number of visitors;

4. A list of each warming center that the department operated, with each separate row of such list referencing a unique warming center and providing the following information about such center set forth in separate columns:

(a) The name of such center;

(b) The zip code and borough in which such center operated;

(c) The type of space in which such center was located, including, but not limited to, a community center, a public library, a New York city housing authority building or a senior center;

(d) The number of days and the number of hours per day that such center operated;

(e) The number of staff in such center;

(f) The number of visitors; and

(i) The age group and the zip code of each such visitor;

5. A description of the results of the visitors' survey required by paragraph 5 of subdivision b of this section and how such results were used to improve such centers;

6. An explanation as to why the department operated more than two such centers in a borough pursuant

to subdivision b of this section, if applicable;

7. A comparison of the utilization of such centers in the current reporting period to the prior reporting period; and

8. An evaluation of the outreach required by subdivision c of this section, including, but not limited to, recommendations to improve such outreach, recommendations to improve utilization of such centers and an estimate of any resources to implement such recommendations.

§ 2. This local law takes effect 120 days after it becomes law, except that the commissioner of health and mental hygiene shall take such measures as are necessary for the implementation of this local law, including the promulgation of rules, before such date.

NLB
LS #7273
5/2/2022