



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 522

By Council Members Bottcher, Ayala, Rivera, Ossé, Hanif, Abreu, Brewer, Louis, Ung, Gutiérrez, Won, Brooks-Powers, Hudson, Nurse, Joseph, Williams, Krishnan, Holden, Schulman, Velázquez, Gennaro, Narcisse, De La Rosa, Restler, Riley, Stevens, Moya, Sanchez, Menin, Marte, Dinowitz, Cabán, Powers, Avilés, Salamanca, Farias, Brannan and Paladino

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to requiring mental health professionals in families with children shelters

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 21-328 to read as follows:

§ 21-328 Mental health professionals in families with children shelters. a. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Adult. The term “adult” means any person who is 18 years of age or older.

Child. The term “child” means a person under 21 years of age.

Families with children shelter. The term “families with children shelter” means temporary emergency housing provided to homeless families with children by the department or by a provider under contract or similar agreement with the department.

Family with children. The term “family with children” means a family with at least one adult and one child, a couple including at least one pregnant individual, a single pregnant individual or a parent or grandparent with a pregnant individual.

Mental health professional. The term “mental health professional” includes, but is not limited to, the following types of mental health professionals licensed to practice in New York state: a licensed clinical social

worker, a psychiatric nurse practitioner, a psychiatrist or a psychologist.

Mental health services. The term “mental health services” includes, but is not limited to, (i) providing psychotherapy services, (ii) providing psychiatric assessments to diagnose mental illness, conduct diagnosis follow-up or coordinate clinical treatment plans, (iii) liaising with or providing referrals to emergency medical or psychiatric care providers or (iv) providing medication management.

Operator. The term “operator” means an entity that enters into a contract with the department to provide families with children shelter.

b. Provision of mental health professionals. Subject to appropriation, mental health professionals shall be available in each families with children shelter to provide on-site mental health services. The department shall maintain a ratio of at least one full-time mental health professional for up to every 50 families with children. The department shall consult with operators in determining the types of mental health professionals providing mental health services to families with children.

c. Report. No later than one year after the effective date of the local law that added this section, and annually thereafter, the department shall submit to the mayor and the speaker of the council and post on its website a report regarding mental health professionals in families with children shelters as required by subdivision b of this section. Such report shall include, but not be limited to, the following information for the preceding calendar year for each families with children shelter:

1. The number of families with children served by such shelter;
2. The number of families with children served by such shelter receiving mental health services;
3. The number of mental health professionals providing mental health services to families with children;
4. A description of the types of mental health professionals providing mental health services to families with children;

5. A description of the mental health services provided to families with children, including, but not limited to, the types of mental health services; and

6. The average caseload of mental health professionals providing mental health services to families with children.

d. No information that is required to be reported pursuant to this section shall be reported in a manner that would violate any applicable provision of federal, state or local law relating to the privacy of information respecting individuals in shelter.

§ 2. This local law takes effect 180 days after it becomes law, except that the commissioner of homeless services shall take such measures as are necessary for the implementation of this local law, including the promulgation of rules, before such date.

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