



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 627

By the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams) and Council Members Won and Restler

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to the establishment of a home sharing program for homeless individuals and reporting in relation thereto

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 1 of title 21 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 21-148 to read as follows:

§ 21-148 Home sharing program for homeless individuals. a. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

City-administered facilities. The term “city-administered facilities” has the meaning ascribed to such term in paragraph 4 of subdivision a of section 3-113.

Guest. The term “guest” means a homeless individual who occupies a spare private bedroom and the common living spaces in the home of a host in exchange for rent, companionship and/or assistance with household duties.

Homeless individual. The term “homeless individual” means a street homeless individual or an individual utilizing city-administered facilities.

Host. The term “host” means a leaseholder or homeowner who shares their home and resides with a guest.

Program. The term “program” means the program established pursuant to this section that houses guests in the homes of hosts to provide homeless individuals with housing and transition them from homelessness.

Relevant agencies. The term “relevant agencies” means the department of housing preservation and

development, the department for the aging, the department for youth and community development and any other agency that the commissioner deems to be a relevant agency.

Street homeless individual. The term “street homeless individual” means an individual who:

1. Lives on the street or in a place not meant for human habitation; or

2. Receives services from the department because such individual is or was living on the street or in a place not meant for human habitation.

b. Program established. No more than 180 days after the effective date of the local law that added this section, the commissioner shall establish a program to house homeless individuals in shared living arrangements with hosts. The commissioner shall determine and implement the following, in consultation with relevant agencies:

1. The program’s staffing;

2. The eligibility criteria for the hosts and guests, including, but not limited to, any age requirements for the hosts and guests and requiring compliance with the host’s lease and all applicable laws;

3. The process to select the hosts and guests, including, but not limited to, applications, screenings and interviews;

4. The process to match the hosts and guests;

5. The move-in process, including, but not limited to, meetings to acquaint the matched host and guest, a home safety check to assess the safety of the host’s home and a home share agreement to establish the agreed-upon terms and details of the home sharing arrangement;

6. The measures to protect the confidentiality of the information that the hosts and guests provide to participate in the program, including, but not limited to, anonymization;

7. The services provided to the hosts and guests, including, but not limited to, mediation and conflict resolution to resolve disputes between the hosts and guests, social services assistance and home visits;

8. The host’s responsibilities, including, but not limited to, providing a habitable living accommodation;

and

9. The guest's responsibilities, including, but not limited to, timely paying rent to the host, providing the host with companionship and/or performing household duties.

c. Program outreach. Beginning no more than 150 days after the effective date of the local law that added this section, and continuing thereafter, the commissioner, in collaboration with relevant agencies, shall conduct culturally appropriate outreach on the program in the designated citywide languages, as defined in section 23-1101. Such outreach shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. The department and relevant agencies posting information on their respective websites, advertising the program in public spaces and promoting the program to government, stakeholders, staff and clients; and

2. City-administered facilities posting information about the program in a conspicuous location accessible to all individuals utilizing such facility.

d. Reporting. Beginning one year after the effective date of the local law that added this section, and continuing annually thereafter, the commissioner shall submit a report on the program to the mayor, the speaker of the council and the public advocate, which the commissioner shall post on the department website. Such report shall be anonymized and include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. The number of host and guest applications, screenings, interviews and matches;

2. The percentage of matches that result in a shared living arrangement;

3. The guests' average length of stay;

4. A description of the program outreach efforts;

5. A description of the services provided to the hosts and guests;

6. Anonymous feedback from program staff, hosts and guests;

7. A description of the challenges with the program and the efforts made to address such challenges; and

8. Recommendations to expand and improve the program.

e. The commissioner shall promulgate rules necessary and appropriate to the administration of this

section.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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