



Legislation Text

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File #: Int 0749-2024, Version: A

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Int. No. 749-A

By Council Members Gutiérrez, Won, Schulman, Marte, Krishnan, Restler, Cabán, Hudson, Rivera, Nurse, Ayala, Ossé, Brooks-Powers, Abreu, De La Rosa, Williams, Avilés, Hanif, Louis, Sanchez, Feliz, Joseph, Fariás, Dinowitz and Bottcher (in conjunction with the Brooklyn Borough President)

A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to the designation of an office or agency as responsible for assisting residents displaced by an emergency

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 1 of the New York city charter is amended by adding a new section 20-r to read as follows:

§ 20-r. Residential displacement remediation. a. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the term “qualifying event” means a residential fire, a natural disaster, or an emergency that impacts a residential building and results in the displacement of residents, including, but not limited to, a building collapse or a gas explosion.

b. The mayor shall designate an agency or office to provide centralized support to residents displaced by qualifying events. The provision of such centralized support shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Providing information on city, state, federal, and not-for-profit services available to residents displaced by a qualifying event;

2. Developing services to facilitate the provision of centralized support for residents displaced by qualifying events;

3. Responding to inquiries and requests for assistance submitted by residents displaced by a qualifying event;

4. Serving as a point of contact for residents displaced by a qualifying event, including identifying the

relevant agency, and monitoring and facilitating communication between such agency and such resident, for a given inquiry or concern related to such resident's displacement or need for assistance;

5. Maintaining a record of inquiries and requests for assistance submitted by residents and a record of the response of the agency or office designated pursuant to this subdivision and of any relevant agencies to such inquiries or requests for assistance; and

6. Gathering and maintaining the contact information, including, but not limited to, the phone numbers or email addresses, of residents displaced by a qualifying event.

c. The agency or office designated pursuant to subdivision b of this section shall establish an email address and telephone number to receive communications from residents displaced by qualifying events. Such email address and telephone number shall be posted online. The agency or office shall be available by both email and telephone to communicate, as described in this section, with such residents between at least the hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. every day in the year except Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. The agency or office shall, in response to inquiries submitted by residents displaced by qualifying events, provide information that may include but need not be limited to:

1. The applicable timeline of services and deadlines following a qualifying event;

2. The status of relevant agency inspections;

3. The status of relevant vacate orders, such as whether a vacate order has been rescinded;

4. The status of permit applications filed by the owner of a relevant building;

5. Whether the owner of a building subject to a vacate order has requested permission from the relevant agency that residents be permitted to return to such building for the purpose of collecting personal artifacts, and, if applicable, whether the relevant agency has granted such permission;

6. Information about assistance offered by not-for-profit organizations or city, state, and federal agencies to residents displaced by a qualifying event, including information about the emergency housing services provided by the department of housing preservation and development; and

7. A summary of relevant agencies and their roles following a qualifying event.

d. Upon the rescission of a vacate order associated with a qualifying event by the commissioner of buildings, the commissioner of housing preservation and development, or the commissioner of any other relevant agency, the agency or office designated pursuant to subdivision b of this section shall provide notice of the rescission of such vacate order to the community board, borough president, and council member representing the district where the qualifying event occurred, and, by email, text message, or phone call, if such contact information is known, to the residents displaced by the qualifying event that gave rise to the vacate order.

e. The agency or office designated by the mayor pursuant to subdivision b of this section shall work in consultation with the commissioner of buildings, the commissioner of housing preservation and development, the commissioner of environmental protection, the fire commissioner, and any other relevant agency to fulfill the requirements of this section.

§ 2. This local law takes effect 270 days after it becomes law, except that any affected agency or office may take any steps necessary for the implementation of this local law before such effective date.

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LS #10953/14692  
7/2/2025 11:45 PM