

**LOCAL LAWS
OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK
FOR THE YEAR 2025**

No. 128

Introduced by Council Members Powers, Vernikov, Holden, Carr, Brannan, Hanks, Restler, Avilés, Abreu, Banks, Ossé, Salaam, Gennaro, Brooks-Powers, Nurse, Stevens, Hudson, Joseph, Krishnan, Brewer, Won, Narcisse, Hanif, Schulman, Ayala, Bottcher, Menin, Rivera, Williams, Cabán, Marte, De La Rosa, Ung, Louis, Salamanca, Sanchez, Farías, Lee, Zhuang, Riley, Moya, Feliz, Dinowitz, Gutiérrez, Morano and the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams).

A LOCAL LAW

To amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to cooling centers

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Section 30-116 of the administrative code of the city of New York, as added by local law number 85 for the year 2020, is amended to read as follows:

§ 30-116 [Comprehensive cooling and communication plan] *Cooling center program.* a.

Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Cooling center. The term “cooling center” means [any facility] *a building* that is [designated by the city to provide] air-conditioned [relief to] *where members of* the public [whenever a National Weather Service heat advisory triggers a citywide emergency response] *may seek relief from heat during a heat-related emergency, provided the owner or operator of such building has provided consent.*

Heat index. The term “heat index” means a measurement of the combined air temperature and relative humidity that estimates the human-perceived equivalent temperature.

Heat vulnerability index. The term “heat vulnerability index” means a tool used by the department of health and mental hygiene to identify neighborhoods where residents have an increased risk of negative impacts from heat-related emergencies or other extreme heat events, considering environmental and social factors such as surface temperatures, access to green spaces, and air-conditioned buildings.

Heat-related emergency. The term “heat-related emergency” means [a circumstance during which the National Weather Service issues its heat advisory products] an occurrence of high temperatures or other circumstances during which the national weather service issues a warning or alert relating to extreme heat, or during which the commissioner of health and mental hygiene determines that the level of the heat index is [deemed to be] unsafe or unhealthy for vulnerable populations[, as determined by the commissioner of health and mental hygiene].

Urban heat island effect. The term “urban heat island effect” means the increase in urban air temperature as compared to surrounding suburban and rural temperature.

Vulnerable population. The term “vulnerable population” means any group of persons at a greater risk of harm from a heat-related emergency than a person in the general population, as determined by the commissioner of health and mental hygiene in consideration of factors including, but not limited to, the heat vulnerability index.

b. The commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of health and mental hygiene, shall designate cooling centers when there is a heat-related emergency in the city. A cooling center designated pursuant to this section shall contain seating, provide access to restrooms and drinking water at no cost to the public, and shall be staffed by no less than 1 natural person during hours such cooling center is open to the public. In determining the locations of such centers, the commissioner shall consider factors including, but not limited to, areas in which vulnerable

populations reside and the heat vulnerability index. Where practicable, the commissioner, in consultation with the commissioner of health and mental hygiene, shall designate no less than 7 cooling centers per 100,000 residents.

c. The commissioner shall post on the website of the office any health alerts issued by the office or the department of health and mental hygiene during a heat-related emergency, and the location and hours of operation of any cooling center open during such heat-related emergency. The commissioner shall post such information on or before May 1 of each year, and make such information available in the designated citywide languages, as defined in section 23-1101.

d. Comprehensive cooling and communication plan. On or before [every] May 15, [beginning in 2021] 2026, the commissioner [of emergency management], in consultation with the commissioner of health and mental hygiene, the director of long-term planning and sustainability, and any other office or agency [they deem] the commissioner deems relevant, shall submit to the speaker of the council and make available to the public on the city's website a plan describing how the city will provide individuals with information on the dangers of heat exposure, access to cooling, including [the city's] cooling centers designated pursuant to this section, and how vulnerable populations can stay cool during heat-related emergencies. The commissioner shall update such plan by no later than May 15 of each year. Such plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- 1. a mechanism to assess the city's cooling needs generally and the cooling needs of vulnerable populations during heat-related emergencies;*

- 2. a description of how the commissioner [of emergency management] and the commissioner of health and mental hygiene will communicate to residents the dangers of heat exposure, including*

information about the urban heat island effect, the heat index, heat-related emergencies and other relevant information pursuant to this section;

3. a description of the temperature, heat index and other conditions under which the city will make cooling centers and other heat relief mechanisms available to the public;

4. information regarding access to cooling centers *designated pursuant to this section* and other heat relief mechanisms including: (a) whether such cooling centers can be safely opened; (b) the feasibility of infection and disease control in such centers, including a description of any necessary procedures to promote infection and disease control and any appropriate cleaning, if applicable; (c) a list of potential locations of cooling centers by street address, cross streets, and ZIP code; (d) the potential hours of operations, maximum capacity, and accessibility for individuals with disabilities for each such center; (e) the link to the cooling center finder which also includes notation of which cooling centers are accessible; and (f) other citywide operational strategies for cooling such as spray caps and homeless outreach;

5. a description of [how the commissioner of emergency management and the commissioner of health and mental hygiene will communicate the information in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this subdivision to residents on or before June 1 of each year] *the public education campaign required by subdivision e of this section*;

6. if cooling centers are not expected to be open or if they will be insufficient to serve the needs of vulnerable populations, a description of how the city will provide such vulnerable populations with cooling during a heat-related emergency, including but not limited to the direct provision of, and support for, residential cooling mechanisms, and a description of how the commissioner [of emergency management] will communicate this information to vulnerable populations;

7. a description of how the commissioner [of emergency management] and the commissioner of health and mental hygiene, or any other office or agency [they deem relevant], will provide public communications, written or otherwise, in the designated citywide languages, as defined in section 23-1101, and whether communications in any additional languages are needed based on the demographics of current or anticipated vulnerable populations;

8. an evaluation of the measures taken to reduce the impact of heat-related emergencies and the number of heat-related deaths during the previous summer seasons and a description of the measures the commissioner [of emergency management] and the commissioner of health and mental hygiene will take to further reduce the impact of heat-related emergencies and the number of heat-related deaths in the upcoming summer season; and

9. a plan for office buildings to set thermostats at or above a specific temperature to reduce stress on the electric grid, including a description of the heat conditions during which such a plan would be recommended, a recommendation on the temperature or temperatures to which such thermostats should be set, and a description of how to promote compliance with such plan when recommended.

[c. The commissioner of emergency management and the commissioner of health and mental hygiene shall update the plan described in subdivision b of this section by May 15 of each year.]

e. Public education and outreach campaign. The office, in consultation with the department of health and mental hygiene, shall conduct a public education and outreach campaign on heat-related emergencies and strategies for preventing health risks associated with heat-related emergencies. Such public education and outreach campaign shall include, but need not be limited to, encouraging vulnerable populations to limit exposure to heat and to remain inside a building that is air-conditioned during heat-related emergencies, and conducting outreach in

neighborhoods or areas of the city where vulnerable populations reside. Such public education and outreach campaign shall provide information about how to submit feedback about a cooling center, including any obstacles to accessing such cooling center.

f. The office shall provide an owner or operator of a building designated as a cooling center with a flyer or other written notice stating that such building is a cooling center and direct or request the owner or operator to post such flyer or notice near an entrance to such cooling center during a heat-related emergency. Such flyer or other written notice shall be provided in the designated citywide languages, as defined in section 23-1101, and shall include information about how to submit feedback about a cooling center, including any obstacles to accessing such cooling center.

g. On or before December 31, 2026, and on or before December 31 of each year thereafter, the department shall submit a report to the speaker of the council and the mayor about the efforts of the office to inform the public about the availability of and benefits provided by cooling centers during the prior year. Such report shall include, but need not be limited to, the following information:

1. The median number of cooling centers made available during any heat-related emergency that occurred during the prior year;

2. A discussion of any outreach to the public by the office or the department of health and mental hygiene regarding health hazards posed by heat-related emergencies and the need to limit exposure to heat;

3. A description of any initiatives of the office or the department of health and mental hygiene to inform the public about the availability of cooling centers or other options for avoiding heat;

4. A discussion of public awareness of the availability of cooling centers, and any recommendations for new programs or strategies to improve public outreach and the utilization of cooling centers;

5. Recommendations for increasing hours of operation of cooling centers during the evening and on weekends; and

6. An estimate of any additional resources needed to implement any such recommendations, and a description of any obstacles to implementing such recommendations.

§ 2. This local law takes effect 60 days after it becomes law.

THE CITY OF NEW YORK, OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK, s.s.:

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a local law of The City of New York, passed by the Council on August 14, 2025 and returned unsigned by the Mayor on September 15, 2025.

ALISA FUENTES, Acting City Clerk, Acting Clerk of the Council.

CERTIFICATION OF CORPORATION COUNSEL

I hereby certify that the form of the enclosed local law (Local Law No. 128 of 2025, Council Int. No. 998-A of 2024) to be filed with the Secretary of State contains the correct text of the local law passed by the New York City Council, presented to the Mayor, and neither approved nor disapproved within thirty days thereafter.

SPENCER FISHER, Acting Corporation Counsel.