



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 2131

By Council Members Rosenthal, Kallos, Cornegy and Yeger

A Local Law in relation to establishing a working group, feasibility study and pilot program on using community locations to provide domestic violence survivors access to the internet

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. a. Definitions. For the purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Community-based domestic violence organization. The term “community-based domestic violence organization” means an organization that works with domestic violence survivors who are homeless, English language learners, immigrants, individuals with disabilities or Black, indigenous or people of color.

Director. The term “director” means the director of the office.

Domestic violence survivor. The term “domestic violence survivor” means any individual who is covered by the term “victim of domestic violence” as defined in section 459-a of the social services law.

Office. The term “office” means the office to end domestic and gender-based violence.

Working group. The term “working group” means the domestic violence survivors internet access working group established pursuant to this section.

b. Domestic violence survivors internet access working group. 1. By November 30, 2020, there shall be a domestic violence survivors internet access working group. The working group shall conduct the feasibility study and pilot program and prepare the reports required by this section regarding using locations in the community to provide domestic violence survivors access to the internet.

2. The working group shall consist of seven members: the director, or the designee thereof; and six

members who represent community-based domestic violence organizations. The director shall appoint the six such members who shall provide domestic violence survivor-centered input and assist with the feasibility study, pilot program and reports. The director shall also facilitate the working group.

3. Each member shall serve at the pleasure of the officer who appointed the member. In the event of a vacancy in membership, a successor shall be selected in the same manner as the original selection for the remainder of the unexpired term. All members shall serve without compensation.

4. The director shall convene the first meeting of the working group no later than 30 days after the working group is established, except that where not all members have been selected within the time specified in this subdivision, the director shall convene the first meeting within 10 days of the appointment of a quorum.

5. The working group shall meet at least monthly during the feasibility study and pilot program to carry out the duties described in this section. Such meeting requirement shall be suspended once the working group submits the pilot program final report required by subdivision f.

c. Feasibility study and report. By January 31, 2021, the working group shall conduct a feasibility study to assess and determine the details of a pilot program to use locations in the community to provide domestic violence survivors access to the internet. The working group shall issue a report on such study, which the director shall submit to the mayor and speaker of the council and post on the office's website. Such study and report shall include, but need not be limited to:

1. The pilot program's design, including, but not limited to, the scope, the staffing and the rationale for such design;

2. Participation in the pilot programs, including, but not limited to, the criteria to participate and the number of participants;

3. The plan to ensure the safety of the participants, the pilot program site staff and the public, including, but not limited to, ensuring the computers and internet access are secure and confidential;

4. The plan to support the participants in using the computers and internet, including, but not limited to,

technical support and training;

5. The plan to administer and conduct outreach on the pilot program in a culturally appropriate manner;

and

6. The metrics to evaluate the pilot program.

d. Pilot program. 1. By March 1, 2021, the director shall establish a two-year pilot program, in no fewer than two boroughs, to use locations in the community to provide domestic violence survivors access to the internet. Such pilot program shall be informed by the recommendations in the feasibility study report required by subdivision c and established in consultation with the working group.

2. Prior to the establishment of the pilot program, and continuing thereafter, the working group and relevant agencies shall conduct culturally appropriate outreach on such program. Such outreach shall include, but need not be limited to, creating written materials, which shall be posted online and made available, as appropriate, at the pilot program sites, family justice centers and other locations in the designated citywide languages, as defined in section 23-1101 of the administrative code of the city of New York.

e. Pilot program progress report. By March 1, 2022, the working group shall issue a progress report on the pilot program, which the director shall submit to the mayor and speaker of the council and post on the office's website. The report shall include, but need not be limited to, the following, disaggregated by pilot program site:

1. The number of participants;

2. A description of the information and services that the participants accessed;

3. Anonymous feedback from the pilot program site participants and staff; and

4. A description of the implementation challenges and the efforts to address such challenges.

f. Pilot program final report. No later than June 30, 2023, the working group shall issue a final report on the pilot program, which the director shall submit to the mayor and speaker of the council and post on the office's website. The report shall include, but need not be limited to:

1. The information in the pilot program progress report required by subdivision e, updated for the final report;

2. A description of the barriers that impede participants from using the internet in their daily lives, including, but not limited to, cost, safety, lack of technical support, lack of training and lack of locations to access it;

3. Recommendations for improving domestic violence survivors' access to the internet, including the pilot program required by subdivision d; and

4. The cost of the pilot program and its potential expansion.

g. The working group shall terminate 180 days after the date on which it submits such final report.

h. The reports required by this section shall not contain personally identifiable information of any participant in a study or program conducted pursuant to this section.

i. Nothing in this section or the administration or application thereof shall be construed to create a private right of action on the part of any person or entity against the city or any agency, official or employee thereof.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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