



Legislation Text

File #: Int 1209-2018, Version: A

Int. No. 1209-A

By Council Members Rosenthal, Ampry-Samuel, Cornegy, Ayala, Yeger, Lander, Gennaro, Gibson, Cumbo, Koslowitz, Rivera, Brooks-Powers, Riley, Louis and Barron

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to requiring the department of correction to utilize doula services

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 1 of title 9 of the administrative code of the city of New York is amended by adding a new section 9-161 to read as follows:

§ 9-161 Doula services. a. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the term “doula” means a trained person who provides continuous physical, emotional and informational support to a pregnant person and the family before, during or shortly after childbirth, for the purpose of assisting a pregnant person through the birth experience; or a trained person who supports the family of a newborn during the first days and weeks after childbirth, providing evidence-based information, practical help and advice to the family on newborn care, self-care and nurturing of the new family unit.

b. The department shall retain an organization to make at least two doulas at any given time available to provide doula services twice a week, for four hours, at all department facilities that house incarcerated persons who identify as female, as well as to provide doula services during labor and delivery, upon request.

c. The department shall ensure that doula services are available at a frequency to be determined by factors including available department resources and exigent circumstances. The department shall permit doulas to access the nursery, as defined in section 9-142, to access areas where programming is typically provided and to accompany incarcerated individuals to medical appointments, upon request. All known pregnant individuals

in the custody of the department are permitted to utilize doula services in labor, delivery and postpartum rooms. Prior to their entry into a departmental facility, doulas shall be subject to the department's service provider processing security clearance protocol.

d. No later than January 15, 2023 and every six months thereafter, the department shall provide to the speaker of the council and publish on its website, in a machine readable format, a report on the number of doula service hours provided, the types of services provided, and the number of incarcerated individuals served in the previous six month period.

e. No later than January 31, 2023, the commissioner of correction shall convene a working group composed of the speaker of the city council or the speaker's designee; commissioner of correction or the commissioner's designee; representatives from the department of health and mental hygiene; representatives from the organization providing doula services pursuant to subdivision b of this section; and department staff who regularly work on programming for incarcerated persons who identify as female. Until August 31, 2029, the working group shall meet every six months to review the reports required by subdivision d of this section, review relevant reports issued by the organization providing doula services, consider any reports issued by city agencies regarding maternal health and discuss improving communication, collaboration and efficiency related to pregnant individuals in custody. After September 1, 2029, the working group shall meet at least once a year to review relevant the reports required by subdivision d of this section, review relevant reports issued by the organization providing doula services, consider any reports issued by city agencies regarding maternal health and discuss improving communication, collaboration and efficiency related to pregnant individuals in custody.

§ 2. This local law takes effect 120 days after it becomes law.

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8/18/21 10:51pm