



Legislation Text

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Proposed Int. No. 534-A

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A Local Law in relation to establishing a program to assist with changing door locks on the dwellings of survivors of domestic and gender-based violence

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 organization. The term “community-based organization” means a non-profit organization that provides services to survivors of domestic violence or gender-based violence regardless of language spoken, gender identity, sexual orientation, criminal history, or immigration status.

Designated organizations. The term “designated organizations” means 5 or more community-based organizations, which the director designates to administer with the program and supervise survivor advocates.

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

Domestic violence. The term “domestic violence” has the same meaning as such term is defined in section 8-102 or as such term is defined in section 459-a of the social services law.

Dwelling. The term “dwelling” means any building or structure or portion thereof that is occupied in whole or in part as a home, residence, or sleeping place of one or more human beings.

Eligible household. The term “eligible household” means a household that meets the following criteria:

1. Includes a survivor of domestic or gender-based violence whose status is established by a self-attestation, documentation from an agency or community-based organization, or an order of a court of

competent jurisdiction;

2. A resident of the city of New York; and

3. Any other criteria deemed appropriate by the office to further the purposes of the program, except that, to the extent allowed under applicable law, such criteria shall not relate to an individual's consumer credit history, criminal history, or immigration status.

Gender-based violence. The term “gender-based violence” means acts or threats of violence directed against a person because of their gender or perceived gender, including, but not limited to, family violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence, sex or labor trafficking, elder abuse, and stalking.

Lock change service. The term “lock change service” means the provision of new locks and keys for the doors of an eligible household.

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

Owner. The term “owner” means the owner of a dwelling.

Program. The term “program” means the program established by subdivision b of this section.

Program participant. The term “program participant” means an eligible household that a designated organization selects to participate in the program.

Relevant agencies. The term “relevant agencies” means the center for innovation through data intelligence, the department of housing preservation and development, the department of social services, the mayor's office of data analytics, any successor of an agency specified in this definition, and any other agency that the director deems relevant.

Support service. The term “support service” means a social service that a survivor advocate connects a program participant to during the program, including, but not limited to, counseling services, housing services, safety planning and legal services.

Survivor. The term “survivor” means a person who has experienced or reported domestic or gender-

based violence.

Survivor advocate. The term “survivor advocate” means a non-attorney advocate employed and supervised by a designated organization who provides information and support to a program participant in connection with a lock change service and connecting a program participant to any support services.

b. Program established. 1. Subject to appropriation, the office shall establish a trauma-informed program that provides connection to support services to eligible survivors, and where permitted by applicable law, may provide a lock change service for the dwellings of eligible survivors.

2. The director shall administer such program and coordinate the following:

- (a) Establishing a list of qualified designated organizations to implement the program;
- (b) The application for such program, which shall be made available on the office’s website; and
- (c) The connection to supportive services for program participants.

c. Report. No later than 1 year after the office establishes the program required by subdivision b of this section, the director shall issue a report on such program to the mayor and speaker of the council and post such report on the office’s website. The information in such report shall be anonymized and include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. The number of households participating in such program and the zip code of and primary language spoken in each such household;

2. A description of the impact, if any, that the survivor advocates, lock change services, and support services had on the program participants;

3. A description of any challenges the office had in implementing such program and any efforts the office took to address such challenges; and

4. Any recommendations on how to improve the program.

d. Privacy. No information that is required to be reported pursuant to subdivision c of this section shall

be reported if doing so would violate any applicable provision of federal, state, or local law relating to the privacy, confidentiality, use, or disclosure of such information. If a category contains between 1 to 9 households, or allows another category to be narrowed to be between 1 to 9 households, the number shall be replaced with a symbol. A category that contains zero shall be reported as zero.

e. Data sharing. Relevant agencies shall share relevant data regarding the program participants with the office as permitted by applicable laws.

f. Owner liability. Nothing in this section shall be construed to create a cause of action against an owner of a dwelling or lock change services provider.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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