



Legislation Text

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Int. No. 726

By Council Members Abreu, Restler, Banks and Cabán

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to the commissioner of homeless services coordinating with hospitals to distribute informational materials on certain weather events to patients and make services directly available to discharged patients during such events

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 3 of title 21 is amended by adding a new section 21-335 to read as follows:

§ 21-335 Coordination with hospitals for awareness and service provision in connection with weather events. a. Definitions. For purposes of this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Code blue alert. The term “code blue alert” means a weather emergency notice that the city issues when the temperature, including wind chill, is forecasted to reach 32 degrees Fahrenheit or below between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

Code red alert. The term “code red alert” means a weather emergency notice that the city issues when the temperature is forecasted to reach at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 1 day, at least 95 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 2 consecutive days, at least 105 degrees Fahrenheit for any duration, or at least 95 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 4 consecutive days, between the hours of 12 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Cooling center. The term “cooling center” has the same meaning as set forth in section 30-116.

Drop-in center. The term “drop-in center” means a facility operated by the city or a provider under contract or similar agreement with the city that provides hot meals, showers, laundry facilities, clothing, medical care, recreational space, employment referrals, or housing placement services, but not overnight housing.

Shelter. The term “shelter” means temporary emergency housing provided by the city or a provider under contract or similar agreement with the city.

Warming center. The term “warming center” means an accessible space designated by the city for the public to obtain refuge during a code blue alert.

b. Development and distribution of written materials. 1. No later than 60 days after the effective date of the local law that added this section, the commissioner shall, in consultation with any agency head the commissioner deems relevant, develop flyers and pamphlets, and other written materials as deemed appropriate by the commissioner, containing information pertaining to a code blue alert and a code red alert. The commissioner shall update the content of such materials on a yearly basis to reflect any changes in law, rule, or agency practice or policy. Such materials shall include, but need not be limited to, the following information:

(a) Resources and services provided by the department and other agencies during a code blue alert and a code red alert to individuals experiencing homelessness, including but not limited to resources and services directed to such individuals discharged from hospitals during such alerts;

(b) Recommended hospital procedures during a code blue alert and a code red alert, in compliance with applicable laws and rules, including but not limited to procedures concerning the discharge of patients experiencing homelessness and the opening of designated spaces within hospitals for warming; and

(c) The department’s contact information and the contact information of any other agency deemed relevant by the commissioner, for purposes of hospitals and their patients obtaining additional information regarding department and other agency resources and services available during a code blue alert and a code red alert.

2. The commissioner shall develop an outreach program to provide the materials developed under paragraph 1 of this subdivision to:

(a) Hospitals located within the city that are not affiliated with the city, for distribution to patients at the discretion of such hospitals; and

(b) Hospitals operated by the New York city health and hospitals corporation, for distribution to patients at the discretion of the New York city health and hospitals corporation.

c. Making services available to discharged patients. 1. The commissioner shall make best efforts to coordinate during a code blue alert and a code red alert with hospitals located within the city that are not affiliated with the city and hospitals operated by the New York city health and hospitals corporation, in order to:

(a) Identify individuals experiencing homelessness who are being discharged from such hospitals;

(b) Engage with such individuals to assess what department resources and services they need; and

(c) Encourage the use of such resources and services by such individuals and directly make available such resources and services to such individuals.

2. Such resources and services shall include but need not be limited to direction to drop-in centers, shelters, warming centers, and cooling centers, including during any extended hours, and transportation to such locations.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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