

BILL NUMBER: S8557

SPONSOR: CARLUCCI

TITLE OF BILL:

An act to amend the mental hygiene law, in relation to reimbursement for certain costs and expenses related to the novel coronavirus, COVID-19

PURPOSE:

Authorizes voluntary providers of supports and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to bill and be reimbursed within thirty days of billing for novel coronavirus, COVID-19 related costs and expenses.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:

Section 1. The mental hygiene law is amended by adding a new section 13.44 to read as follows: § 13.44 Reimbursement costs and expenses related to novel coronavirus, COVID-19. OPWDD, DOH and division of the budget shall authorize voluntary providers of supports and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities to bill and be reimbursed within thirty days of billing for novel coronavirus, COVID-19 related costs and expenses, including, but not limited to, increased staffing and personal costs, personal protective equipment expenses, and increased residential cost.

Section 2: Effective Date.

JUSTIFICATION:

Voluntary not-for-profit residential service providers have been on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic working each day to ensure the safety of the individuals that they care for.'Since the start of the pandemic, these not-for-profit providers have had to obtain Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including masks, gowns, gloves, shields and other protective materials on their own without receiving any allocation of PPE from OPWDD and often facing roadblocks from county OEM's where provider agencies were not prioritized. Additionally, to ensure that providers had adequate staffing, many providers statewide had to provide "combat/hazard pay" for front line direct care and clinical staff, who serve and protect a vulnerable population, offering double and even triple pay to these brave DSPs, house managers and other essential staff as they serve a population often ill -equipped to self-distance or whom cannot tolerate wearing a mask. This legislation would facilitate the desperate need for cash flow to already beleaguered providers during this unprecedented time.

PRIOR LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

New Legislation.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

EFFECTIVE DATE:

Immediately.