

Health and Human Services

The Assembly Republican Conference offers the following legislation in hopes of strengthening our healthcare system and assisting those most in need:

Health

Freedom of Choice in Health Care Act – Ensures it is the policy of New York that its citizens can enter into private contracts with healthcare providers and purchase private healthcare coverage. In addition, the State cannot impose a penalty or fine against any New Yorker who chooses not to participate in any healthcare system or plan (**A.3896, Byrne**).

The New York State of Health Transparency Act – Mandates insurance companies participating in the New York State of Health Marketplace to share the following information to consumers in a clear manner for use in comparing plans, plan coverage, and plan premiums: healthcare practitioner availability, exclusions from coverage, medication deductible fees/payments, the specific price or percentage for co-pays, the availability of specific medications, the process of reversing a denial of a health plan decision, and details on out-of-network coverage (**A.3779, Byrne**).

“Emergency or Disaster Preparedness Act” – Requires the Health Department to submit a plan to establish regional step-down facilities to temporarily care for individuals who have been discharged from a hospital after receiving treatment for COVID-19, or any other sickness related to a pandemic, to a nursing home, adult care facility, or assisted living residence where such individual resides until it is safe for them to return (**A.3839, Byrne**).

Off-Label Drug Coverage – Prevents a pharmacy benefit manager from excluding coverage for an off-label use of a drug if the drug is recognized for treatment of the indication in one of the standard reference compendia in the medical literature or has been successfully used for treatment previously by the insured for the same indication (**A.3935, M. Miller**).

Mental Health Provider Waivers – Allows the Commissioners of the Office of Mental Health, the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, and the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities to waive rules and regulations of their respective offices to remove barriers to collaboration such as medical assistance reimbursement, service procedures, care coordination, and direct-care worker training (**A.3952, M. Miller**).

Developmental Disability Training For Medical Professionals – Requires that certain medical professionals complete a training program on the treatment of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities and chronic illness (**A.3983, M. Miller**).

Developmental Disability Transportation Study – Directs the Commissioner of Transportation, in consultation with the Commissioner of the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities, to conduct a statewide study and review of the transportation of individuals with developmental disabilities (**A.5543, Palmesano**).

Essential Group Home Aide – Provides the right for group home residents to designate an essential person who would be permitted to be present and provide aid to a resident at a group home with unrestricted access; provides for regular testing of such essential persons during COVID-19 (**A.6109, M. Miller**).

New York State Nursing Shortage Correction Act – Provides tuition assistance to individuals looking to become a nurse and who commit to working in New York for the same length of time as the degree or program takes to complete (**A.5080, Palmesano**).

Regents Physician Loan Forgiveness Program Expansion – Expands the Regents Physician Loan Forgiveness Program to include medical malpractice insurance rate relief to eligible physicians who practice in designated physician shortage areas (**A.5050, Palmesano**).

Interstate Medical Licensure Compact – Enacts the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact, provides a streamlined process that allows physicians to become licensed in multiple participating states, thereby enhancing the portability of a medical license and ensuring the safety of patients (**A.5540, Palmesano**).

Health Care Worker Peer Support Program – Provides grants to eligible entities for the purpose of establishing peer-to-peer mental health programs for healthcare workers (**A.3501, Ashby**).

Human Services

Unemployment Insurance Reform – Allows individuals to collect unemployment while working part time by reducing the amount of the unemployment benefit by 50 percent of the part-time earnings. This enables claimants to increase their overall net income by one-half of their part-time employment costs while reducing the cost of unemployment to the former employer by one-half of the part-time income (**A.4943, Goodell**).

Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) Appeals – Allows appeals to OTDA to be conducted by telephone or video conference (**A.4872, Goodell**).

Successful Participation in Employment or Training Opportunities by Welfare Recipients – Allows local social services districts, at their option, to immediately contact a welfare recipient who fails to comply with job training or work experience requirements, provide the recipient with a verbal notice of the failure to comply with a written confirmation letter (rather than a ten day written notice), and to immediately conduct a verbal conciliation effort to resolve any good faith issues needed to re-engage the recipient in job training or work experience with a minimum of delay (**A.4859, Goodell**).

Public Assistance Benefit Wanted Status – Requires the Division of Criminal Justice Services to check the wanted felon status of people applying for public assistance (**A.6352, Barclay**).