



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

EXECUTIVE ORDER 68

May 5, 2021

CREATION OF THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH

WHEREAS, over 1.6 million New Yorkers experience mental illness every year, with too many of them not having access to mental healthcare when they want or need it; and

WHEREAS, communities of color and low-income neighborhoods experience more mental health needs and lower rates of connection to community-based, ongoing care; and

WHEREAS, New York City aims to address long-standing inequities in mental health, in the face of decades of federal and state disinvestment and deinstitutionalization; and

WHEREAS New York City residents are experiencing profound mental health challenges and trauma during the COVID-19 pandemic, likely to persist for years; and

WHEREAS, mental health support can change, improve, and save people's lives; strengthen communities; prevent suffering; reduce the use of jail, shelter, and emergency medical services; and ensure that the youngest New Yorkers can make educational and developmental progress;

NOW, THEREFORE, by the power vested in me as Mayor of the City of New York, it is hereby ordered:

Section 1. The Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health (the "Office") is established to coordinate citywide policy to work towards the following goals:

- a. Connect more New Yorkers with mental health needs to treatment and promote equity in access to treatment; and
- b. Reduce the disparity between neighborhoods in the number of reported mental health emergencies and reduce the total number of mental health emergencies by addressing mental health needs before they become crises.

§ 2. The Office shall be headed by a director who will be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Mayor. The director shall be the chair of the Mental Health Council created by Executive Order No. 15, dated March 3, 2016, as amended by this Order.

§ 3. The Office shall:

a. Coordinate with other City efforts to reduce substance misuse and facilitate connections to services for substance use disorder.

b. Publish an annual report identifying critical gaps in care that are preventing New Yorkers with mental health needs from accessing and staying connected to care. To identify gaps, the Office should review existing data and research, conduct research as needed, and interview agency staff, community partners, mental health providers and other relevant experts.

c. Incubate innovative strategies to close these gaps in care by:

1. Evaluating proposals from City agencies and community-based organizations to implement innovative strategies to close these gaps in care;
2. Administering funding allocated to the Office to support and pilot these new programs; and
3. Publishing reach and impact data as well as program budgets on an Office website.

d. Maximize the promotion of mental health within and across City agencies by developing citywide policies and practices, and coordinate agencies to:

1. Effectively and equitably maximize mental health crisis prevention, intervention and stabilization practices;
2. Promote mental health screening;
3. Increase referrals to care;
4. Offer relevant training; and
5. Implement other strategies that promote mental health.

e. Eliminate barriers to care through engagement with under-served populations by:

1. Directly implementing strategic partnerships with City agencies and other entities; and
2. Disseminating resources to enhance mental health literacy and promote connections to care.

§ 4. The Director of the Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health shall coordinate with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, in a manner consistent with article 41 of the Mental Hygiene Law and chapter 22 of the New York City Charter, as needed to carry out the duties set forth in this Order.

§ 5. All City agencies are hereby directed to provide appropriate assistance, as requested by the Mayor's Office of Mental Health, to carry out its responsibilities under this Order.

§ 6. Section 1 of Executive Order No. 15, dated March 3, 2016, is amended to read as follows:

Section 1. Establishment of the Mental Health Council.

There is hereby established under the direction of the Office of the Mayor an interagency Mental Health Council (hereinafter the "Council").

a. The Council shall consist of one Chair and no fewer than twenty Council members, which Council members shall be City employees. One or more Honorary Members may be selected. The Chair of the New York City Community Services Board shall serve as an Honorary Member.

b. The Chair and all Council members, including Honorary Members, shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Mayor. The Chair, members and Honorary Members shall serve without compensation.

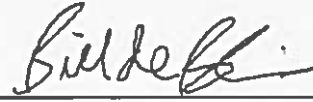
c. All Council members and the Chair shall have voting privileges. Honorary Members may not exercise voting rights.

d. Council membership shall include City office or agency Commissioners or their designees from agencies including, but not limited to, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Human Resources Administration, the Administration for Children's Services, the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice, and the Department for the Aging.

e. Representatives of the Department of Education and the New York City Health & Hospitals Corporation shall be invited to participate in the Council.

f. The Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall serve as a technical advisor for the Council.

§ 7. This Order shall take effect immediately.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill de Blasio", is written above a horizontal line.

Bill de Blasio,
MAYOR