

*An Act relative to fair pay for comparable work.*

SECTION 1. Chapter 6A of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:-

Section 105. (a) As used in this section, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

“human service provider,” a community-based human services organization with a human services program funded by the executive office of health and human services, the executive office of elder affairs, the department of housing and community development or the department of early education and care.

“human services worker,” an employee of a human service provider who provides treatment, support, or services to clients or their families.

“disparity amount,” the monetary calculation of the average difference in salary between human service workers and direct support workers or other comparable employees employed by the commonwealth’s state-operated programs for human services.

“rate,” the reimbursement rate paid by the executive office of health and human services, the executive office of elder affairs, the department of housing and community development or the department of early education and care to a human service provider to deliver services to clients on the commonwealth’s behalf.

(b) Notwithstanding and general or special law to the contrary, the executive office of health and human services, the executive office of elder affairs, the department of housing and community development or the department of early education and care shall increase the rate of reimbursement for human services providers by an amount that reduces the disparity amount, as defined by subsection (a), to:

- (1) 50 percent on or before July 1, 2021;
- (2) 35 percent on or before July 1, 2022;
- (3) 20 percent on or before July 1, 2023;
- (4) 5 percent on or before July 1, 2024; and
- (5) 0 percent on or before July 1, 2025, and shall remain at 0 percent thereafter.

(c) All increases in the rate of reimbursement provided for in this section shall be used to increase the compensation of human services workers.

(d) The executive office of health and human services, the executive office of administration and finance, the executive office of elder affairs, the department of housing and community development, and the department of early education and care shall adopt regulations to implement this section.

(e) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the elimination of the disparity amount prior to July 1, 2025.

SECTION 2. On or before January 1, 2020, the executive office of health and human services, the executive office of administration and finance, the executive office of elder affairs, the department of housing and community development, and the department of early education and care, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Council of Human Service Providers, Inc., shall provide a report to the senate and house committees on ways and means that includes recommendations to strengthen recruitment and retention of human services workers, as defined in subsection (a) of section 105 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, employed by human services providers, as defined in subsection (a) of section 105 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, that have contracts with the state.

SECTION 3. On or before July 1, 2020, the executive office of health and human services, the executive office of elder affairs, the department of housing and community development or the department of early education and care, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Council of Human Service Providers, Inc., shall provide a report to the senate and house committees on ways and means, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities, the joint committee on elder affairs, the joint committee on health care financing, the joint committee on mental health, substance use, and recovery, the joint committee on public health, and the joint committee on state administration and regulatory oversight that includes the following information:

(1) the current disparity amount, as defined in subsection (a) of section 105 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, between the salaries of human services workers, as defined in subsection (a) of section 105 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, employed by human service providers, as defined in subsection (a) of section 105 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, and direct support workers or other comparable employees employed by the commonwealth's state-operated programs for human services; and

(2) the amount of annual increases in the rate of reimbursement, as defined in subsection (a) of section 105 of chapter 6A of the General Laws, to human service providers necessary to reduce and eliminate the disparity amount by July 1, 2025.