

Postsecondary Education Committee

CS/CS/SB 584 — Young Adult Housing Support

by Fiscal Policy Committee; Education Postsecondary Committee; and Senators Garcia and Osgood

The bill requires each Florida College System (FCS) institution and state university, in consultation with the State Office on Homelessness within the Department of Children and Families (DCF), to develop plans for prioritizing the placement of students who are or were formerly in foster care and those experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness into residence halls and dormitory residences owned by the institution or university. This includes, but is not limited to, students who qualify for a tuition and fee exemption based on meeting the federal definition of homeless children and youth and students who are current or former foster youth. The bill specifies that the Office of Continuing Care is responsible for determining whether a student is or was formerly in foster care, and each FCS and state university is responsible for determining whether a student is experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

The bill provides that if an FCS institution or state university implements a priority system for assigning students to, or awarding any of the following, the institution or university must give first priority to students who qualify for a tuition and fee exemption based on meeting the federal definition of homeless children and students who are current or former foster youth:

- Institution-operated or university-operated housing.
- Year-round housing.
- Work-study opportunities.

The bill prohibits FCS institutions and state universities from requiring students to have a cosigner or guarantor to obtain housing if the student receives housing support through the Road to Independence Program or is in a continuing care program for young adults.

The bill requires the DCF, community-based care lead agencies, and housing authorities to take any action required by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development to administer the federal Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) initiative, to include:

- Entering into a memorandum of understanding or letter of intent with all housing authorities within their service areas.
- Providing or securing supportive services for participating youth for the duration of the FYI initiative voucher.
- Providing a written certification to the housing authority verifying the youth's child welfare history.
- Identifying youth eligible for an FYI initiative voucher within the community-based care lead agency's caseload and communicating their eligibility to the youth.

The bill requires the DCF, community-based care lead agencies, and their subcontracted service providers that administer housing funds for young adults in the child welfare system to document actions taken to facilitate a young adult's acquisition of a residential lease, which may include,

but are not limited to, providing assurances to a landlord that funding will be provided on a monthly basis through a housing voucher.

Finally, the bill requires the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), in consultation with specified groups, to conduct a study of the barriers that young adults who are homeless or were formerly in foster care face when trying to obtain housing. OPPAGA must report its findings by December 1, 2026, to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

If approved by the Governor, or allowed to become law without the Governor's signature, these provisions take effect July 1, 2025.

Vote: Senate 38-0; House 116-0