



1           Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (22) of section  
2 420.507, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

3           420.507 Powers of the corporation.--The corporation  
4 shall have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out  
5 and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part,  
6 including the following powers which are in addition to all  
7 other powers granted by other provisions of this part:

8           (22) To develop and administer the State Apartment  
9 Incentive Loan Program. In developing and administering that  
10 program, the corporation may:

11           (a) Make first, second, and other subordinated  
12 mortgage loans including variable or fixed rate loans subject  
13 to contingent interest for all State Apartment Incentive Loans  
14 provided for in this chapter based upon available cash flow of  
15 the projects. The corporation shall make loans exceeding 25  
16 percent of project cost available only to nonprofit  
17 organizations and public bodies which are able to secure  
18 grants, donations of land, or contributions from other sources  
19 and to projects meeting the criteria of subparagraph 1.  
20 Mortgage loans shall be made available at the following rates  
21 of interest:

22           1. Zero to 3 percent interest for sponsors of projects  
23 that set aside at least 80 percent of their total units for  
24 residents qualifying as farmworkers as defined in this part,  
25 or commercial fishing workers as defined in this part, or the  
26 homeless as defined in s. 420.621(6)(~~4~~) over the life of the  
27 loan.

28           2. Zero to 3 percent interest based on the pro rata  
29 share of units set aside for homeless residents if the total  
30 of such units is less than 80 percent of the units in the  
31 borrower's project.

1           3. One to 9 percent interest for sponsors of projects  
2 targeted at populations other than farmworkers, commercial  
3 fishing workers, and the homeless.

4           Section 2. Section 420.621, Florida Statutes, is  
5 amended to read:

6           420.621 Definitions; ss. 420.621-420.628  
7 ~~420.621-420.627~~.--As used in ss. 420.621-420.628

8 ~~420.621-420.627~~, the term ~~following terms shall have the~~  
9 ~~following meanings, unless the context otherwise requires:~~

10           (1) "Children and youths experiencing homelessness,"  
11 for programs authorized under the McKinney-Vento Education  
12 Assistance for Homeless Children and Youths, 42 U.S.C. ss.  
13 11431 et seq., means children and youths who lack a fixed,  
14 regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

15           (2) "Continuum of care" means a community plan to  
16 organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific  
17 needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable  
18 housing and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps  
19 to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.

20           (3) "Council on Homelessness" means the council  
21 created in s. 420.622.

22           ~~(1) "AFDC" means Aid to Families with Dependent~~  
23 ~~Children as administered under chapter 409.~~

24           ~~(4)(2)~~ "Department" means the Department of Children  
25 and Family Services.

26           ~~(5)(3)~~ "District" means a service district of the  
27 department ~~of Children and Family Services~~, as set forth in s.  
28 20.19.

29           ~~(6)(4)~~ "Homeless," applied to an individual, or  
30 "individual experiencing homelessness" means "Homeless" refers  
31 ~~to~~ an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate

1 | nighttime residence and includes ~~or~~ an individual who ~~has a~~  
2 | ~~primary nighttime residence that is:~~

3 |       (a) Is living in an emergency or transitional shelter;  
4 | ~~A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed~~  
5 | ~~to provide temporary living accommodations, including welfare~~  
6 | ~~hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the~~  
7 | ~~mentally ill;~~

8 |       (b) ~~An institution that provides a temporary residence~~  
9 | ~~for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or~~

10 |       (b)(c) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a  
11 | public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used  
12 | as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

13 |       (c) Is living in a car, park, public space, abandoned  
14 | building, bus or train station, or similar setting; or

15 |       (d) Is a migratory individual who qualifies as  
16 | homeless because he or she is living in circumstances  
17 | described in paragraphs (a)-(c).

18 |  
19 | The terms defined in this subsection do ~~term does~~ not refer to  
20 | any individual imprisoned ~~or otherwise detained~~ pursuant to  
21 | state or federal law. The terms also do not include  
22 | individuals or families who are sharing housing due to  
23 | cultural preferences, voluntary arrangements, and traditional  
24 | networks of support. The terms include an individual who has  
25 | been released from jail, prison, the juvenile justice system,  
26 | the child welfare system, a mental health or developmental  
27 | disability facility, a residential addiction treatment  
28 | program, or a hospital, for whom no subsequent residence has  
29 | been identified, and who lacks the resources and support  
30 | network to obtain housing.

31 |

1           ~~(7)(5)~~ "Local coalition for the homeless" means a  
2 coalition established pursuant to s. 420.623.

3           ~~(8)(6)~~ "New and temporary homeless" means those  
4 individuals or families who are homeless due to societal  
5 ~~external factors, such as unemployment or other loss of~~  
6 ~~income, personal or family life crises, or the shortage of~~  
7 ~~low income housing.~~

8           (9) "Societal causes of homelessness" means factors  
9 such as lack of housing for individuals and families with low  
10 incomes, lack of employment opportunities for those with a  
11 high school education or less, and lack of day care,  
12 transportation, and other institutional supports.

13           ~~(10)(7)~~ "State Office on Homelessness" means the state  
14 office created in s. 420.622.~~"Secretary" means the secretary~~  
15 ~~of the Department of Children and Family Services.~~

16           Section 3. Subsections (2) and (9) of section 420.622,  
17 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

18           420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on  
19 Homelessness.--

20           (2) The Council on Homelessness is created to consist  
21 of a 17-member ~~15-member~~ council of public and private agency  
22 representatives who shall develop policy and advise the State  
23 Office on Homelessness. The council members shall be: the  
24 Secretary of Children and Family Services, or his or her  
25 designee; the Secretary of Community Affairs, or his or her  
26 designee; the Secretary of Health, or his or her designee; the  
27 Executive Director of Veterans' Affairs, or his or her  
28 designee; the Secretary of Corrections, or his or her  
29 designee; the Secretary of Health Care Administration, or his  
30 or her designee; the Commissioner of Education, or his or her  
31 designee; the Director of Workforce Florida, Inc., or his or

1 her designee; one representative of the Florida Association of  
2 Counties; one representative from the Florida League of  
3 Cities; one representative of the Florida ~~Coalition for~~  
4 Supportive Housing Coalition; the Executive Director of the  
5 Florida Housing Finance Corporation, or his or her designee;  
6 one representative of the Florida Coalition for the Homeless;  
7 ~~one representative of the Florida State Rural Development~~  
8 ~~Council~~; and four members appointed by the Governor. The  
9 council members shall be volunteer, nonpaid persons and shall  
10 be reimbursed for travel expenses only. The appointed members  
11 of the council shall serve staggered 2-year terms, and the  
12 council shall meet at least four times per year. The  
13 importance of minority, gender, and geographic representation  
14 must be considered when appointing members to the council.

15 (9) The council shall, by June 30 ~~December 31~~ of each  
16 year, beginning in 2008, issue to the Governor, the President  
17 of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
18 and the Secretary of Children and Family Services an  
19 evaluation of the executive director's performance in  
20 fulfilling the statutory duties of the office, a report  
21 summarizing the council's recommendations to the office and  
22 the corresponding actions taken by the office, and any  
23 recommendations to the Legislature for proposals to reduce  
24 homelessness in this state.

25 Section 4. Section 420.6275, Florida Statutes, is  
26 created to read:

27 420.6275 Housing First.--

28 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.--

29 (a) The Legislature finds that many communities plan  
30 to manage homelessness rather than plan to end it.  
31

1       (b) The Legislature also finds that for most of the  
2 past two decades, public and private solutions to homelessness  
3 have focused on providing individuals and families who are  
4 experiencing homelessness with emergency shelter, transitional  
5 housing, or a combination of both. While emergency shelter  
6 programs may provide critical access to services for  
7 individuals and families in crisis, they often fail to address  
8 the long-term needs of those who are homeless.

9       (c) The Legislature further finds that Housing First  
10 is an alternative approach to the current system of emergency  
11 shelter or transitional housing which tends to reduce the  
12 length of time of homelessness and has proven to be  
13 cost-effective to homeless programs.

14       (d) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to  
15 encourage local coalitions for the homeless, established  
16 pursuant to s. 420.623, to adopt the Housing First approach to  
17 ending homelessness for individuals and families.

18       (2) HOUSING FIRST METHODOLOGY.--

19       (a) The Housing First approach to homelessness differs  
20 from traditional approaches by providing housing assistance,  
21 case management, and support services responsive to individual  
22 or family needs after housing is obtained. By using the  
23 Housing First approach when appropriate, communities can  
24 significantly reduce the amount of time that individuals and  
25 families are homeless and prevent further episodes of  
26 homelessness. Housing First emphasizes that social services  
27 provided to enhance individual and family well-being can be  
28 more effective when people are in their own home, and:

29           1. The housing is not time-limited.

30           2. The housing is not contingent on compliance with  
31 services. Instead, participants must comply with a standard

1 lease agreement and are provided with the services and support  
2 that are necessary to help them do so successfully.

3 (b) The Housing First approach addresses the societal  
4 causes of homelessness and advocates for the immediate return  
5 of individuals and families back into housing and communities.  
6 Housing First provides a critical link between the emergency  
7 and transitional housing system and community-based social  
8 service, educational, and health care organizations and  
9 consists of four components:

- 10 1. Crisis intervention and short-term stabilization.
- 11 2. Screening, intake, and needs assessment.
- 12 3. Provision of housing resources.
- 13 4. Provision of case management.

14 Section 5. Section 420.628, Florida Statutes, is  
15 created to read:

16 420.628 Children and young adults leaving foster  
17 care.--

18 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.--

19 (a) The Legislature finds that the transition from  
20 childhood to adulthood is filled with opportunity and risk.  
21 Most young people who receive adequate support make this  
22 transition successfully and will become healthy adults who  
23 will be prepared for work and be able to become responsible,  
24 fulfilled members of their families and communities.

25 (b) The Legislature finds that there are also many  
26 young people who will enter adulthood without the knowledge,  
27 skills, attitudes, habits, and relationships that will enable  
28 them to be productive members of society. Those young people,  
29 who through no fault of their own, live in foster families,  
30 group homes, and institutions are among those at greatest  
31 risk.



1           (c) The Legislature finds that these young people face  
2 numerous barriers to a successful transition to adulthood.  
3 Those barriers include changes in foster care placements and  
4 schools, limited opportunities for participation in  
5 age-appropriate normal activities, and the inability to  
6 achieve economic stability, make connections with permanent  
7 supportive adults or family, and access housing. The main  
8 barriers to safe and affordable housing for youth aging out of  
9 the foster care system are cost, lack of availability, the  
10 unwillingness of many landlords to rent to them, and their own  
11 lack of knowledge about how to be good tenants.

12           (d) The Legislature also finds that young adults who  
13 emancipate from the child welfare system are at risk of  
14 becoming homeless and those who were formerly in foster care  
15 are disproportionately represented in the homeless population.  
16 Only about two-fifths of eligible young people receive  
17 independent living services and, of those who do, few receive  
18 adequate housing assistance. Without the stability of safe  
19 housing all other services, training, and opportunities may  
20 not be effective.

21           (e) The Legislature further finds that research on  
22 young people who emancipate from foster care suggests a nexus  
23 between foster care involvement and later episodes of  
24 homelessness and that interventions in the foster care system  
25 might help to prevent homelessness. Responding to the needs of  
26 young people leaving the foster care system with  
27 developmentally appropriate supportive housing models  
28 organized in a continuum of decreasing supervision may  
29 increase their ability to live independently in the future.

30           (f) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to  
31 encourage the Department of Children and Family Services, its

1 agents, and community-based care providers operating pursuant  
2 to s. 409.1671, to develop and implement procedures designed  
3 to reduce the number of young adults who become homeless after  
4 leaving the child welfare system.

5 (2) YOUTH HOUSING FIRST CONTINUUM PILOT

6 PROGRAM.--Housing for young people is by nature transitional.  
7 Most young people in their late teens through mid-twenties are  
8 housed in college dormitories or shared or studio apartments  
9 or continue to live at home. Commonly, young people move  
10 through a number of such interim housing situations as they  
11 grow into adulthood. Many older teens and young adults who  
12 leave foster care at the age of 18 do not have the opportunity  
13 for those usual transitions and as a result are at risk for  
14 becoming homeless.

15 (a) Creation of pilot program; eligibility.--There is  
16 created a 3-year Youth Housing First Continuum Pilot Program  
17 in Hillsborough County. The purpose of the program is to  
18 support the development and implementation of a transitional  
19 living or subsidized independent living housing experience for  
20 those young people aging out of foster care who will not have  
21 the option of remaining in a foster care family home or in a  
22 group home, to facilitate a smooth transition from foster home  
23 or group home living to independent living. The pilot program  
24 shall serve at least 100 young adults, and eligibility  
25 requirements shall include:

26 1. Young adults who turn 18 years of age while in  
27 licensed foster care and have been in foster care for at least  
28 12 months prior to turning 18 years of age. The 12-month  
29 requirement shall be waived in circumstances where the  
30 requirements of s. 39.701(6)(a)8. have not been met, no  
31

1 subsequent residence has been identified, and the young person  
2 lacks the resources and support network to obtain housing.

3 2. Priority shall be given to those young persons who  
4 are attending high school and can demonstrate either through  
5 documentation of school attendance or engagement in  
6 extracurricular activities that a displacement from school  
7 would have an adverse effect on their ability to achieve their  
8 educational goals.

9 3. Other participants shall be chosen based on their  
10 eligibility pursuant to s. 409.1451(2) and documented  
11 enrollment in a full-time adult educational or postsecondary  
12 educational or vocational program or a combination of  
13 employment and part-time enrollment in an educational program.

14 (b) Pilot program design.--There shall be a youth  
15 housing continuum that incorporates various types of housing  
16 without predetermined time limits to allow young adults to  
17 transition from one housing program to another according to  
18 their individual developmental capacities. Based upon the  
19 needs and preferences of a given young adult, such housing  
20 could take any number of forms from shared homes to  
21 scattered-site, independent apartments with or without  
22 roommates. Young adults should have the flexibility to move  
23 among housing programs as they gain independent living skills  
24 and economic stability, including the ability to reenter  
25 housing programs and move back along the continuum if their  
26 current needs or abilities change. The continuum in the pilot  
27 program will consist of the following three levels of  
28 decreasing supervision:

29 1. Supervised living for young adults who have reached  
30 18 years of age, but are not yet 24 years of age, who cannot  
31 adequately manage their affairs and need constant, consistent

1 adult supervision, training, and support. Each participant  
2 shall have his or her own bedroom and bathroom and share a  
3 common living area.

4 2. Monitored living for young adults who have reached  
5 18 years of age, but are not yet 24 years of age, who can  
6 typically manage their own affairs but need regular adult  
7 monitoring. Housing will be provided in scattered sites  
8 throughout the community with support staff working regularly  
9 with participants to address their educational, employment,  
10 and financial stability goals. Each participant shall have his  
11 or her own bedroom and bathroom and share an apartment with  
12 one to three roommates.

13 3. Independent living for young adults who have the  
14 ability to live on their own with access to support services  
15 as needed.

16 (c) Pilot program administration; duties;  
17 report.--Connected by 25 in Hillsborough County shall provide  
18 administrative support for and shall be responsible for the  
19 operation for the Youth Housing First Continuum Pilot Program.  
20 Connected by 25 shall:

21 1. Create and implement a transitional housing  
22 continuum in which young persons who meet the eligibility  
23 criteria of this subsection will receive support while  
24 participating in an educational or training program, or any  
25 activity consistent with their independent living transitional  
26 services case plan. The housing continuum should be based on  
27 the Housing First approach, which is premised on accessing  
28 adequate, stable housing and receiving the services necessary  
29 to maintain such housing.

30 2. Provide each program participant with a transition  
31 and aftercare specialist to provide transitional support

1 services. Each participant, in partnership with the transition  
2 and aftercare specialist, shall develop a transition plan that  
3 is specific to his or her efforts to achieve self-sufficiency.

4 3. Require that each participant complete a  
5 comprehensive financial literacy and asset development  
6 training program and be enrolled in the Connected by 25 match  
7 savings program that utilizes private dollars to match, on a  
8 one-to-one basis, the savings of each participant up to \$1,000  
9 each year. This requirement will prepare program participants  
10 for economic success as they age out of the foster care  
11 system.

12 (d) Annual reports.--Beginning January 1, 2008, and  
13 continuing for the duration of the pilot program, Connected by  
14 25 shall submit to the Governor, the Speaker of the House of  
15 Representatives, the President of the Senate, and the  
16 Secretary of Children and Family Services an annual report  
17 outlining the progress made in the development and  
18 implementation of the pilot program, including documentation  
19 of the outcomes for the participants in the areas identified  
20 by the Independent Living Services Advisory Council pursuant  
21 to s. 409.1451, and recommendations for pilot program  
22 improvement and expansion.

23 Section 6. Subsection (12) of section 1003.01, Florida  
24 Statutes, is amended to read:

25 1003.01 Definitions.--As used in this chapter, the  
26 term:

27 (12) "Children and youths who are experiencing  
28 homelessness," for programs authorized under subtitle B,  
29 Education for Homeless Children and Youths, of title VII of  
30 the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. ss.  
31

1 11431 et seq., means children and youths who lack a fixed,  
2 regular, and adequate nighttime residence.

3 ~~(12) "Homeless child" means:~~

4 ~~(a) One who lacks a fixed, regular nighttime~~  
5 ~~residence;~~

6 ~~(b) One who has a primary nighttime residence that is:~~

7 ~~1. A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter~~  
8 ~~designed to provide temporary living accommodations, including~~  
9 ~~welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing~~  
10 ~~for the mentally ill;~~

11 ~~2. An institution that provides a temporary residence~~  
12 ~~for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or~~

13 ~~3. A public or private place not designed for, or~~  
14 ~~ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human~~  
15 ~~beings; or~~

16 ~~(c) One who temporarily resides with an adult other~~  
17 ~~than his or her parent because the parent is suffering~~  
18 ~~financial hardship.~~

19  
20 ~~A child who is imprisoned, detained, or in the custody of the~~  
21 ~~state pursuant to a state or federal law is not a homeless~~  
22 ~~child.~~

23 Section 7. Paragraph (f) of subsection (1) and  
24 paragraph (g) of subsection (4) of section 1003.21, Florida  
25 Statutes, are amended to read:

26 1003.21 School attendance.--

27 (1)

28 (f) Children and youths who are experiencing  
29 homelessness ~~Homeless children~~, as defined in s. 1003.01, must  
30 have access to a free public education and must be admitted to  
31 school in the school district in which they or their families

1 | live. School districts shall assist such ~~homeless~~ children to  
2 | meet the requirements of subsection (4) and s. 1003.22, as  
3 | well as local requirements for documentation.

4 |         (4) Before admitting a child to kindergarten, the  
5 | principal shall require evidence that the child has attained  
6 | the age at which he or she should be admitted in accordance  
7 | with the provisions of subparagraph (1)(a)2. The district  
8 | school superintendent may require evidence of the age of any  
9 | child whom he or she believes to be within the limits of  
10 | compulsory attendance as provided for by law. If the first  
11 | prescribed evidence is not available, the next evidence  
12 | obtainable in the order set forth below shall be accepted:

13 |         (g) If none of these evidences can be produced, an  
14 | affidavit of age sworn to by the parent, accompanied by a  
15 | certificate of age signed by a public health officer or by a  
16 | public school physician, or, if neither of these is available  
17 | in the county, by a licensed practicing physician designated  
18 | by the district school board, which certificate states that  
19 | the health officer or physician has examined the child and  
20 | believes that the age as stated in the affidavit is  
21 | substantially correct. Children and youths who are  
22 | experiencing homelessness ~~A homeless child~~, as defined in s.  
23 | 1003.01, shall be given temporary exemption from this section  
24 | for 30 school days.

25 |         Section 8. Subsection (1) and paragraph (e) of  
26 | subsection (5) of section 1003.22, Florida Statutes, are  
27 | amended to read:

28 |         1003.22 School-entry health examinations; immunization  
29 | against communicable diseases; exemptions; duties of  
30 | Department of Health.--  
31 |

1           (1) Each district school board and the governing  
2 authority of each private school shall require that each child  
3 who is entitled to admittance to kindergarten, or is entitled  
4 to any other initial entrance into a public or private school  
5 in this state, present a certification of a school-entry  
6 health examination performed within 1 year prior to enrollment  
7 in school. Each district school board, and the governing  
8 authority of each private school, may establish a policy that  
9 permits a student up to 30 school days to present a  
10 certification of a school-entry health examination. Children  
11 and youths who are experiencing homelessness ~~A homeless child~~,  
12 as defined in s. 1003.01, shall be given a temporary exemption  
13 for 30 school days. Any district school board that establishes  
14 such a policy shall include provisions in its local school  
15 health services plan to assist students in obtaining the  
16 health examinations. However, any child shall be exempt from  
17 the requirement of a health examination upon written request  
18 of the parent of the child stating objections to the  
19 examination on religious grounds.

20           (5) The provisions of this section shall not apply if:

21           (e) An authorized school official issues a temporary  
22 exemption, for a period not to exceed 30 school days, to  
23 permit a student who transfers into a new county to attend  
24 class until his or her records can be obtained. Children and  
25 youths who are experiencing homelessness ~~A homeless child~~, as  
26 defined in s. 1003.01, shall be given a temporary exemption  
27 for 30 school days. The public school health nurse or  
28 authorized private school official is responsible for followup  
29 of each such student until proper documentation or  
30 immunizations are obtained. An exemption for 30 days may be  
31 issued for a student who enters a juvenile justice program to



1 permit the student to attend class until his or her records  
2 can be obtained or until the immunizations can be obtained. An  
3 authorized juvenile justice official is responsible for  
4 followup of each student who enters a juvenile justice program  
5 until proper documentation or immunizations are obtained.

6       Section 9. The sum of \$250,000 in nonrecurring funds  
7 is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the  
8 Department of Children and Family Services for the purposes of  
9 implementing section 420.628, Florida Statutes, during the  
10 2007-2008 fiscal year.

11       Section 10. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.

12  
13                   STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN  
14                   COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
15                   Senate Bill 2824

16 The committee substitute:

- 17 - Adds definitions for the terms "Children and youths  
18 experiencing homelessness," "Council on Homelessness,"  
19 "Societal causes of homelessness," and "State Office on  
20 Homelessness." It amends the definition of the term  
21 "homeless" or "individual experiencing homelessness" and  
22 removes a definition for the term "AFDC."  
23 - Amends the current structure of the Council on  
24 Homelessness (council).  
25 - Establishes the Housing First approach to homelessness  
26 and encourages local coalitions to adopt this approach.  
27 - Encourages the Department of Children and Family Services  
28 (DCF) and the community-based care lead agencies (CBCs)  
29 to develop and implement procedures to reduce the number  
30 of young adults who become homeless after leaving the  
31 child welfare system.  
- Establishes a three-year Youth Housing First Continuum  
Pilot program in Hillsborough County, Florida.  
- Amends the school code definition of the term "homeless  
child."  
- Provides for an appropriation of \$250,000 in nonrecurring  
General Revenue funds.