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Proposed Committee Substitute by the Committee on Appropriations  
(Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services)

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to homelessness; amending s. 201.15, F.S.; authorizing that, subject to an appropriation, certain taxes up to a specified amount be transferred to the Grants and Donations Trust Fund within the Department of Children and Families for the purpose of funding challenge grants; amending s. 420.621, F.S.; revising, adding, and deleting defined terms; amending s. 420.622, F.S.; increasing the number of members on the Council on Homelessness to include a representative of the Florida Housing Coalition and the Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs or his or her designee; providing that appointed council members are encouraged to have certain experience; revising the duties of the State Office on Homelessness; revising requirements for the state's system of homeless programs; requiring entities that receive state funding to provide summary aggregated data to assist the council in providing certain information; removing the requirement that the office have the concurrence of the council to accept and administer moneys appropriated to it to provide certain annual challenge grants to continuums of care lead agencies; clarifying the source of such appropriation; increasing the maximum amount of grant awards per continuum of care lead agency; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; revising



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28 requirements for use of grant funds by continuum of  
29 care lead agencies; revising preference criteria for  
30 certain grants; increasing the maximum percentage of  
31 its funding which a continuum of care lead agency may  
32 spend on administrative costs; requiring such agencies  
33 to submit a final report to the Department of Children  
34 and Families documenting certain outcomes achieved by  
35 grant-funded programs; removing the requirement that  
36 the office have the concurrence of the council to  
37 administer moneys given to it to provide homeless  
38 housing assistance grants annually to certain  
39 continuum of care lead agencies to acquire, construct,  
40 or rehabilitate permanent housing units for homeless  
41 persons; conforming a provision to changes made by the  
42 act; requiring grant applicants to be ranked  
43 competitively based on criteria determined by the  
44 office; deleting preference requirements; increasing  
45 the minimum number of years for which projects must  
46 reserve certain units acquired, constructed, or  
47 rehabilitated; increasing the maximum percentage of  
48 funds the office and each applicant may spend on  
49 administrative costs; revising certain performance  
50 measure requirements; authorizing, instead of  
51 requiring, the Department of Children and Families,  
52 with input from the council, to adopt rules relating  
53 to certain grants and related issues; revising  
54 requirements for an annual report the council must  
55 submit to the Governor, Legislature, and Secretary of  
56 Children and Families; authorizing the office to



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57 administer moneys appropriated to it for distribution  
58 among certain designated continuum of care lead  
59 agencies and entities; creating s. 420.6225, F.S.;  
60 specifying the purpose of a continuum of care;  
61 requiring each continuum of care, pursuant to federal  
62 law, to designate a collaborative applicant that is  
63 responsible for submitting the continuum of care  
64 funding application for the designated catchment area  
65 to the United States Department of Housing and Urban  
66 Development; providing requirements for such  
67 designated collaborative applicants; authorizing the  
68 applicant to be referred to as the continuum of care  
69 lead agency; providing requirements for continuum of  
70 care catchment areas and lead agencies; requiring that  
71 each continuum of care create a continuum of care plan  
72 for specified purposes; specifying requirements for  
73 such plans; requiring continuums of care to promote  
74 participation by all interested individuals and  
75 organizations, subject to certain requirements;  
76 creating s. 420.6227, F.S.; providing legislative  
77 findings and program purpose; establishing a grant-in-  
78 aid program to help continuums of care prevent and end  
79 homelessness, which may include any aspect of the  
80 local continuum of care plan; requiring continuums of  
81 care to submit an application for grant-in-aid funds  
82 to the office for review; requiring the office to  
83 develop guidelines for the development, evaluation,  
84 and approval of spending plans; requiring grant-in-aid  
85 funds for continuums of care to be administered by the



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86 office and awarded on a competitive basis; requiring  
87 the office to distribute such funds to local agencies  
88 to fund programs that are required by the local  
89 continuum of care plan, based on certain  
90 recommendations; limiting the percentage of the total  
91 state funds awarded under a spending plan which may be  
92 used by the continuum of care lead agency for staffing  
93 and administrative expenditures; requiring entities  
94 contracting with local agencies to provide services  
95 through certain financial assistance programs to  
96 provide a specified minimum percentage of the funding  
97 necessary for the support of project operations;  
98 authorizing in-kind contributions to be evaluated and  
99 counted as part or all of the required local funding,  
100 at the discretion of the office; repealing s. 420.623,  
101 F.S., relating to local coalitions for the homeless;  
102 repealing s. 420.624, F.S., relating to local homeless  
103 assistance continuums of care; repealing s. 420.625,  
104 F.S., relating to a grant-in-aid program; amending s.  
105 420.626, F.S.; revising procedures that certain  
106 facilities and institutions are encouraged to develop  
107 and implement to reduce the discharge of persons into  
108 homelessness when such persons are admitted or housed  
109 for a specified period at such facilities or  
110 institutions; amending s. 420.6265, F.S.; revising  
111 legislative findings and intent for Rapid ReHousing;  
112 revising the Rapid ReHousing methodology; amending s.  
113 420.6275, F.S.; revising legislative findings relating  
114 to Housing First; revising the Housing First



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115 methodology to reflect current practice; amending s.  
116 420.507, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing  
117 an effective date.

118

119 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

120

121 Section 1. Paragraph (c) of subsection (4) of section  
122 201.15, Florida Statutes, is amended, and subsection (5) of that  
123 section is republished, to read:

124 201.15 Distribution of taxes collected.—All taxes collected  
125 under this chapter are hereby pledged and shall be first made  
126 available to make payments when due on bonds issued pursuant to  
127 s. 215.618 or s. 215.619, or any other bonds authorized to be  
128 issued on a parity basis with such bonds. Such pledge and  
129 availability for the payment of these bonds shall have priority  
130 over any requirement for the payment of service charges or costs  
131 of collection and enforcement under this section. All taxes  
132 collected under this chapter, except taxes distributed to the  
133 Land Acquisition Trust Fund pursuant to subsections (1) and (2),  
134 are subject to the service charge imposed in s. 215.20(1).  
135 Before distribution pursuant to this section, the Department of  
136 Revenue shall deduct amounts necessary to pay the costs of the  
137 collection and enforcement of the tax levied by this chapter.  
138 The costs and service charge may not be levied against any  
139 portion of taxes pledged to debt service on bonds to the extent  
140 that the costs and service charge are required to pay any  
141 amounts relating to the bonds. All of the costs of the  
142 collection and enforcement of the tax levied by this chapter and  
143 the service charge shall be available and transferred to the



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144 extent necessary to pay debt service and any other amounts  
145 payable with respect to bonds authorized before January 1, 2017,  
146 secured by revenues distributed pursuant to this section. All  
147 taxes remaining after deduction of costs shall be distributed as  
148 follows:

149 (4) After the required distributions to the Land  
150 Acquisition Trust Fund pursuant to subsections (1) and (2) and  
151 deduction of the service charge imposed pursuant to s.  
152 215.20(1), the remainder shall be distributed as follows:

153 (c) Eleven and twenty-four hundredths percent of the  
154 remainder in each fiscal year shall be paid into the State  
155 Treasury to the credit of the State Housing Trust Fund. Of such  
156 funds, the first \$35 million shall be transferred annually,  
157 subject to any distribution required under subsection (5), to  
158 the State Economic Enhancement and Development Trust Fund within  
159 the Department of Economic Opportunity. Subject to an  
160 appropriation, up to the next \$10 million may be transferred,  
161 subject to any distribution required under subsection (5), to  
162 the Grants and Donations Trust Fund within the Department of  
163 Children and Families for the purpose of funding the challenge  
164 grants established in s. 420.622(4). The remainder shall be used  
165 as follows:

166 1. Half of that amount shall be used for the purposes for  
167 which the State Housing Trust Fund was created and exists by  
168 law.

169 2. Half of that amount shall be paid into the State  
170 Treasury to the credit of the Local Government Housing Trust  
171 Fund and used for the purposes for which the Local Government  
172 Housing Trust Fund was created and exists by law.



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173 (5) Distributions to the State Housing Trust Fund pursuant  
174 to paragraphs (4) (c) and (d) must be sufficient to cover amounts  
175 required to be transferred to the Florida Affordable Housing  
176 Guarantee Program's annual debt service reserve and guarantee  
177 fund pursuant to s. 420.5092(6) (a) and (b) up to the amount  
178 required to be transferred to such reserve and fund based on the  
179 percentage distribution of documentary stamp tax revenues to the  
180 State Housing Trust Fund which is in effect in the 2004-2005  
181 fiscal year.

182 Section 2. Section 420.621, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
183 read:

184 420.621 Definitions.—As used in ss. 420.621-420.628, the  
185 term:

186 (1) "Continuum of care" means the group organized to carry  
187 out the responsibilities imposed under ss. 420.621-420.628 to  
188 coordinate, plan, and pursue ending homelessness in a designated  
189 catchment area. The group is composed of representatives from  
190 certain organizations, including, but not limited to, nonprofit  
191 homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based  
192 organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public  
193 housing agencies, school districts, social service providers,  
194 mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable  
195 housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve  
196 homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and organizations that  
197 serve homeless and formerly homeless persons, to the extent that  
198 these organizations are represented within the designated  
199 catchment area and are available to participate ~~the community~~  
200 ~~components needed to organize and deliver housing and services~~  
201 ~~to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they~~



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202 ~~move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes~~  
203 ~~action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to~~  
204 ~~homelessness.~~

205 (2) "Continuum of care lead agency" or "continuum of care  
206 collaborative applicant" means the organization designated by a  
207 continuum of care pursuant to s. 420.6225.

208 (3)~~(2)~~ "Council on Homelessness" means the council created  
209 in s. 420.622.

210 (4)~~(3)~~ "Department" means the Department of Children and  
211 Families.

212 ~~(4) "District" means a service district of the department,~~  
213 ~~as set forth in s. 20.19.~~

214 (5) "Homeless" means any of the following:

215 (a) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and  
216 adequate nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in 24  
217 C.F.R. 578.3.

218 (b) An individual or family who will imminently lose their  
219 primary nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in 24  
220 C.F.R. 578.3 applied to an individual, or "individual  
221 experiencing homelessness" means an individual who lacks a  
222 fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes an  
223 individual who:

224 ~~(a) Is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of~~  
225 ~~housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;~~

226 ~~(b) Is living in a motel, hotel, travel trailer park, or~~  
227 ~~camping ground due to a lack of alternative adequate~~  
228 ~~accommodations;~~

229 ~~(c) Is living in an emergency or transitional shelter;~~

230 ~~(d) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or~~





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231 ~~private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular~~  
232 ~~sleeping accommodation for human beings;~~

233 ~~(e) Is living in a car, park, public space, abandoned~~  
234 ~~building, bus or train station, or similar setting; or~~

235 ~~(f) Is a migratory individual who qualifies as homeless~~  
236 ~~because he or she is living in circumstances described in~~  
237 ~~paragraphs (a) - (e).~~

238

239 ~~The terms do not refer to an individual imprisoned pursuant to~~  
240 ~~state or federal law or to individuals or families who are~~  
241 ~~sharing housing due to cultural preferences, voluntary~~  
242 ~~arrangements, or traditional networks of support. The terms~~  
243 ~~include an individual who has been released from jail, prison,~~  
244 ~~the juvenile justice system, the child welfare system, a mental~~  
245 ~~health and developmental disability facility, a residential~~  
246 ~~addiction treatment program, or a hospital, for whom no~~  
247 ~~subsequent residence has been identified, and who lacks the~~  
248 ~~resources and support network to obtain housing.~~

249 ~~(6) "Local coalition for the homeless" means a coalition~~  
250 ~~established pursuant to s. 420.623.~~

251 ~~(7) "New and temporary homeless" means individuals or~~  
252 ~~families who are homeless due to societal factors.~~

253 ~~(6)(8)~~ "State Office on Homelessness" means the state  
254 office created in s. 420.622.

255 Section 3. Section 420.622, Florida Statutes, is amended to  
256 read:

257 420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on  
258 Homelessness.-

259 (1) The State Office on Homelessness is created within the



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260 Department of Children and Families to provide interagency,  
261 council, and other related coordination on issues relating to  
262 homelessness.

263 (2) The Council on Homelessness is created to consist of 19  
264 ~~17~~ representatives of public and private agencies who shall  
265 develop policy and advise the State Office on Homelessness. The  
266 council members shall be: the Secretary of Children and  
267 Families, or his or her designee; the executive director of the  
268 Department of Economic Opportunity, or his or her designee, who  
269 shall advise the council on issues related to rural development;  
270 the State Surgeon General, or his or her designee; the Executive  
271 Director of Veterans' Affairs, or his or her designee; the  
272 Secretary of Corrections, or his or her designee; the Secretary  
273 of Health Care Administration, or his or her designee; the  
274 Commissioner of Education, or his or her designee; the Director  
275 of CareerSource Florida, Inc., or his or her designee; one  
276 representative of the Florida Association of Counties; one  
277 representative of the Florida League of Cities; one  
278 representative of the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition; one  
279 representative of the Florida Housing Coalition; the Executive  
280 Director of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, or his or  
281 her designee; one representative of the Florida Coalition for  
282 the Homeless; the Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs,  
283 or his or her designee; and four members appointed by the  
284 Governor. The council members shall be nonpaid volunteers and  
285 shall be reimbursed only for travel expenses. The appointed  
286 members of the council shall be appointed to staggered 2-year  
287 terms, and are encouraged to have experience in the  
288 administration or provision of resources, services, or housing



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289 that addresses the needs of persons experiencing homelessness.

290 The council shall meet at least four times per year. The  
291 importance of minority, gender, and geographic representation  
292 shall be considered in appointing members to the council.

293 (3) The State Office on Homelessness, pursuant to the  
294 policies set by the council and subject to the availability of  
295 funding, shall:

296 (a) Coordinate among state, local, and private agencies and  
297 providers to produce a statewide consolidated inventory for the  
298 state's entire system of homeless programs which incorporates  
299 local continuum of care plans ~~regionally developed plans~~. Such  
300 programs include, but are not limited to:

301 1. Programs authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless  
302 Assistance ~~Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance~~ Act of 1987,  
303 as amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid  
304 Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009, 42 U.S.C. ss. 11302  
305 ~~ss. 11371 et seq.~~, and carried out under funds awarded to this  
306 state; and

307 2. Programs, components thereof, or activities that assist  
308 persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.

309 (b) Collect, maintain, and make available information  
310 concerning persons who are homeless ~~or at risk for homelessness~~,  
311 including summary demographics information drawn from the local  
312 continuum of care Homeless Management Information System or the  
313 annual Point-in-Time Count, ~~current services and resources~~  
314 ~~available~~ and the local continuum of care Housing Inventory  
315 Chart required by the Department of Housing and Urban  
316 Development, ~~the cost and availability of services and programs,~~  
317 ~~and the met and unmet needs of this population.~~ All entities



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318 that receive state funding must provide summary aggregated  
319 ~~access to all data they maintain in summary form~~, with no  
320 individual identifying information, to assist the council in  
321 providing this information. The State Office on Homelessness, in  
322 consultation with the designated lead agencies for a ~~local~~  
323 ~~homeless~~ continuum of care and with the Council on Homelessness,  
324 shall develop a process by which summary data is collected ~~the~~  
325 ~~system and process of data collection~~ from all lead agencies for  
326 the purpose of analyzing trends and assessing impacts in the  
327 ~~statewide homeless delivery system~~ for delivering services to  
328 the homeless. ~~Any statewide homelessness survey and database~~  
329 ~~system must comply with all state and federal statutory and~~  
330 ~~regulatory confidentiality requirements.~~

331 (c) Annually evaluate state and continuum of care system  
332 programs ~~local services and resources~~ and develop a consolidated  
333 plan for addressing the needs of the homeless or those at risk  
334 for homelessness.

335 (d) Explore, compile, and disseminate information regarding  
336 public and private funding sources for state and local programs  
337 serving the homeless and provide technical assistance in  
338 applying for such funding.

339 (e) Monitor and provide recommendations for coordinating  
340 the activities and programs of ~~local~~ continuum of care  
341 ~~coalitions for the homeless~~ and promote the effectiveness of  
342 programs to prevent and end homelessness in the state ~~addressing~~  
343 ~~the needs of the homeless.~~

344 (f) Provide technical assistance to facilitate efforts to  
345 support and strengthen ~~establish, maintain, and expand local~~  
346 ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum of care.



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347 (g) Develop and assist in the coordination of policies and  
348 procedures relating to the discharge or transfer from the care  
349 or custody of state-supported or state-regulated entities  
350 persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.

351 (h) Spearhead outreach efforts for maximizing access by  
352 people who are homeless or at risk for homelessness to state and  
353 federal programs and resources.

354 (i) Promote a federal policy agenda that is responsive to  
355 the needs of those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness  
356 ~~the homeless population~~ in this state.

357 (j) Review reports on continuum of care system performance  
358 measures and ~~Develop outcome and accountability measures and~~  
359 ~~promote and~~ use such measures to evaluate program effectiveness  
360 and make recommendations for improving current practices to work  
361 toward ending homelessness in this state ~~in order to best meet~~  
362 ~~the needs of the homeless.~~

363 (k) Formulate policies and legislative proposals aimed at  
364 preventing and ending homelessness in this state ~~to address more~~  
365 ~~effectively the needs of the homeless~~ and coordinate the  
366 implementation of state and federal legislative policies.

367 (l) Convene meetings and workshops of state and local  
368 agencies, continuums of care ~~local coalitions and programs~~, and  
369 other stakeholders for the purpose of developing and reviewing  
370 policies, services, activities, coordination, and funding of  
371 efforts to end homelessness ~~meet the needs of the homeless.~~

372 (m) With the input of the continuums of care, conduct or  
373 promote research on the effectiveness of current programs and  
374 propose pilot projects aimed at ending homelessness ~~improving~~  
375 ~~services.~~



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376 (n) Serve as an advocate for issues relating to  
377 homelessness.

378 (o) Investigate ways to improve access to participation in  
379 state funding and other programs for prevention and reduction  
380 ~~alleviation~~ of homelessness to faith-based organizations and  
381 collaborate and coordinate with faith-based organizations.

382 (4) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~  
383 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ shall accept and administer  
384 moneys appropriated to it pursuant to s. 201.15(4)(c) to provide  
385 annual "challenge grants" to lead agencies of ~~homeless~~  
386 ~~assistance~~ continuums of care designated by the State Office on  
387 Homelessness pursuant to s. 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~. The department  
388 shall establish varying levels of grant awards up to \$750,000  
389 ~~\$500,000~~ per continuum of care lead agency. The department, in  
390 consultation with the Council on Homelessness, shall specify a  
391 grant award level in the notice of the solicitation of grant  
392 applications.

393 (a) To qualify for the grant, a continuum of care lead  
394 agency must develop and implement a local ~~homeless assistance~~  
395 continuum of care plan for its designated catchment area. The  
396 services and housing funded through the grant must be  
397 implemented through the continuum of care's ~~continuum of care~~  
398 ~~plan must implement a coordinated assessment or central intake~~  
399 entry system as provided in s. 420.6225(5)(b) and must be  
400 designed to screen, assess, and refer persons seeking assistance  
401 to the appropriate housing intervention and service provider.  
402 The continuum of care lead agency shall also document the  
403 commitment of local government or private organizations to  
404 provide matching funds or in-kind support in an amount equal to



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405 25 percent of the grant requested. Expenditures of leveraged  
406 funds or resources, including third-party cash or in-kind  
407 contributions, are authorized only for eligible activities  
408 carried out in connection with a ~~committed on one project in~~  
409 which such funds or resources have not been used as leverage or  
410 match for any other project or program. ~~and~~ The expenditures  
411 must be certified through a written commitment.

412 (b) Preference must be given to those continuum of care  
413 lead agencies that have demonstrated the ability of their  
414 continuum of care to help households move out of homelessness  
415 ~~provide quality services to homeless persons and the ability to~~  
416 ~~leverage federal homeless assistance funding under the Stewart~~  
417 ~~B. McKinney Act with local government funding or private funding~~  
418 ~~for the provision of services to homeless persons.~~

419 ~~(c) Preference must be given to lead agencies in catchment~~  
420 ~~areas with the greatest need for the provision of housing and~~  
421 ~~services to the homeless, relative to the population of the~~  
422 ~~catchment area.~~

423 ~~(c)-(d)~~ The grant may be used to fund any of the housing,  
424 program, or service needs included in the local ~~homeless~~  
425 ~~assistance~~ continuum of care plan. The continuum of care lead  
426 agency may allocate the grant to programs, services, or housing  
427 providers that implement the local ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum  
428 of care plan. The lead agency may provide subgrants to a local  
429 agency to implement programs or services or provide housing  
430 identified for funding in the lead agency's application to the  
431 department. A lead agency may spend a maximum of 10 & percent of  
432 its funding on administrative costs.

433 ~~(d)-(e)~~ The continuum of care lead agency shall submit a



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434 final report to the department documenting the outcomes achieved  
435 by the grant-funded programs ~~grant~~ in enabling persons who are  
436 homeless to return to permanent housing, thereby ending such  
437 person's episode of homelessness.

438 (5) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~  
439 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ may administer moneys given  
440 ~~appropriated~~ to it to provide homeless housing assistance grants  
441 annually to continuum of care lead agencies ~~for local homeless~~  
442 ~~assistance continuum of care,~~ as recognized by the State Office  
443 on Homelessness, to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate  
444 ~~transitional or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.  
445 These moneys shall consist of any sums that the state may  
446 appropriate, as well as money received from donations, gifts,  
447 bequests, or otherwise from any public or private source, which  
448 are intended to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate ~~transitional~~  
449 ~~or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.

450 (a) Grant applicants shall be ranked competitively based on  
451 criteria determined by the State Office on Homelessness.  
452 ~~Preference must be given to applicants who leverage additional~~  
453 ~~private funds and public funds, particularly federal funds~~  
454 ~~designated for the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation~~  
455 ~~of transitional or permanent housing for homeless persons; who~~  
456 ~~acquire, build, or rehabilitate the greatest number of units; or~~  
457 ~~who acquire, build, or rehabilitate in catchment areas having~~  
458 ~~the greatest need for housing for the homeless relative to the~~  
459 ~~population of the catchment area.~~

460 (b) Funding for any particular project may not exceed  
461 \$750,000.

462 (c) Projects must reserve, for a minimum of 20 ~~10~~ years,





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463 the number of units acquired, constructed, or rehabilitated  
464 through homeless housing assistance grant funding to serve  
465 persons who are homeless at the time they assume tenancy.

466 (d) No more than two grants may be awarded annually in any  
467 given ~~local homeless assistance~~ continuum of care catchment  
468 area.

469 (e) A project may not be funded which is not included in  
470 the local ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum of care plan, as  
471 recognized by the State Office on Homelessness, for the  
472 catchment area in which the project is located.

473 (f) The maximum percentage of funds that the State Office  
474 on Homelessness and each applicant may spend on administrative  
475 costs is 10 ~~5~~ percent.

476 (6) The State Office on Homelessness, in conjunction with  
477 the Council on Homelessness, shall establish performance  
478 measures related to state funding provided through the State  
479 Office on Homelessness and utilize those grant-related measures  
480 to and specific objectives by which it may evaluate the  
481 performance and outcomes of continuum of care lead agencies that  
482 receive state grant funds. ~~Challenge Grants made through the~~  
483 ~~State Office on Homelessness shall be distributed to lead~~  
484 ~~agencies based on their overall performance and their~~  
485 ~~achievement of specified objectives. Each lead agency for which~~  
486 ~~grants are made under this section shall provide the State~~  
487 ~~Office on Homelessness a thorough evaluation of the~~  
488 ~~effectiveness of the program in achieving its stated purpose. In~~  
489 ~~evaluating the performance of the lead agencies, the State~~  
490 ~~Office on Homelessness shall base its criteria upon the program~~  
491 ~~objectives, goals, and priorities that were set forth by the~~



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492 ~~lead agencies in their proposals for funding. Such criteria may~~  
493 ~~include, but are not limited to, the number of persons or~~  
494 ~~households that are no longer homeless, the rate of recidivism~~  
495 ~~to homelessness, and the number of persons who obtain gainful~~  
496 ~~employment.~~

497 (7) The State Office on Homelessness must monitor the  
498 challenge grants and homeless housing assistance grants to  
499 ensure proper expenditure of funds and compliance with the  
500 conditions of the applicant's contract.

501 (8) The Department of Children and Families, with input  
502 from the Council on Homelessness, may ~~must~~ adopt rules relating  
503 to the challenge grants and the homeless housing assistance  
504 grants and related issues consistent with the purposes of this  
505 section.

506 (9) The council shall, by June 30 of each year, provide to  
507 the Governor, the Legislature, and the Secretary of Children and  
508 Families a report summarizing the extent of homelessness in the  
509 state and the council's recommendations for ending ~~reducing~~  
510 homelessness in this state.

511 (10) The State Office on Homelessness may administer moneys  
512 appropriated to it for distribution among the ~~28 local homeless~~  
513 ~~continuums of care~~ continuum of care lead agencies and entities  
514 funded in the 2017-2018 state fiscal year which are designated  
515 by the office as local coalitions for the homeless ~~designated by~~  
516 ~~the Department of Children and Families.~~

517 Section 4. Section 420.6225, Florida Statutes, is created  
518 to read:

519 420.6225 Continuum of care.-

520 (1) The purpose of a continuum of care, as defined in s.



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521 420.621, is to coordinate community efforts to prevent and end  
522 homelessness in its catchment area designated as provided in  
523 subsection (3) and to fulfill the responsibilities set forth in  
524 this chapter.

525 (2) Pursuant to the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, each  
526 continuum of care is required to designate a collaborative  
527 applicant that is responsible for submitting the continuum of  
528 care funding application for the designated catchment area to  
529 the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.  
530 The continuum of care designated collaborative applicant shall  
531 serve as the point of contact to the State Office on  
532 Homelessness, is accountable for representations made in the  
533 application, and, in carrying out responsibilities under this  
534 chapter, may be referred to as the continuum of care lead  
535 agency.

536 (3) Continuum of care catchment areas must be designated  
537 and revised as necessary by the State Office on Homelessness and  
538 must be consistent with the continuum of care catchment areas  
539 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban  
540 Development for the purposes of awarding federal homeless  
541 assistance funding for continuum of care programs.

542 (4) The State Office on Homelessness shall recognize only  
543 one continuum of care lead agency for each designated catchment  
544 area. Such continuum of care lead agency must be consistent with  
545 the continuum of care collaborative applicant designation  
546 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban  
547 Development in the awarding of federal funds to continuums of  
548 care.

549 (5) Each continuum of care shall create a continuum of care



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550 plan, the purpose of which is to implement an effective and  
551 efficient housing crisis response system to prevent and end  
552 homelessness in the continuum of care catchment area. A  
553 continuum of care plan must include all of the following  
554 components:

555 (a) Outreach to unsheltered individuals and families to  
556 link them with appropriate housing interventions.

557 (b) A coordinated entry system, compliant with the  
558 requirements of the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, which is  
559 designed to coordinate intake, utilize common assessment tools,  
560 prioritize households for housing interventions, and refer  
561 households to the appropriate housing intervention.

562 (c) Emergency shelter, designed to provide safe temporary  
563 shelter while the household is in the process of obtaining  
564 permanent housing.

565 (d) Supportive services, designed to maximize housing  
566 stability once the household is in permanent housing.

567 (e) Permanent supportive housing, designed to provide long-  
568 term affordable housing and support services to persons with  
569 disabilities who are moving out of homelessness.

570 (f) Rapid ReHousing, as specified in s. 420.6265.

571 (g) Permanent housing, including linkages to affordable  
572 housing, subsidized housing, long-term rent assistance, housing  
573 vouchers, and mainstream private sector housing.

574 (h) An ongoing planning mechanism to end homelessness for  
575 all subpopulations of persons experiencing homelessness.

576 (6) Continuums of care must promote participation by all  
577 interested individuals and organizations and may not exclude  
578 individuals and organizations on the basis of race, color,



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579 national origin, sex, handicap, familial status, or religion.  
580 Faith-based organizations, local governments, and persons who  
581 have experienced homelessness are encouraged to participate. To  
582 the extent possible, these individuals and organizations must be  
583 coordinated and integrated with other mainstream health, social  
584 services, and employment programs for which homeless populations  
585 may be eligible, including, but not limited to, Medicaid, the  
586 State Children's Health Insurance Program, the Temporary  
587 Assistance for Needy Families Program, the Food Assistance  
588 Program, and services funded through the Mental Health and  
589 Substance Abuse Block Grant, the Workforce Innovation and  
590 Opportunity Act, and the welfare-to-work grant program.

591 Section 5. Section 420.6227, Florida Statutes, is created  
592 to read:

593 420.6227 Grant-in-aid program.—

594 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature hereby finds and  
595 declares that many services for households experiencing  
596 homelessness have been provided by local communities through  
597 voluntary private agencies and religious organizations and that  
598 those resources have not been sufficient to prevent and end  
599 homelessness in Florida. The Legislature recognizes that the  
600 level of need and types of problems associated with homelessness  
601 may vary from community to community, due to the diversity and  
602 geographic distribution of the homeless population and the  
603 resulting differing needs of particular communities.

604 (2) PURPOSE.—The principal purpose of the grant-in-aid  
605 program is to provide needed assistance to continuums of care to  
606 enable them to do all of the following:

607 (a) Assist persons in their communities who have become, or



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608 may likely become, homeless.

609 (b) Help homeless households move to permanent housing as  
610 quickly as possible.

611 (3) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established a state  
612 grant-in-aid program to help continuums of care prevent and end  
613 homelessness, which may include any aspect of the local  
614 continuum of care plan, as described in s. 420.6225.

615 (4) APPLICATION PROCEDURE.—Continuums of care that intend  
616 to apply for the grant-in-aid program must submit an application  
617 for grant-in-aid funds to the State Office on Homelessness for  
618 review.

619 (5) SPENDING PLANS.—The State Office on Homelessness shall  
620 develop guidelines for the development, evaluation, and approval  
621 of spending plans that are created by local continuum of care  
622 lead agencies.

623 (6) ALLOCATION OF GRANT FUNDS.—The State Office on  
624 Homelessness shall administer state grant-in-aid funds for  
625 continuums of care, which must be awarded on a competitive  
626 basis.

627 (7) DISTRIBUTION TO LOCAL AGENCIES.—The State Office on  
628 Homelessness shall distribute funds awarded under subsection (6)  
629 to local agencies to fund programs that are required by the  
630 local continuum of care plan, as described in s. 420.6225 and  
631 provided in subsection (3), based upon the recommendations of  
632 the local continuum of care lead agencies, in accordance with  
633 spending plans that are developed by the lead agencies and  
634 approved by the office. Not more than 10 percent of the total  
635 state funds awarded under a spending plan may be used by the  
636 continuum of care lead agency for staffing and administrative



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637 expenditures.

638 (8) LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS.—If an entity contracts with local  
639 agencies to provide services and receives financial assistance  
640 obtained under this section, the entity must provide a minimum  
641 of 25 percent of the funding necessary for the support of  
642 project operations. In-kind contributions, including, but not  
643 limited to, materials, commodities, transportation, office  
644 space, other types of facilities, or personal services may be  
645 evaluated and counted as part or all of the required local  
646 funding, at the discretion of the State Office on Homelessness.

647 Section 6. Section 420.623, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

648 Section 7. Section 420.624, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

649 Section 8. Section 420.625, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

650 Section 9. Subsection (3) of section 420.626, Florida  
651 Statutes, is amended, and subsection (2) of that section is  
652 republished, to read:

653 420.626 Homelessness; discharge guidelines.—

654 (2) The following facilities and institutions are  
655 encouraged to develop and implement procedures designed to  
656 reduce the discharge of persons into homelessness when such  
657 persons are admitted or housed for more than 24 hours at such  
658 facilities or institutions: hospitals and inpatient medical  
659 facilities; crisis stabilization units; residential treatment  
660 facilities; assisted living facilities; and detoxification  
661 centers.

662 (3) The procedures should include all of the following:

663 (a) Development and implementation of a screening process  
664 or other mechanism for identifying persons to be discharged from  
665 the facility or institution who are at considerable risk for



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666 homelessnes or face some imminent threat to health and safety  
667 upon discharge.†

668 (b) Development and implementation of a discharge plan  
669 addressing how identified persons will secure housing and other  
670 needed care and support upon discharge.†

671 (c) Communication with Assessment of the capabilities of  
672 the entities to whom identified persons may potentially be  
673 discharged to determine their capability to serve such persons  
674 and their acceptance of such discharge into their programs, and  
675 selection of the entity determined to be best equipped to  
676 provide or facilitate the provision of suitable care and  
677 support.†

678 (d) Coordination of effort and sharing of information with  
679 entities that are expected to bear the responsibility for  
680 providing care or support to identified persons upon discharge.†  
681 and

682 (e) Provision of sufficient medication, medical equipment  
683 and supplies, clothing, transportation, and other basic  
684 resources necessary to assure that the health and well-being of  
685 identified persons are not jeopardized upon their discharge.

686 Section 10. Section 420.6265, Florida Statutes, is amended  
687 to read:

688 420.6265 Rapid ReHousing.—

689 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

690 (a) The Legislature finds that Rapid ReHousing is a  
691 strategy of using temporary financial assistance ~~and case~~  
692 ~~management~~ to quickly move an individual or family out of  
693 homelessness and into permanent housing, and using housing  
694 stabilization support services to help them remain stably





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695 housed.

696 (b) The Legislature also finds that public and private  
697 solutions to homelessness in the past have focused on providing  
698 individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness with  
699 emergency shelter, transitional housing, or a combination of  
700 both. While emergency shelter and transitional housing programs  
701 may provide critical access to services for individuals and  
702 families in crisis, the programs often fail to address permanent  
703 housing ~~their long-term~~ needs and may unnecessarily extend their  
704 episodes of homelessness.

705 (c) The Legislature further finds that most households  
706 become homeless as a result of a financial crisis that prevents  
707 individuals and families from paying rent or a domestic conflict  
708 that results in one member being ejected or leaving without  
709 resources or a plan for housing.

710 (d) The Legislature further finds that Rapid ReHousing has  
711 proven to be a cost-effective ~~is an alternative~~ approach to  
712 ending homelessness which reduces ~~to the current system of~~  
713 emergency shelter or transitional housing which tends to reduce  
714 the length of time that a person is homeless and is demonstrably  
715 has ~~proven to be~~ more cost effective than alternative  
716 approaches.

717 (e) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to  
718 encourage ~~homeless~~ continuums of care to adopt the Rapid  
719 ReHousing approach to ending ~~preventing~~ homelessness for  
720 individuals and families who do not require the intensive  
721 intense level of supports provided in the permanent supportive  
722 housing model.

723 (2) RAPID REHOUSING METHODOLOGY.-



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724 (a) The Rapid ReHousing response to homelessness differs  
725 from traditional approaches to addressing homelessness by  
726 focusing on each individual's or family's barriers to housing.  
727 By using this approach, communities can significantly reduce the  
728 amount of time that individuals and families are homeless and  
729 prevent further episodes of homelessness.

730 (b) In Rapid ReHousing, when an individual or a family is  
731 identified as being homeless, the individual or family is  
732 assessed and prioritized for housing through the continuum of  
733 care's coordinated entry system, temporary assistance is  
734 provided to allow the individual or family to obtain permanent  
735 housing as quickly as possible, and necessary, ~~if needed,~~  
736 assistance is provided to allow the individual or family to  
737 retain housing.

738 (c) The objective of Rapid ReHousing is to provide  
739 assistance for as short a term as possible so that the  
740 individual or family receiving assistance attains stability and  
741 integration into the community as quickly as possible ~~does not~~  
742 ~~develop a dependency on the assistance.~~

743 Section 11. Section 420.6275, Florida Statutes, is amended  
744 to read:

745 420.6275 Housing First.—

746 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

747 (a) The Legislature finds that many communities plan to  
748 manage homelessness rather than ~~plan~~ to end it.

749 (b) The Legislature also finds that for nearly ~~most of the~~  
750 ~~past~~ two decades, public and private solutions to homelessness  
751 ~~have~~ focused on providing individuals and families who were ~~are~~  
752 experiencing homelessness with emergency shelter, transitional



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753 housing, or a combination of both. This strategy failed to  
754 recognize that, while emergency shelter programs may provide  
755 critical access to services for individuals and families in  
756 crisis, they often fail to address their long-term needs.

757 (c) The Legislature further finds that Housing First is a  
758 cost-effective ~~an alternative approach to the current system of~~  
759 ~~emergency shelter or transitional housing which tends to ending~~  
760 homelessness and reducing ~~reduce~~ the length of time of  
761 homelessness for many individuals and families ~~and has proven to~~  
762 ~~be cost-effective.~~

763 (d) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to  
764 encourage ~~homeless~~ continuums of care to adopt the Housing First  
765 approach to ending homelessness for individuals and families.

766 (2) HOUSING FIRST METHODOLOGY.—

767 (a) The Housing First approach to homelessness provides  
768 permanent ~~differs from traditional approaches by providing~~  
769 housing assistance, followed by ~~case management,~~ and support  
770 services responsive to individual or family needs once ~~after~~  
771 housing is obtained. By using this approach ~~when appropriate,~~  
772 communities can significantly reduce the amount of time that  
773 individuals and families are homeless and prevent further  
774 episodes of homelessness. Housing First emphasizes that social  
775 services provided to enhance individual and family well-being  
776 can be more effective when people are in their own home, and:

777 1. The housing is not time-limited.

778 2. The housing is not contingent on compliance with  
779 services. Instead, participants must comply with a standard  
780 lease agreement.

781 3. Individuals and families ~~and~~ are provided with



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782 individualized ~~the~~ services and support ~~that are~~ necessary to  
783 help them maintain stable housing ~~do so successfully~~.

784 ~~3. A background check and any rehabilitation necessary to~~  
785 ~~combat an addiction related to alcoholism or substance abuse has~~  
786 ~~been completed by the individual for whom assistance or support~~  
787 ~~services are provided.~~

788 (b) The Housing First approach addresses the societal  
789 causes of homelessness and advocates for the immediate return of  
790 individuals and families into housing and communities. Housing  
791 First links affordable housing with community-based social  
792 service and health care organizations ~~Housing First provides a~~  
793 ~~critical link between the emergency and transitional housing~~  
794 ~~system and community-based social service, educational, and~~  
795 ~~health care organizations~~ and consists of four components:

- 796 1. Crisis intervention and short-term stabilization.  
797 2. Screening, intake, and needs assessment.  
798 3. Provision of housing resources.  
799 4. Provision of case management.

800 Section 12. Paragraph (d) of subsection (22) of section  
801 420.507, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

802 420.507 Powers of the corporation.—The corporation shall  
803 have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and  
804 effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part, including  
805 the following powers which are in addition to all other powers  
806 granted by other provisions of this part:

807 (22) To develop and administer the State Apartment  
808 Incentive Loan Program. In developing and administering that  
809 program, the corporation may:

810 (d) In counties or rural areas of counties that do not have



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811 existing units set aside for homeless persons, forgive  
812 indebtedness for loans provided to create permanent rental  
813 housing units for persons who are homeless, as defined in s.  
814 420.621 ~~s. 420.621(5)~~, or for persons residing in time-limited  
815 transitional housing or institutions as a result of a lack of  
816 permanent, affordable housing. Such developments must be  
817 supported by a ~~local homeless assistance~~ continuum of care  
818 developed under s. 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~, be developed by  
819 nonprofit applicants, be small properties as defined by  
820 corporation rule, and be a project in the local housing  
821 assistance continuum of care plan recognized by the State Office  
822 on Homelessness.

823 Section 13. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.