

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to homelessness; amending s. 420.621,
3 F.S.; revising and providing definitions; amending s.
4 420.622, F.S.; increasing the number of members on the
5 Council on Homelessness to include a representative of
6 the Florida Housing Coalition and the Secretary of the
7 Department of Elder Affairs or his or her designee;
8 providing that appointed council members are
9 encouraged to have certain experience; revising the
10 duties of the State Office on Homelessness; revising
11 requirements for the state's system of homeless
12 programs; requiring entities that receive state
13 funding to provide summary aggregated data to assist
14 the council in providing certain information; removing
15 the requirement that the office have the concurrence
16 of the council to accept and administer moneys
17 appropriated to it to provide certain annual challenge
18 grants to continuums of care lead agencies; clarifying
19 the source of such appropriation; increasing the
20 maximum amount of grant awards per continuum of care
21 lead agency; conforming provisions to changes made by
22 the act; revising requirements for use of grant funds
23 by continuum of care lead agencies; revising
24 preference criteria for certain grants; increasing the
25 maximum percentage of its funding which a continuum of

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

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

76 | to the office for review; requiring the office to
77 | develop guidelines for the development, evaluation,
78 | and approval of spending plans; requiring grant-in-aid
79 | funds for continuums of care to be administered by the
80 | office and awarded on a competitive basis; requiring
81 | the office to distribute such funds to local agencies
82 | to fund programs that are required by the local
83 | continuum of care plan, based on certain
84 | recommendations; limiting the percentage of the total
85 | state funds awarded under a spending plan which may be
86 | used by the continuum of care lead agency for staffing
87 | and administrative expenditures; requiring entities
88 | contracting with local agencies to provide services
89 | through certain financial assistance programs to
90 | provide a specified minimum percentage of the funding
91 | necessary for the support of project operations;
92 | authorizing in-kind contributions to be evaluated and
93 | counted as part or all of the required local funding,
94 | at the discretion of the office; repealing s. 420.623,
95 | F.S., relating to local coalitions for the homeless;
96 | repealing s. 420.624, F.S., relating to local homeless
97 | assistance continuums of care; repealing s. 420.625,
98 | F.S., relating to a grant-in-aid program; amending s.
99 | 420.626, F.S.; revising procedures that certain
100 | facilities and institutions are encouraged to develop

101 and implement to reduce the discharge of persons into
 102 homelessness when such persons are admitted or housed
 103 for a specified period at such facilities or
 104 institutions; amending s. 420.6265, F.S.; revising
 105 legislative findings and intent for Rapid ReHousing;
 106 revising the Rapid ReHousing methodology; amending s.
 107 420.6275, F.S.; revising legislative findings relating
 108 to Housing First; revising the Housing First
 109 methodology to reflect current practice; amending s.
 110 420.507, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing
 111 an effective date.

112

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

114

115 Section 1. Section 420.621, Florida Statutes, is amended
 116 to read:

117 420.621 Definitions.—As used in ss. 420.621-420.628, the
 118 term:

119 (1) "Continuum of care" means a group organized to carry
 120 out the responsibilities imposed under ss. 420.621-420.628 to
 121 coordinate, plan, and pursue ending homelessness in a designated
 122 catchment area. Such a group shall be composed of
 123 representatives from certain organizations, including, but not
 124 limited to, nonprofit homeless providers, victim service
 125 providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses,

126 advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social
 127 service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals,
 128 universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement,
 129 organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless
 130 veterans, and organizations that serve homeless and formerly
 131 homeless persons, to the extent that these organizations are
 132 represented within the designated catchment area and are
 133 available to participate ~~the community components needed to~~
 134 ~~organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific~~
 135 ~~needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing~~
 136 ~~and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end~~
 137 ~~homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.~~

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

141 (3) ~~(2)~~ "Council on Homelessness" means the council created
 142 in s. 420.622.

143 (4) ~~(3)~~ "Department" means the Department of Children and
 144 Families.

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

147 (5) "Homeless~~r~~" means any of the following:

148 (a) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular,
 149 and adequate nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in
 150 24 C.F.R. 578.3.

151 (b) An individual or family who will imminently lose their
152 primary nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in 24
153 C.F.R. 578.3.~~applied to an individual, or "individual~~
154 ~~experiencing homelessness" means an individual who lacks a~~
155 ~~fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes an~~
156 ~~individual who:~~

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

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

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

163 ~~(d) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or~~
164 ~~private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular~~
165 ~~sleeping accommodation for human beings;~~

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

168 ~~(f) Is a migratory individual who qualifies as homeless~~
169 ~~because he or she is living in circumstances described in~~
170 ~~paragraphs (a)–(e).~~

171
172 ~~The terms do not refer to an individual imprisoned pursuant to~~
173 ~~state or federal law or to individuals or families who are~~
174 ~~sharing housing due to cultural preferences, voluntary~~
175 ~~arrangements, or traditional networks of support. The terms~~

176 | ~~include an individual who has been released from jail, prison,~~
 177 | ~~the juvenile justice system, the child welfare system, a mental~~
 178 | ~~health and developmental disability facility, a residential~~
 179 | ~~addiction treatment program, or a hospital, for whom no~~
 180 | ~~subsequent residence has been identified, and who lacks the~~
 181 | ~~resources and support network to obtain housing.~~

182 | ~~(6) "Local coalition for the homeless" means a coalition~~
 183 | ~~established pursuant to s. 420.623.~~

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

186 | (6)~~(8)~~ "State Office on Homelessness" means the state
 187 | office created in s. 420.622.

188 | Section 2. Section 420.622, Florida Statutes, is amended
 189 | to read:

190 | 420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on
 191 | Homelessness.—

192 | (1) The State Office on Homelessness is created within the
 193 | Department of Children and Families to provide interagency,
 194 | council, and other related coordination on issues relating to
 195 | homelessness.

196 | (2) The Council on Homelessness is created to consist of
 197 | 19 ~~17~~ representatives of public and private agencies who shall
 198 | develop policy and advise the State Office on Homelessness. The
 199 | council members shall be: the Secretary of Children and
 200 | Families, or his or her designee; the executive director of the

201 Department of Economic Opportunity, or his or her designee, who
202 shall advise the council on issues related to rural development;
203 the State Surgeon General, or his or her designee; the Executive
204 Director of Veterans' Affairs, or his or her designee; the
205 Secretary of Corrections, or his or her designee; the Secretary
206 of Health Care Administration, or his or her designee; the
207 Commissioner of Education, or his or her designee; the Director
208 of CareerSource Florida, Inc., or his or her designee; one
209 representative of the Florida Association of Counties; one
210 representative of the Florida League of Cities; one
211 representative of the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition; one
212 representative of the Florida Housing Coalition; the Executive
213 Director of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, or his or
214 her designee; one representative of the Florida Coalition for
215 the Homeless; the Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs,
216 or his or her designee; and four members appointed by the
217 Governor. The council members shall be nonpaid volunteers and
218 shall be reimbursed only for travel expenses. The appointed
219 members of the council shall be appointed to staggered 2-year
220 terms, and are encouraged to have experience in the
221 administration or provision of resources, services, or housing
222 that addresses the needs of persons experiencing homelessness.
223 The council shall meet at least four times per year. The
224 importance of minority, gender, and geographic representation
225 shall be considered in appointing members to the council.

226 (3) The State Office on Homelessness, pursuant to the
227 policies set by the council and subject to the availability of
228 funding, shall:

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

234 1. Programs authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless
235 Assistance ~~Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance~~ Act of 1987,
236 as amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid
237 Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009, 42 U.S.C. ss. 11302
238 ~~ss. 11371~~ et seq., and carried out under funds awarded to this
239 state; and

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

242 (b) Collect, maintain, and make available information
243 concerning persons who are homeless ~~or at risk for homelessness~~,
244 including summary demographics information drawn from the local
245 continuum of care Homeless Management Information System or the
246 annual Point-in-Time Count, and the local continuum of care
247 Housing Inventory Chart required by the Department of Housing
248 and Urban Development ~~current services and resources available,~~
249 ~~the cost and availability of services and programs, and the met~~
250 ~~and unmet needs of this population.~~ All entities that receive

251 state funding must provide summary aggregated ~~access to all~~ data
252 ~~they maintain in summary form~~, with no individual identifying
253 information, to assist the council in providing this
254 information. The State Office on Homelessness, in consultation
255 with the designated lead agencies for a ~~local homeless~~ continuum
256 of care and with the Council on Homelessness, shall develop a
257 process by which summary data is collected ~~the system and~~
258 ~~process of data collection~~ from all lead agencies for the
259 purpose of analyzing trends and assessing impacts in the
260 ~~statewide homeless delivery~~ system for delivering services to
261 the homeless. ~~Any statewide homelessness survey and database~~
262 ~~system must comply with all state and federal statutory and~~
263 ~~regulatory confidentiality requirements.~~

264 (c) Annually evaluate state and continuum of care system
265 programs ~~local services and resources~~ and develop a consolidated
266 plan for addressing the needs of the homeless or those at risk
267 for homelessness.

268 (d) Explore, compile, and disseminate information
269 regarding public and private funding sources for state and local
270 programs serving the homeless and provide technical assistance
271 in applying for such funding.

272 (e) Monitor and provide recommendations for coordinating
273 the activities and programs of continuums of care ~~local~~
274 ~~coalitions for the homeless~~ and promote the effectiveness of
275 programs to prevent and end homelessness in the state ~~addressing~~

276 | ~~the needs of the homeless.~~

277 | (f) Provide technical assistance to facilitate efforts to
278 | support and strengthen ~~establish, maintain, and expand local~~
279 | ~~homeless assistance~~ continuums of care.

280 | (g) Develop and assist in the coordination of policies and
281 | procedures relating to the discharge or transfer from the care
282 | or custody of state-supported or state-regulated entities
283 | persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.

284 | (h) Spearhead outreach efforts for maximizing access by
285 | people who are homeless or at risk for homelessness to state and
286 | federal programs and resources.

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

290 | (j) Review reports on continuum of care system performance
291 | measures and ~~Develop outcome and accountability measures and~~
292 | ~~promote and~~ use such measures to evaluate program effectiveness
293 | and make recommendations for improving current practices to work
294 | toward ending homelessness in this state ~~in order to best meet~~
295 | ~~the needs of the homeless.~~

296 | (k) Formulate policies and legislative proposals aimed at
297 | preventing and ending homelessness in this state ~~to address more~~
298 | ~~effectively the needs of the homeless~~ and coordinate the
299 | implementation of state and federal legislative policies.

300 | (l) Convene meetings and workshops of state and local

301 agencies, continuum of care ~~local coalitions and programs~~, and
302 other stakeholders for the purpose of developing and reviewing
303 policies, services, activities, coordination, and funding of
304 efforts to end homelessness ~~meet the needs of the homeless~~.

305 (m) With the input of the continuum of care, conduct or
306 promote research on the effectiveness of current programs and
307 propose pilot projects aimed at ending homelessness ~~improving~~
308 ~~services~~.

309 (n) Serve as an advocate for issues relating to
310 homelessness.

311 (o) Investigate ways to improve access to participation in
312 state funding and other programs for prevention and reduction
313 ~~alleviation~~ of homelessness to faith-based organizations and
314 collaborate and coordinate with faith-based organizations.

315 (4) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~
316 ~~of the Council on Homelessness~~, shall accept and administer
317 moneys appropriated to it to provide annual "challenge grants"
318 to lead agencies of ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum of care
319 designated by the State Office on Homelessness pursuant to s.
320 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~. The department shall establish varying
321 levels of grant awards up to \$750,000 ~~\$500,000~~ per continuum of
322 care lead agency. The department, in consultation with the
323 Council on Homelessness, shall specify a grant award level in
324 the notice of the solicitation of grant applications.

325 (a) To qualify for the grant, a continuum of care lead

326 agency must develop and implement a local ~~homeless assistance~~
327 continuum of care plan for its designated catchment area. The
328 services and housing funded through the grant must be
329 implemented through the continuum of care's entry ~~continuum of~~
330 ~~care plan must implement a coordinated assessment or central~~
331 ~~intake system~~ as provided in s. 420.6225(5)(b) and must be
332 designed to screen, assess, and refer persons seeking assistance
333 to the appropriate housing intervention and service provider.
334 The continuum of care lead agency shall also document the
335 commitment of local government or private organizations to
336 provide matching funds or in-kind support in an amount equal to
337 25 percent of the grant requested. Expenditures of leveraged
338 funds or resources, including third-party cash or in-kind
339 contributions, are authorized only for eligible activities
340 carried out in connection with a ~~committed on one project in~~
341 which such funds or resources have not been used as leverage or
342 match for any other project or program. The expenditures and
343 must be certified through a written commitment.

344 (b) Preference must be given to those continuum of care
345 lead agencies that have demonstrated the ability of their
346 continuum of care to help households move out of homelessness
347 ~~provide quality services to homeless persons and the ability to~~
348 ~~leverage federal homeless assistance funding under the Stewart~~
349 ~~B. McKinney Act with local government funding or private funding~~
350 ~~for the provision of services to homeless persons.~~

351 ~~(c) Preference must be given to lead agencies in catchment~~
352 ~~areas with the greatest need for the provision of housing and~~
353 ~~services to the homeless, relative to the population of the~~
354 ~~catchment area.~~

355 (c)~~(d)~~ The grant may be used to fund any of the housing,
356 program, or service needs included in the local ~~homeless~~
357 ~~assistance~~ continuum of care plan. The continuum of care lead
358 agency may allocate the grant to programs, services, or housing
359 providers that implement the local ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum
360 of care plan. The lead agency may provide subgrants to a local
361 agency to implement programs or services or provide housing
362 identified for funding in the lead agency's application to the
363 department. A lead agency may spend a maximum of 10 ~~&~~ percent of
364 its funding on administrative costs.

365 (d)~~(e)~~ The continuum of care lead agency shall submit a
366 final report to the department documenting the outcomes achieved
367 by the grant-funded programs ~~grant~~ in enabling persons who are
368 homeless to return to permanent housing, thereby ending such
369 person's episode of homelessness.

370 (5) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~
371 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ may administer moneys given
372 ~~appropriated~~ to it to provide homeless housing assistance grants
373 annually to continuum of care lead agencies ~~for local homeless~~
374 ~~assistance continuum of care,~~ as recognized by the State Office
375 on Homelessness, to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate

376 ~~transitional or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.
377 These moneys shall consist of any sums that the state may
378 appropriate, as well as money received from donations, gifts,
379 bequests, or otherwise from any public or private source, which
380 are intended to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate ~~transitional~~
381 ~~or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.

382 (a) Grant applicants shall be ranked competitively based
383 on criteria determined by the State Office on Homelessness.
384 ~~Preference must be given to applicants who leverage additional~~
385 ~~private funds and public funds, particularly federal funds~~
386 ~~designated for the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation~~
387 ~~of transitional or permanent housing for homeless persons; who~~
388 ~~acquire, build, or rehabilitate the greatest number of units; or~~
389 ~~who acquire, build, or rehabilitate in catchment areas having~~
390 ~~the greatest need for housing for the homeless relative to the~~
391 ~~population of the catchment area.~~

392 (b) Funding for any particular project may not exceed
393 \$750,000.

394 (c) Projects must reserve, for a minimum of 20 ~~10~~ years,
395 the number of units acquired, constructed, or rehabilitated
396 through homeless housing assistance grant funding to serve
397 persons who are homeless at the time they assume tenancy.

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

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

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

408 (6) The State Office on Homelessness, in conjunction with
409 the Council on Homelessness, shall establish performance
410 measures related to state funding provided through the State
411 Office on Homelessness and use those grant-related measures to
412 ~~and specific objectives by which it may evaluate the performance~~
413 ~~and outcomes of~~ continuum of care lead agencies that receive
414 state grant funds. Challenge Grants made through the State
415 ~~Office on Homelessness shall be distributed to lead agencies~~
416 ~~based on their overall performance and their achievement of~~
417 ~~specified objectives. Each lead agency for which grants are made~~
418 ~~under this section shall provide the State Office on~~
419 ~~Homelessness a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the~~
420 ~~program in achieving its stated purpose. In evaluating the~~
421 ~~performance of the lead agencies, the State Office on~~
422 ~~Homelessness shall base its criteria upon the program~~
423 ~~objectives, goals, and priorities that were set forth by the~~
424 ~~lead agencies in their proposals for funding. Such criteria may~~
425 ~~include, but are not limited to, the number of persons or~~

426 ~~households that are no longer homeless, the rate of recidivism~~
 427 ~~to homelessness, and the number of persons who obtain gainful~~
 428 ~~employment.~~

429 (7) The State Office on Homelessness must monitor the
 430 challenge grants and homeless housing assistance grants to
 431 ensure proper expenditure of funds and compliance with the
 432 conditions of the applicant's contract.

433 (8) The Department of Children and Families, with input
 434 from the Council on Homelessness, may ~~must~~ adopt rules relating
 435 to the challenge grants and the homeless housing assistance
 436 grants and related issues consistent with the purposes of this
 437 section.

438 (9) The council shall, by June 30 of each year, provide to
 439 the Governor, the Legislature, and the Secretary of Children and
 440 Families a report summarizing the extent of homelessness in the
 441 state and the council's recommendations for ending ~~reducing~~
 442 homelessness in this state.

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

449 Section 3. Section 420.6225, Florida Statutes, is created
 450 to read:

451 420.6225 Continuum of care.—

452 (1) The purpose of a continuum of care, as defined in s.
453 420.621, is to coordinate community efforts to prevent and end
454 homelessness in its catchment area designated as provided in
455 subsection (3) and to fulfill the responsibilities set forth in
456 this chapter.

457 (2) Pursuant to the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, each
458 continuum of care is required to designate a collaborative
459 applicant that is responsible for submitting the continuum of
460 care funding application for the designated catchment area to
461 the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.
462 The continuum of care designated collaborative applicant shall
463 serve as the point of contact to the State Office on
464 Homelessness, is accountable for representations made in the
465 application, and, in carrying out responsibilities under this
466 chapter, may be referred to as the continuum of care lead
467 agency.

468 (3) Continuum of care catchment areas must be designated
469 and revised as necessary by the State Office on Homelessness and
470 must be consistent with the continuum of care catchment areas
471 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban
472 Development for the purposes of awarding federal homeless
473 assistance funding for continuum of care programs.

474 (4) The State Office on Homelessness shall recognize only
475 one continuum of care lead agency for each designated catchment

476 area. Such continuum of care lead agency must be consistent with
477 the continuum of care collaborative applicant designation
478 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban
479 Development in the awarding of federal funds to continuums of
480 care.

481 (5) Each continuum of care shall create a continuum of
482 care plan, the purpose of which is to implement an effective and
483 efficient housing crisis response system to prevent and end
484 homelessness in the continuum of care catchment area. A
485 continuum of care plan must include all of the following
486 components:

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

489 (b) A coordinated entry system, compliant with the
490 requirements of the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, which is
491 designed to coordinate intake, utilize common assessment tools,
492 prioritize households for housing interventions, and refer
493 households to the appropriate housing intervention.

494 (c) Emergency shelter, designed to provide safe temporary
495 shelter while the household is in the process of obtaining
496 permanent housing.

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

499 (e) Permanent supportive housing, designed to provide
500 long-term affordable housing and support services to persons

501 with disabilities who are moving out of homelessness.

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

503 (g) Permanent housing, including linkages to affordable
504 housing, subsidized housing, long-term rent assistance, housing
505 vouchers, and mainstream private sector housing.

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

508 (6) Continuums of care must promote participation by all
509 interested individuals and organizations and may not exclude
510 individuals and organizations on the basis of race, color,
511 national origin, sex, handicap, familial status, or religion.
512 Faith-based organizations, local governments, and persons who
513 have experienced homelessness are encouraged to participate. To
514 the extent possible, these individuals and organizations must be
515 coordinated and integrated with other mainstream health, social
516 services, and employment programs for which homeless populations
517 may be eligible, including, but not limited to, Medicaid, the
518 State Children's Health Insurance Program, the Temporary
519 Assistance for Needy Families Program, the Food Assistance
520 Program, and services funded through the Mental Health and
521 Substance Abuse Block Grant, the Workforce Innovation and
522 Opportunity Act, and the welfare-to-work grant program.

523 Section 4. Section 420.6227, Florida Statutes, is created
524 to read:

525 420.6227 Grant-in-aid program.—

526 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds and
527 declares that many services for households experiencing
528 homelessness have been provided by local communities through
529 voluntary private agencies and religious organizations and that
530 those resources have not been sufficient to prevent and end
531 homelessness in Florida. The Legislature recognizes that the
532 level of need and types of problems associated with homelessness
533 may vary from community to community, due to the diversity and
534 geographic distribution of the homeless population and the
535 resulting differing needs of particular communities.

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

539 (a) Assist persons in their communities who have become,
540 or may likely become, homeless.

541 (b) Help homeless households move to permanent housing as
542 quickly as possible.

543 (3) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a state grant-in-
544 aid program to help continuums of care prevent and end
545 homelessness, which may include any aspect of the local
546 continuum of care plan, as described in 420.6225.

547 (4) APPLICATION PROCEDURE.—Continuums of care that intend
548 to apply for the grant-in-aid program must submit an application
549 for grant-in-aid funds to the State Office on Homelessness for
550 review.

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

555 (6) ALLOCATION OF GRANT FUNDS.—The State Office on
556 Homelessness shall administer state grant-in-aid funds for
557 continuum of care, which must be awarded on a competitive
558 basis.

559 (7) DISTRIBUTION TO LOCAL AGENCIES.—The State Office on
560 Homelessness shall distribute funds awarded under subsection (6)
561 to local agencies to fund programs that are required by the
562 local continuum of care plan, as described in s. 420.6225 and
563 provided in subsection (3), based upon the recommendations of
564 the local continuum of care lead agencies, in accordance with
565 spending plans that are developed by the lead agencies and
566 approved by the office. Not more than 10 percent of the total
567 state funds awarded under a spending plan may be used by the
568 continuum of care lead agency for staffing and administrative
569 expenditures.

570 (8) LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS.—If an entity contracts with
571 local agencies to provide services and receives financial
572 assistance obtained under this section, the entity must provide
573 at least 25 percent of the funding necessary for the support of
574 project operations. In-kind contributions, including, but not
575 limited to, materials, commodities, transportation, office

576 space, other types of facilities, or personal services may be
 577 evaluated and counted as part or all of the required local
 578 funding, at the discretion of the State Office on Homelessness.

579 Section 5. Section 420.623, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

580 Section 6. Section 420.624, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

581 Section 7. Section 420.625, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

582 Section 8. Subsection (3) of section 420.626, Florida
 583 Statutes, is amended, and subsection (2) of that section is
 584 republished, to read:

585 420.626 Homelessness; discharge guidelines.—

586 (2) The following facilities and institutions are
 587 encouraged to develop and implement procedures designed to
 588 reduce the discharge of persons into homelessness when such
 589 persons are admitted or housed for more than 24 hours at such
 590 facilities or institutions: hospitals and inpatient medical
 591 facilities; crisis stabilization units; residential treatment
 592 facilities; assisted living facilities; and detoxification
 593 centers.

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

595 (a) Development and implementation of a screening process
 596 or other mechanism for identifying persons to be discharged from
 597 the facility or institution who are at considerable risk for
 598 homelessness or face some imminent threat to health and safety
 599 upon discharge.†

600 (b) Development and implementation of a discharge plan

601 addressing how identified persons will secure housing and other
602 needed care and support upon discharge.~~†~~

603 (c) Communication with ~~Assessment of the capabilities of~~
604 the entities to whom identified persons may potentially be
605 discharged to determine their capability to serve such persons
606 and their acceptance of such discharge into their programs, and
607 selection of the entity determined to be best equipped to
608 provide or facilitate the provision of suitable care and
609 support.~~†~~

610 (d) Coordination of effort and sharing of information with
611 entities that are expected to bear the responsibility for
612 providing care or support to identified persons upon discharge.~~†~~
613 ~~and~~

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

618 Section 9. Section 420.6265, Florida Statutes, is amended
619 to read:

620 420.6265 Rapid ReHousing.—

621 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

622 (a) The Legislature finds that Rapid ReHousing is a
623 strategy of using temporary financial assistance ~~and case~~
624 ~~management~~ to quickly move an individual or family out of
625 homelessness and into permanent housing, and using housing

626 stabilization support services to help them remain stably
627 housed.

628 (b) The Legislature also finds that public and private
629 solutions to homelessness in the past have focused on providing
630 individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness with
631 emergency shelter, transitional housing, or a combination of
632 both. While emergency shelter and transitional housing programs
633 may provide critical access to services for individuals and
634 families in crisis, the programs often fail to address permanent
635 housing ~~their long-term~~ needs and may unnecessarily extend their
636 episodes of homelessness.

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

642 (d) The Legislature further finds that Rapid ReHousing has
643 proven to be a cost effective ~~is an alternative~~ approach to
644 ending homelessness which reduces ~~to the current system of~~
645 ~~emergency shelter or transitional housing which tends to reduce~~
646 the length of time that a person is homeless and is demonstrably
647 more ~~has proven to be~~ cost effective than alternative
648 approaches.

649 (e) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to
650 encourage ~~homeless~~ continuums of care to adopt the Rapid

651 ReHousing approach to ending ~~preventing~~ homelessness for
652 individuals and families who do not require the intensive
653 ~~intense~~ level of supports provided in the permanent supportive
654 housing model.

655 (2) RAPID REHOUSING METHODOLOGY.—

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

662 (b) In Rapid ReHousing, when an individual or a family is
663 identified as being homeless, the individual or family is
664 assessed and prioritized for housing through the continuum of
665 care's coordinated entry system, temporary assistance is
666 provided to allow the individual or family to obtain permanent
667 housing as quickly as possible, and necessary, ~~if needed~~,
668 assistance is provided to allow the individual or family to
669 retain housing.

670 (c) The objective of Rapid ReHousing is to provide
671 assistance for as short a term as possible so that the
672 individual or family receiving assistance attains stability and
673 integration into the community as quickly as possible ~~does not~~
674 ~~develop a dependency on the assistance~~.

675 Section 10. Section 420.6275, Florida Statutes, is amended

676 to read:

677 420.6275 Housing First.—

678 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

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

681 (b) The Legislature also finds that for nearly ~~most of the~~
682 ~~past~~ two decades, public and private solutions to homelessness
683 ~~have~~ focused on providing individuals and families who were ~~are~~
684 experiencing homelessness with emergency shelter, transitional
685 housing, or a combination of both. This strategy failed to
686 recognize that, while emergency shelter programs may provide
687 critical access to services for individuals and families in
688 crisis, they often fail to address their long-term needs.

689 (c) The Legislature further finds that Housing First is a
690 cost effective ~~an alternative~~ approach to the current system of
691 ~~emergency shelter or transitional housing which tends to~~ ending
692 homelessness and reducing ~~reduce~~ the length of time of
693 homelessness for many individuals and families ~~and has proven to~~
694 ~~be cost-effective~~.

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

698 (2) HOUSING FIRST METHODOLOGY.—

699 (a) The Housing First approach to homelessness provides
700 permanent ~~differs from traditional approaches by providing~~

701 housing assistance, followed by ~~case management,~~ and support
702 services responsive to individual or family needs once ~~after~~
703 housing is obtained. By using this approach ~~when appropriate,~~
704 communities can significantly reduce the amount of time that
705 individuals and families are homeless and prevent further
706 episodes of homelessness. Housing First emphasizes that social
707 services provided to enhance individual and family well-being
708 can be more effective when people are in their own home, and:

709 1. The housing is not time-limited.
710 2. The housing is not contingent on compliance with
711 services. Instead, participants must comply with a standard
712 lease agreement.

713 3. Individuals and families ~~and~~ are provided with
714 individualized ~~the~~ services and support ~~that are~~ necessary to
715 help them maintain stable housing ~~do so successfully.~~

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

720 (b) The Housing First approach addresses the societal
721 causes of homelessness and advocates for the immediate return of
722 individuals and families into housing and communities. Housing
723 First links affordable housing with community-based social
724 service and health care organizations ~~Housing First provides a~~
725 ~~critical link between the emergency and transitional housing~~

726 ~~system and community-based social service, educational, and~~
 727 ~~health care organizations~~ and consists of four components:

- 728 1. Crisis intervention and short-term stabilization.
- 729 2. Screening, intake, and needs assessment.
- 730 3. Provision of housing resources.
- 731 4. Provision of case management.

732 Section 11. Paragraph (d) of subsection (22) of section
 733 420.507, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

734 420.507 Powers of the corporation.—The corporation shall
 735 have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and
 736 effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part, including
 737 the following powers which are in addition to all other powers
 738 granted by other provisions of this part:

739 (22) To develop and administer the State Apartment
 740 Incentive Loan Program. In developing and administering that
 741 program, the corporation may:

742 (d) In counties or rural areas of counties that do not
 743 have existing units set aside for homeless persons, forgive
 744 indebtedness for loans provided to create permanent rental
 745 housing units for persons who are homeless, as defined in s.
 746 420.621 ~~s. 420.621(5)~~, or for persons residing in time-limited
 747 transitional housing or institutions as a result of a lack of
 748 permanent, affordable housing. Such developments must be
 749 supported by a ~~local homeless assistance~~ continuum of care
 750 developed under s. 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~, be developed by

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751 nonprofit applicants, be small properties as defined by
752 corporation rule, and be a project in the local housing
753 assistance continuum of care plan recognized by the State Office
754 on Homelessness.

755 Section 12. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019.