

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 specified criteria;
38 | deleting preference requirements; increasing the
39 | minimum number of years for which projects must
40 | reserve certain units acquired, constructed, or
41 | rehabilitated; increasing the maximum percentage of
42 | funds the office and each applicant may spend on
43 | administrative costs; revising certain performance
44 | measure requirements; authorizing, instead of
45 | 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 the
 105 Rapid ReHousing methodology; amending s. 420.6275,
 106 F.S.; revising the Housing First methodology; amending
 107 s. 420.507, F.S.; conforming cross-references;
 108 providing an effective date.

109
 110 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

111
 112 Section 1. Section 420.621, Florida Statutes, is amended
 113 to read:

114 420.621 Definitions.—As used in ss. 420.621-420.628, the
 115 term:

116 (1) "Continuum of care" means a group organized to carry
 117 out the responsibilities imposed under ss. 420.621-420.628 to
 118 coordinate, plan, and pursue ending homelessness in a designated
 119 catchment area. Such a group shall be composed of
 120 representatives from certain organizations, including, but not
 121 limited to, nonprofit homeless providers, victim service
 122 providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses,
 123 advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social
 124 service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals,
 125 universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement,

126 organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless
 127 veterans, and organizations that serve homeless and formerly
 128 homeless persons, to the extent that these organizations are
 129 represented within the designated catchment area and are
 130 available to participate ~~the community components needed to~~
 131 ~~organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific~~
 132 ~~needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing~~
 133 ~~and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end~~
 134 ~~homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.~~

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

138 (3)~~(2)~~ "Council on Homelessness" means the council created
 139 in s. 420.622.

140 (4)~~(3)~~ "Department" means the Department of Children and
 141 Families.

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

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

145 (a) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular,
 146 and adequate nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in
 147 24 C.F.R. 578.3.

148 (b) An individual or family who will imminently lose their
 149 primary nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in 24
 150 C.F.R. 578.3. ~~applied to an individual, or "individual~~

151 ~~experiencing homelessness" means an individual who lacks a~~
152 ~~fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes an~~
153 ~~individual who:~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

168
169 ~~The terms do not refer to an individual imprisoned pursuant to~~
170 ~~state or federal law or to individuals or families who are~~
171 ~~sharing housing due to cultural preferences, voluntary~~
172 ~~arrangements, or traditional networks of support. The terms~~
173 ~~include an individual who has been released from jail, prison,~~
174 ~~the juvenile justice system, the child welfare system, a mental~~
175 ~~health and developmental disability facility, a residential~~

176 ~~addiction treatment program, or a hospital, for whom no~~
177 ~~subsequent residence has been identified, and who lacks the~~
178 ~~resources and support network to obtain housing.~~

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

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

183 ~~(6)(8)~~ (6) "State Office on Homelessness" means the state
184 office created in s. 420.622.

185 Section 2. Section 420.622, Florida Statutes, is amended
186 to read:

187 420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on
188 Homelessness.—

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

193 (2) The Council on Homelessness is created to consist of
194 19 ~~17~~ representatives of public and private agencies who shall
195 develop policy and advise the State Office on Homelessness. The
196 council members shall be: the Secretary of Children and
197 Families, or his or her designee; the executive director of the
198 Department of Economic Opportunity, or his or her designee, who
199 shall advise the council on issues related to rural development;
200 the State Surgeon General, or his or her designee; the Executive

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

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

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

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

239 (b) Collect, maintain, and make available information
240 concerning persons who are homeless ~~or at risk for homelessness~~,
241 including summary demographics information drawn from the local
242 continuum of care Homeless Management Information System or the
243 annual Point-in-Time Count, and the local continuum of care
244 Housing Inventory Chart required by the Department of Housing
245 and Urban Development ~~current services and resources available,~~
246 ~~the cost and availability of services and programs, and the met~~
247 ~~and unmet needs of this population.~~ All entities that receive
248 state funding must provide summary aggregated ~~access to all~~ data
249 ~~they maintain in summary form~~, with no individual identifying
250 information, to assist the council in providing this

251 information. The State Office on Homelessness, in consultation
252 with the designated lead agencies for a ~~local homeless~~ continuum
253 of care and with the Council on Homelessness, shall develop a
254 process by which summary data is collected ~~the system and~~
255 ~~process of data collection~~ from all lead agencies for the
256 purpose of analyzing trends and assessing impacts in the
257 ~~statewide homeless delivery~~ system for delivering services to
258 the homeless. ~~Any statewide homelessness survey and database~~
259 ~~system must comply with all state and federal statutory and~~
260 ~~regulatory confidentiality requirements.~~

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

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

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

274 (f) Provide technical assistance to facilitate efforts to
275 support and strengthen ~~establish, maintain, and expand local~~

276 ~~homeless assistance~~ continuums of care.

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

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

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

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

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

297 (l) Convene meetings and workshops of state and local
298 agencies, continuums of care ~~local coalitions and programs~~, and
299 other stakeholders for the purpose of developing and reviewing
300 policies, services, activities, coordination, and funding of

301 efforts to end homelessness ~~meet the needs of the homeless.~~

302 (m) With the input of the continuums of care, conduct or
303 promote research on the effectiveness of current programs and
304 propose pilot projects aimed at ending homelessness ~~improving~~
305 ~~services.~~

306 (n) Serve as an advocate for issues relating to
307 homelessness.

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

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

322 (a) To qualify for the grant, a continuum of care lead
323 agency must develop and implement a local ~~homeless assistance~~
324 continuum of care plan for its designated catchment area. The
325 services and housing funded through the grant must be

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

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

348 ~~(c) Preference must be given to lead agencies in catchment~~
349 ~~areas with the greatest need for the provision of housing and~~
350 ~~services to the homeless, relative to the population of the~~

351 ~~catchment area.~~

352 (c)~~(d)~~ The grant may be used to fund any of the housing,
353 program, or service needs included in the local ~~homeless~~
354 ~~assistance~~ continuum of care plan. The continuum of care lead
355 agency may allocate the grant to programs, services, or housing
356 providers that implement the local ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum
357 of care plan. The lead agency may provide subgrants to a local
358 agency to implement programs or services or provide housing
359 identified for funding in the lead agency's application to the
360 department. A lead agency may spend a maximum of 10 ~~8~~ percent of
361 its funding on administrative costs.

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

367 (5) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~
368 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ may administer moneys given
369 ~~appropriated~~ to it to provide homeless housing assistance grants
370 annually to continuum of care lead agencies ~~for local homeless~~
371 ~~assistance continuum of care,~~ as recognized by the State Office
372 on Homelessness, to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate
373 ~~transitional or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.
374 These moneys shall consist of any sums that the state may
375 appropriate, as well as money received from donations, gifts,

376 bequests, or otherwise from any public or private source, which
377 are intended to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate ~~transitional~~
378 ~~or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.

379 (a) Grant applicants shall be ranked competitively based
380 on criteria that include, but are not limited to, all of the
381 following:

382 1. The ability of the continuum of care to provide quality
383 services.

384 2. The ability of the continuum of care to leverage
385 federal homeless assistance and private funding.

386 3. The extent of the need for providing housing and
387 services to individuals experiencing homelessness in a continuum
388 of care's planning areas relative to the population of the
389 counties served.

390 4. The effectiveness of the continuum of care in keeping
391 families housed ~~Preference must be given to applicants who~~
392 ~~leverage additional private funds and public funds, particularly~~
393 ~~federal funds designated for the acquisition, construction, or~~
394 ~~rehabilitation of transitional or permanent housing for homeless~~
395 ~~persons; who acquire, build, or rehabilitate the greatest number~~
396 ~~of units; or who acquire, build, or rehabilitate in catchment~~
397 ~~areas having the greatest need for housing for the homeless~~
398 ~~relative to the population of the catchment area.~~

399 (b) Funding for any particular project may not exceed
400 \$750,000.

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

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

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

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

415 (6) The State Office on Homelessness, in conjunction with
 416 the Council on Homelessness, shall establish performance
 417 measures related to state funding provided through the State
 418 Office on Homelessness and use those grant-related measures to
 419 ~~and specific objectives by which it may~~ evaluate the performance
 420 and outcomes of continuum of care lead agencies that receive
 421 state grant funds. Challenge Grants made through the State
 422 ~~Office on Homelessness shall be distributed to lead agencies~~
 423 ~~based on their overall performance and their achievement of~~
 424 ~~specified objectives. Each lead agency for which grants are made~~
 425 ~~under this section shall provide the State Office on~~

426 ~~Homelessness a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the~~
 427 ~~program in achieving its stated purpose. In evaluating the~~
 428 ~~performance of the lead agencies, the State Office on~~
 429 ~~Homelessness shall base its criteria upon the program~~
 430 ~~objectives, goals, and priorities that were set forth by the~~
 431 ~~lead agencies in their proposals for funding. Such criteria may~~
 432 ~~include, but are not limited to, the number of persons or~~
 433 ~~households that are no longer homeless, the rate of recidivism~~
 434 ~~to homelessness, and the number of persons who obtain gainful~~
 435 ~~employment.~~

436 (7) The State Office on Homelessness must monitor the
 437 challenge grants and homeless housing assistance grants to
 438 ensure proper expenditure of funds and compliance with the
 439 conditions of the applicant's contract.

440 (8) The Department of Children and Families, with input
 441 from the Council on Homelessness, may ~~must~~ adopt rules relating
 442 to the challenge grants and the homeless housing assistance
 443 grants and related issues consistent with the purposes of this
 444 section.

445 (9) The council shall, by June 30 of each year, provide to
 446 the Governor, the Legislature, and the Secretary of Children and
 447 Families a report summarizing the extent of homelessness in the
 448 state and the council's recommendations for ending ~~reducing~~
 449 homelessness in this state.

450 (10) The State Office on Homelessness may administer

451 moneys appropriated to it for distribution among the continuum
452 of care lead agencies and entities funded in the 2017-2018 state
453 fiscal year which are designated by the office as local
454 coalitions for the homeless ~~28 local homeless continuums of care~~
455 ~~designated by the Department of Children and Families.~~

456 Section 3. Section 420.6225, Florida Statutes, is created
457 to read:

458 420.6225 Continuum of care.-

459 (1) The purpose of a continuum of care, as defined in s.
460 420.621, is to coordinate community efforts to prevent and end
461 homelessness in its catchment area designated as provided in
462 subsection (3) and to fulfill the responsibilities set forth in
463 this chapter.

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

475 (3) Continuum of care catchment areas must be designated

476 and revised as necessary by the State Office on Homelessness and
477 must be consistent with the continuum of care catchment areas
478 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban
479 Development for the purposes of awarding federal homeless
480 assistance funding for continuum of care programs.

481 (4) The State Office on Homelessness shall recognize only
482 one continuum of care lead agency for each designated catchment
483 area. Such continuum of care lead agency must be consistent with
484 the continuum of care collaborative applicant designation
485 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban
486 Development in the awarding of federal funds to continuums of
487 care.

488 (5) Each continuum of care shall create a continuum of
489 care plan, the purpose of which is to implement an effective and
490 efficient housing crisis response system to prevent and end
491 homelessness in the continuum of care catchment area. A
492 continuum of care plan must include all of the following
493 components:

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

496 (b) A coordinated entry system, compliant with the
497 requirements of the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, which is
498 designed to coordinate intake, utilize common assessment tools,
499 prioritize households for housing interventions, and refer
500 households to the appropriate housing intervention.

501 (c) Emergency shelter, designed to provide safe temporary
502 shelter while the household is in the process of obtaining
503 permanent housing.

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

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

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

510 (g) Permanent housing, including linkages to affordable
511 housing, subsidized housing, long-term rent assistance, housing
512 vouchers, and mainstream private sector housing.

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

515 (6) Continuums of care must promote participation by all
516 interested individuals and organizations and may not exclude
517 individuals and organizations on the basis of race, color,
518 national origin, sex, handicap, familial status, or religion.
519 Faith-based organizations, local governments, and persons who
520 have experienced homelessness are encouraged to participate. To
521 the extent possible, these individuals and organizations must be
522 coordinated and integrated with other mainstream health, social
523 services, and employment programs for which homeless populations
524 may be eligible, including, but not limited to, Medicaid, the
525 State Children's Health Insurance Program, the Temporary

526 Assistance for Needy Families Program, the Food Assistance
527 Program, and services funded through the Mental Health and
528 Substance Abuse Block Grant, the Workforce Innovation and
529 Opportunity Act, and the welfare-to-work grant program.

530 Section 4. Section 420.6227, Florida Statutes, is created
531 to read:

532 420.6227 Grant-in-aid program.—

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

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

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

548 (b) Help homeless households move to permanent housing as
549 quickly as possible.

550 (3) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a state grant-in-

551 aid program to help continuums of care prevent and end
552 homelessness, which may include any aspect of the local
553 continuum of care plan, as described in 420.6225.

554 (4) APPLICATION PROCEDURE.—Continuums of care that intend
555 to apply for the grant-in-aid program must submit an application
556 for grant-in-aid funds to the State Office on Homelessness for
557 review.

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

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

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

576 expenditures.

577 (8) LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS.—If an entity contracts with
578 local agencies to provide services and receives financial
579 assistance obtained under this section, the entity must provide
580 at least 25 percent of the funding necessary for the support of
581 project operations. In-kind contributions, including, but not
582 limited to, materials, commodities, transportation, office
583 space, other types of facilities, or personal services may be
584 evaluated and counted as part or all of the required local
585 funding, at the discretion of the State Office on Homelessness.

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

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

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

589 Section 8. Subsection (3) of section 420.626, Florida
590 Statutes, is amended, and subsection (2) of that section is
591 republished, to read:

592 420.626 Homelessness; discharge guidelines.—

593 (2) The following facilities and institutions are
594 encouraged to develop and implement procedures designed to
595 reduce the discharge of persons into homelessness when such
596 persons are admitted or housed for more than 24 hours at such
597 facilities or institutions: hospitals and inpatient medical
598 facilities; crisis stabilization units; residential treatment
599 facilities; assisted living facilities; and detoxification
600 centers.

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

602 (a) Development and implementation of a screening process
 603 or other mechanism for identifying persons to be discharged from
 604 the facility or institution who are at considerable risk for
 605 homelessness or face some imminent threat to health and safety
 606 upon discharge.~~†~~

607 (b) Development and implementation of a discharge plan
 608 addressing how identified persons will secure housing and other
 609 needed care and support upon discharge.~~†~~

610 (c) Communication with ~~Assessment of the capabilities of~~
 611 the entities to whom identified persons may potentially be
 612 discharged to determine their capability to serve such persons
 613 and their acceptance of such discharge into their programs, and
 614 selection of the entity determined to be best equipped to
 615 provide or facilitate the provision of suitable care and
 616 support.~~†~~

617 (d) Coordination of effort and sharing of information with
 618 entities that are expected to bear the responsibility for
 619 providing care or support to identified persons upon discharge.~~†~~
 620 and

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

625 Section 9. Section 420.6265, Florida Statutes, is amended

626 to read:

627 420.6265 Rapid ReHousing.—

628 ~~(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—~~

629 ~~(a) The Legislature finds that Rapid ReHousing is a~~
630 ~~strategy of using temporary financial assistance and case~~
631 ~~management to quickly move an individual or family out of~~
632 ~~homelessness and into permanent housing.~~

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

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

646 ~~(d) The Legislature further finds that Rapid ReHousing is~~
647 ~~an alternative approach to the current system of emergency~~
648 ~~shelter or transitional housing which tends to reduce the length~~
649 ~~of time a person is homeless and has proven to be cost~~
650 ~~effective.~~

651 ~~(c) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to~~
652 ~~encourage homeless continuums of care to adopt the Rapid~~
653 ~~ReHousing approach to preventing homelessness for individuals~~
654 ~~and families who do not require the intense level of supports~~
655 ~~provided in the permanent supportive housing model.~~

656 ~~(2) RAPID REHOUSING METHODOLOGY.—~~

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

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

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

676 Section 10. Section 420.6275, Florida Statutes, is amended
677 to read:

678 420.6275 Housing First.—

679 ~~(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—~~

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

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

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

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

697 ~~(2) HOUSING FIRST METHODOLOGY.—~~

698 (1)(a) The Housing First approach to homelessness provides
699 permanent ~~differs from traditional approaches by providing~~
700 housing assistance, followed by ~~case management, and support~~

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

708 (a)1. The housing is not time-limited.

709 (b)2. The housing is not contingent on compliance with
710 services. Instead, participants must comply with a standard
711 lease agreement.

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

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

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

726 ~~health care organizations~~ and consists of four components:

727 (a)~~1.~~ Crisis intervention and short-term stabilization.

728 (b)~~2.~~ Screening, intake, and needs assessment.

729 (c)~~3.~~ Provision of housing resources.

730 (d)~~4.~~ Provision of case management.

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

733 420.507 Powers of the corporation.—The corporation shall
734 have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and
735 effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part, including
736 the following powers which are in addition to all other powers
737 granted by other provisions of this part:

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

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

751 | corporation rule, and be a project in the local housing
752 | assistance continuum of care plan recognized by the State Office
753 | on Homelessness.

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