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HB 163

2020 Legislature

1  
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; revising the duties of the  
6 State Office on Homelessness; revising requirements  
7 for the state's system of homeless programs; requiring  
8 entities that receive state funding to provide summary  
9 aggregated data to the council; revising the  
10 qualifications for and amount of grant awards to  
11 continuum of care lead agencies; requiring continuum  
12 of care lead agencies to submit a report to the  
13 Department of Children and Families; increasing the  
14 minimum number of years for which projects must  
15 reserve certain units for the homeless; authorizing,  
16 rather than requiring, the Department of Children and  
17 Families to adopt certain rules; authorizing the  
18 office to administer certain money; creating s.  
19 420.6225, F.S.; specifying the purpose of a continuum  
20 of care; requiring each continuum of care to designate  
21 a collaborative applicant; providing requirements for  
22 such applicants; authorizing such applicants to be  
23 referred to as continuum of care lead agencies;  
24 providing requirements for continuum of care catchment  
25 areas and lead agencies; requiring continuums of care

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

26 to create continuum of care plans; specifying  
 27 requirements for such plans; requiring continuums of  
 28 care to promote participation by all interested  
 29 individuals and organizations; creating s. 420.6227,  
 30 F.S.; providing legislative findings and program  
 31 purpose; establishing a grant-in-aid program to help  
 32 continuums of care prevent and end homelessness;  
 33 providing requirements for such program; repealing s.  
 34 420.623, F.S., relating to local coalitions for the  
 35 homeless; repealing s. 420.624, F.S., relating to  
 36 local homeless assistance continuum of care; repealing  
 37 s. 420.625, F.S., relating to a grant-in-aid program;  
 38 amending s. 420.626, F.S.; revising procedures for  
 39 certain facilities and institutions to implement when  
 40 discharging specified persons to reduce homelessness;  
 41 amending s. 420.6265, F.S.; revising the Rapid  
 42 ReHousing methodology; amending s. 420.6275, F.S.;  
 43 revising the Housing First methodology; amending s.  
 44 420.507, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing  
 45 an effective date.

46  
 47 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

48  
 49 Section 1. Section 420.621, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 50 to read:

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

51 420.621 Definitions.—As used in ss. 420.621-420.628, the  
 52 term:

53 (1) "Continuum of care" means a group organized to carry  
 54 out the responsibilities imposed under ss. 420.621-420.628 to  
 55 coordinate, plan, and pursue ending homelessness in a designated  
 56 catchment area. Such a group shall be composed of  
 57 representatives from certain organizations, including, but not  
 58 limited to, nonprofit homeless providers, victim service  
 59 providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses,  
 60 advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social  
 61 service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals,  
 62 universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement,  
 63 organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless  
 64 veterans, and organizations that serve homeless and formerly  
 65 homeless persons, to the extent that these organizations are  
 66 represented within the designated catchment area and are  
 67 available to participate ~~the community components needed to~~  
 68 ~~organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific~~  
 69 ~~needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing~~  
 70 ~~and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end~~  
 71 ~~homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.~~

72 (2) "Continuum of care lead agency" or "continuum of care  
 73 collaborative applicant" means the organization designated by a  
 74 continuum of care under s. 420.6225.

75 (3) ~~(2)~~ "Council on Homelessness" means the council created

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

76 | in s. 420.622.

77 | (4)~~(3)~~ "Department" means the Department of Children and  
78 | Families.

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

81 | (5) "Homeless," means:

82 | (a) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular,  
83 | and adequate nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in  
84 | 24 C.F.R. 578.3; or

85 | (b) An individual or family who will imminently lose their  
86 | primary nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in 24  
87 | C.F.R. 578.3.~~applied to an individual, or "individual~~  
88 | ~~experiencing homelessness" means an individual who lacks a~~  
89 | ~~fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes an~~  
90 | ~~individual who:~~

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

93 | ~~(b) Is living in a motel, hotel, travel trailer park, or~~  
94 | ~~camping ground due to a lack of alternative adequate~~  
95 | ~~accommodations;~~

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

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

100 | ~~(e) Is living in a car, park, public space, abandoned~~

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

101 ~~building, bus or train station, or similar setting; or~~  
 102 ~~(f) Is a migratory individual who qualifies as homeless~~  
 103 ~~because he or she is living in circumstances described in~~  
 104 ~~paragraphs (a) - (e).~~

105  
 106 ~~The terms do not refer to an individual imprisoned pursuant to~~  
 107 ~~state or federal law or to individuals or families who are~~  
 108 ~~sharing housing due to cultural preferences, voluntary~~  
 109 ~~arrangements, or traditional networks of support. The terms~~  
 110 ~~include an individual who has been released from jail, prison,~~  
 111 ~~the juvenile justice system, the child welfare system, a mental~~  
 112 ~~health and developmental disability facility, a residential~~  
 113 ~~addiction treatment program, or a hospital, for whom no~~  
 114 ~~subsequent residence has been identified, and who lacks the~~  
 115 ~~resources and support network to obtain housing.~~

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

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

120 (6)(8) "State Office on Homelessness" means the state  
 121 office created in s. 420.622.

122 Section 2. Section 420.622, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 123 to read:

124 420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on  
 125 Homelessness.—

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

126 (1) The State Office on Homelessness is created within the  
 127 Department of Children and Families to provide interagency,  
 128 council, and other related coordination on issues relating to  
 129 homelessness.

130 (2) The Council on Homelessness is created to consist of  
 131 19 ~~17~~ representatives of public and private agencies who shall  
 132 develop policy and advise the State Office on Homelessness. The  
 133 council members shall be: the Secretary of Children and  
 134 Families, or his or her designee; the executive director of the  
 135 Department of Economic Opportunity, or his or her designee, who  
 136 shall advise the council on issues related to rural development;  
 137 the State Surgeon General, or his or her designee; the Executive  
 138 Director of Veterans' Affairs, or his or her designee; the  
 139 Secretary of Corrections, or his or her designee; the Secretary  
 140 of Health Care Administration, or his or her designee; the  
 141 Commissioner of Education, or his or her designee; the Director  
 142 of CareerSource Florida, Inc., or his or her designee; one  
 143 representative of the Florida Association of Counties; one  
 144 representative of the Florida League of Cities; one  
 145 representative of the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition; one  
 146 representative of the Florida Housing Coalition; the Executive  
 147 Director of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, or his or  
 148 her designee; one representative of the Florida Coalition for  
 149 the Homeless; the Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs,  
 150 or his or her designee; and four members appointed by the

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

151 Governor. The council members shall be nonpaid volunteers and  
 152 shall be reimbursed only for travel expenses. The appointed  
 153 members of the council shall be appointed to staggered 2-year  
 154 terms, and are encouraged to have experience in the  
 155 administration or provision of resources, services, or housing  
 156 that addresses the needs of persons experiencing homelessness.

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

160 (3) The State Office on Homelessness, pursuant to the  
 161 policies set by the council and subject to the availability of  
 162 funding, shall:

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

168 1. Programs authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless  
 169 Assistance ~~Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance~~ Act of 1987,  
 170 as amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid  
 171 Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009, 42 U.S.C. ss. 11302  
 172 ~~ss. 11371~~ et seq., and carried out under funds awarded to this  
 173 state; and

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

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

176 (b) Collect, maintain, and make available information  
 177 concerning persons who are homeless ~~or at risk for homelessness,~~  
 178 including summary demographics information drawn from the local  
 179 continuum of care Homeless Management Information System or the  
 180 annual Point-in-Time Count, and the local continuum of care  
 181 Housing Inventory Chart required by the United States Department  
 182 of Housing and Urban Development ~~current services and resources~~  
 183 ~~available, the cost and availability of services and programs,~~  
 184 ~~and the met and unmet needs of this population.~~ All entities  
 185 that receive state funding must provide summary aggregated  
 186 ~~access to all data they maintain in summary form,~~ with no  
 187 individual identifying information, to assist the council in  
 188 providing this information. The State Office on Homelessness, in  
 189 consultation with the designated lead agencies for a ~~local~~  
 190 ~~homeless~~ continuum of care and with the Council on Homelessness,  
 191 shall develop a process by which summary data is collected ~~the~~  
 192 ~~system and process of data collection~~ from all continuum of care  
 193 lead agencies for the purpose of analyzing trends and assessing  
 194 impacts in the ~~statewide homeless delivery~~ system for delivering  
 195 services to the homeless. ~~Any statewide homelessness survey and~~  
 196 ~~database system must comply with all state and federal statutory~~  
 197 ~~and regulatory confidentiality requirements.~~

198 (c) Annually evaluate state and continuum of care system  
 199 programs ~~local services and resources~~ and develop a consolidated  
 200 plan for addressing the needs of the homeless or those at risk



ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

201 for homelessness.

202 (d) Explore, compile, and disseminate information  
 203 regarding public and private funding sources for state and local  
 204 programs serving the homeless and provide technical assistance  
 205 in applying for such funding.

206 (e) Monitor and provide recommendations for coordinating  
 207 the activities and programs of continuums of care ~~local~~  
 208 ~~coalitions for the homeless~~ and promote the effectiveness of  
 209 programs to prevent and end homelessness in the state ~~addressing~~  
 210 ~~the needs of the homeless~~.

211 (f) Provide technical assistance to facilitate efforts to  
 212 support and strengthen ~~establish, maintain, and expand local~~  
 213 ~~homeless assistance~~ continuums of care.

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

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

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

224 (j) Review reports on continuum of care system performance  
 225 measures and ~~Develop outcome and accountability measures and~~

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

226 ~~promote and~~ use such measures to evaluate program effectiveness  
 227 and make recommendations for improving current practices to work  
 228 toward ending homelessness in this state ~~in order to best meet~~  
 229 ~~the needs of the homeless.~~

230 (k) Formulate policies and legislative proposals aimed at  
 231 preventing and ending homelessness in this state ~~to address more~~  
 232 ~~effectively the needs of the homeless~~ and coordinate the  
 233 implementation of state and federal legislative policies.

234 (l) Convene meetings and workshops of state and local  
 235 agencies, continuums of care ~~local coalitions and programs~~, and  
 236 other stakeholders for the purpose of developing and reviewing  
 237 policies, services, activities, coordination, and funding of  
 238 efforts to end homelessness ~~meet the needs of the homeless.~~

239 (m) With the input of the continuums of care, conduct or  
 240 promote research on the effectiveness of current programs and  
 241 propose pilot projects aimed at ending homelessness ~~improving~~  
 242 ~~services.~~

243 (n) Serve as an advocate for issues relating to  
 244 homelessness.

245 (o) Investigate ways to improve access to participation in  
 246 state funding and other programs for the prevention and  
 247 reduction ~~alleviation~~ of homelessness to faith-based  
 248 organizations and collaborate and coordinate with faith-based  
 249 organizations.

250 (4) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

251 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ shall accept and administer  
252 moneys appropriated to it to provide annual "challenge grants"  
253 to lead agencies of ~~homeless assistance~~ continuums of care  
254 designated by the State Office on Homelessness under ~~pursuant to~~  
255 s. 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~. The department shall establish varying  
256 levels of grant awards up to \$750,000 ~~\$500,000~~ per continuum of  
257 care lead agency. The department, in consultation with the  
258 Council on Homelessness, shall specify a grant award level in  
259 the notice of the solicitation of grant applications.

260 (a) To qualify for the grant, a continuum of care lead  
261 agency must develop and implement a local ~~homeless assistance~~  
262 continuum of care plan for its designated catchment area. The  
263 services and housing funded through the grant must be  
264 implemented through the continuum of care's ~~care plan must~~  
265 ~~implement a~~ coordinated entry assessment or central intake  
266 system as provided in s. 420.6225(5)(b) and must be designed to  
267 ~~screen,~~ ~~assess,~~ and refer persons seeking assistance to the  
268 appropriate housing intervention and service provider. The  
269 continuum of care lead agency shall also document the commitment  
270 of local government or private organizations to provide matching  
271 funds or in-kind support in an amount equal to 25 percent of the  
272 grant requested. Expenditures of leveraged funds or resources,  
273 including third-party cash or in-kind contributions, are  
274 authorized only for eligible activities carried out in  
275 connection with a ~~committed on one~~ project in which such funds

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

276 | or resources have not been used as leverage or match for any  
277 | other project or program. The expenditures ~~and~~ must be certified  
278 | through a written commitment.

279 | (b) Preference must be given to those continuum of care  
280 | lead agencies that have demonstrated the ability of their  
281 | continuum of care to help households move out of homelessness  
282 | ~~provide quality services to homeless persons and the ability to~~  
283 | ~~leverage federal homeless assistance funding under the Stewart~~  
284 | ~~B. McKinney Act with local government funding or private funding~~  
285 | ~~for the provision of services to homeless persons.~~

286 | ~~(c) Preference must be given to lead agencies in catchment~~  
287 | ~~areas with the greatest need for the provision of housing and~~  
288 | ~~services to the homeless, relative to the population of the~~  
289 | ~~catchment area.~~

290 | (c)(d) The grant may be used to fund any of the housing,  
291 | program, or service needs included in the local ~~homeless~~  
292 | ~~assistance~~ continuum of care plan. The continuum of care lead  
293 | agency may allocate the grant to programs, services, or housing  
294 | providers that implement the local ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum  
295 | of care plan. The continuum of care lead agency may provide  
296 | subgrants to a local agency to implement programs or services or  
297 | provide housing identified for funding in the continuum of care  
298 | lead agency's application to the department. A continuum of care  
299 | lead agency may spend a maximum of 10 & percent of its funding  
300 | on administrative costs.

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

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

306            (5) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~  
 307 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ may administer moneys given  
 308 ~~appropriated~~ to it to provide homeless housing assistance grants  
 309 annually to continuum of care lead agencies ~~for local homeless~~  
 310 ~~assistance continuum of care,~~ as recognized by the State Office  
 311 on Homelessness, to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate  
 312 ~~transitional or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.  
 313 These moneys shall consist of any sums that the state may  
 314 appropriate, as well as money received from donations, gifts,  
 315 bequests, or ~~otherwise from~~ any other public or private source,  
 316 which are intended to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate  
 317 ~~transitional or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.

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

321            1. The ability of the continuum of care to provide quality  
 322 services.

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

325            3. The extent of the need for providing housing and

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

326 services to individuals experiencing homelessness in a continuum  
327 of care's planning areas relative to the population of the  
328 counties served.

329 4. The effectiveness of the continuum of care in keeping  
330 families housed ~~Preference must be given to applicants who~~  
331 ~~leverage additional private funds and public funds, particularly~~  
332 ~~federal funds designated for the acquisition, construction, or~~  
333 ~~rehabilitation of transitional or permanent housing for homeless~~  
334 ~~persons; who acquire, build, or rehabilitate the greatest number~~  
335 ~~of units; or who acquire, build, or rehabilitate in catchment~~  
336 ~~areas having the greatest need for housing for the homeless~~  
337 ~~relative to the population of the catchment area.~~

338 (b) Funding for any particular project may not exceed  
339 \$750,000.

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

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

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

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

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

354 (6) The State Office on Homelessness, in conjunction with  
 355 the Council on Homelessness, shall establish performance  
 356 measures related to state funding provided through the State  
 357 Office on Homelessness and use those grant-related measures to  
 358 ~~and specific objectives by which it may~~ evaluate the performance  
 359 and outcomes of continuum of care lead agencies that receive  
 360 state grant funds. ~~Challenge Grants made through the State~~  
 361 ~~Office on Homelessness shall be distributed to lead agencies~~  
 362 ~~based on their overall performance and their achievement of~~  
 363 ~~specified objectives. Each lead agency for which grants are made~~  
 364 ~~under this section shall provide the State Office on~~  
 365 ~~Homelessness a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the~~  
 366 ~~program in achieving its stated purpose. In evaluating the~~  
 367 ~~performance of the lead agencies, the State Office on~~  
 368 ~~Homelessness shall base its criteria upon the program~~  
 369 ~~objectives, goals, and priorities that were set forth by the~~  
 370 ~~lead agencies in their proposals for funding. Such criteria may~~  
 371 ~~include, but are not limited to, the number of persons or~~  
 372 ~~households that are no longer homeless, the rate of recidivism~~  
 373 ~~to homelessness, and the number of persons who obtain gainful~~  
 374 ~~employment.~~

375 (7) The State Office on Homelessness must monitor the

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

376 challenge grants and homeless housing assistance grants to  
 377 ensure proper expenditure of funds and compliance with the  
 378 conditions of the applicant's contract.

379 (8) The Department of Children and Families, with input  
 380 from the Council on Homelessness, may ~~must~~ adopt rules relating  
 381 to the challenge grants and the homeless housing assistance  
 382 grants and related issues consistent with the purposes of this  
 383 section.

384 (9) The Council on Homelessness ~~council~~ shall, by June 30  
 385 of each year, provide to the Governor, the Legislature, and the  
 386 Secretary of Children and Families a report summarizing the  
 387 extent of homelessness in the state and the council's  
 388 recommendations for ending ~~reducing~~ homelessness in this state.

389 (10) The State Office on Homelessness may administer  
 390 moneys appropriated to it for distribution among the continuum  
 391 of care lead agencies and entities funded in the 2018-2019 state  
 392 fiscal year which are designated by the office as local  
 393 coalitions for the homeless ~~28 local homeless continuums of care~~  
 394 ~~designated by the Department of Children and Families.~~

395 Section 3. Section 420.6225, Florida Statutes, is created  
 396 to read:

397 420.6225 Continuum of care.—

398 (1) The purpose of a continuum of care, as defined in s.  
 399 420.621, is to coordinate community efforts to prevent and end  
 400 homelessness in its catchment area designated as provided in



ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

401 subsection (3) and to fulfill the responsibilities set forth in  
402 this chapter.

403 (2) Under the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, each continuum  
404 of care is required to designate a collaborative applicant that  
405 is responsible for submitting the continuum of care funding  
406 application for the designated catchment area to the United  
407 States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The  
408 designated continuum of care collaborative applicant shall serve  
409 as the point of contact for the State Office on Homelessness, is  
410 accountable for representations made in the application, and, in  
411 carrying out responsibilities under this chapter, may be  
412 referred to as the continuum of care lead agency.

413 (3) Continuum of care catchment areas must be designated  
414 and revised as necessary by the State Office on Homelessness and  
415 must be consistent with the continuum of care catchment areas  
416 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban  
417 Development for the purposes of awarding federal homeless  
418 assistance funding for continuum of care programs.

419 (4) The State Office on Homelessness shall recognize only  
420 one continuum of care lead agency for each designated catchment  
421 area. Such continuum of care lead agency must be consistent with  
422 the designated continuum of care collaborative applicant  
423 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban  
424 Development in the awarding of federal funds to continuums of  
425 care.

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

426        (5) Each continuum of care shall create a continuum of  
427 care plan, the purpose of which is to implement an effective and  
428 efficient housing crisis response system to prevent and end  
429 homelessness in the continuum of care catchment area. A  
430 continuum of care plan must include all of the following  
431 components:

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

434        (b) A coordinated entry system, compliant with the  
435 requirements of the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, which is  
436 designed to coordinate intake, utilize common assessment tools,  
437 prioritize households for housing interventions, and refer  
438 households to the appropriate housing intervention.

439        (c) Emergency shelter, designed to provide safe temporary  
440 shelter while the household is in the process of obtaining  
441 permanent housing.

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

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

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

448        (g) Permanent housing, including links to affordable  
449 housing, subsidized housing, long-term rental assistance,  
450 housing vouchers, and mainstream private sector housing.

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

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

453 (6) Continuums of care must promote participation by all  
 454 interested individuals and organizations and may not exclude  
 455 individuals and organizations on the basis of race, color,  
 456 national origin, sex, handicap, familial status, or religion.  
 457 Faith-based organizations, local governments, and persons who  
 458 have experienced homelessness are encouraged to participate. To  
 459 the extent possible, these individuals and organizations must be  
 460 coordinated and integrated with other mainstream health, social  
 461 services, and employment programs for which homeless populations  
 462 may be eligible, including, but not limited to, Medicaid, the  
 463 state Children's Health Insurance Program, the Temporary  
 464 Assistance for Needy Families Program, the Food Assistance  
 465 Program, and services funded through the Mental Health and  
 466 Substance Abuse Block Grant, the Workforce Innovation and  
 467 Opportunity Act, and the welfare-to-work grant program.

468 Section 4. Section 420.6227, Florida Statutes, is created  
 469 to read:

470 420.6227 Grant-in-aid program.—

471 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds and  
 472 declares that many services for households experiencing  
 473 homelessness have been provided by local communities through  
 474 voluntary private agencies and religious organizations and that  
 475 those resources have not been sufficient to prevent and end

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

476 homelessness in the state. The Legislature recognizes that the  
477 level of need and types of problems associated with homelessness  
478 may vary from community to community, due to the diversity and  
479 geographic distribution of the homeless population and the  
480 resulting differing needs of particular communities.

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

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

486 (b) Help homeless households move to permanent housing as  
487 quickly as possible.

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

492 (4) APPLICATION PROCEDURE.—Continuums of care that intend  
493 to apply for the grant-in-aid program must submit an application  
494 for grant-in-aid funds to the State Office on Homelessness for  
495 review.

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

500 (6) ALLOCATION OF GRANT FUNDS.—The State Office on

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

501 Homelessness shall administer grant-in-aid funds for continuums  
 502 of care, which must be awarded on a competitive basis.

503 (7) DISTRIBUTION TO LOCAL AGENCIES.—The State Office on  
 504 Homelessness shall distribute funds awarded under subsection (6)  
 505 to local agencies to fund programs that are required by the  
 506 local continuum of care plan, as described in s. 420.6225 and  
 507 provided in subsection (3), based upon the recommendations of  
 508 the local continuum of care lead agencies, in accordance with  
 509 spending plans that are developed by the lead agencies and  
 510 approved by the office. Not more than 10 percent of the total  
 511 state funds awarded under a spending plan may be used by the  
 512 continuum of care lead agency for staffing and administrative  
 513 expenditures.

514 (8) LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS.—If an entity contracts with  
 515 local agencies to provide services and receives financial  
 516 assistance obtained under this section, the entity must provide  
 517 at least 25 percent of the funding necessary for the support of  
 518 project operations. In-kind contributions, including, but not  
 519 limited to, materials, commodities, transportation, office  
 520 space, other types of facilities, or personal services may be  
 521 evaluated and counted as part or all of the required local  
 522 funding, at the discretion of the State Office on Homelessness.

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

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

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

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

526 Section 8. Subsection (3) of section 420.626, Florida  
 527 Statutes, is amended, and subsection (2) of that section is  
 528 republished, to read:

529 420.626 Homelessness; discharge guidelines.—

530 (2) The following facilities and institutions are  
 531 encouraged to develop and implement procedures designed to  
 532 reduce the discharge of persons into homelessness when such  
 533 persons are admitted or housed for more than 24 hours at such  
 534 facilities or institutions: hospitals and inpatient medical  
 535 facilities; crisis stabilization units; residential treatment  
 536 facilities; assisted living facilities; and detoxification  
 537 centers.

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

539 (a) Development and implementation of a screening process  
 540 or other mechanism for identifying persons to be discharged from  
 541 the facility or institution who are at considerable risk for  
 542 homelessness or face some imminent threat to health and safety  
 543 upon discharge.†

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

547 (c) Communication with ~~Assessment of the capabilities of~~  
 548 the entities to whom identified persons may potentially be  
 549 discharged to determine their capability to serve such persons  
 550 and their acceptance of such persons into their programs, and

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

551 selection of the entity determined to be best equipped to  
 552 provide or facilitate the provision of suitable care and  
 553 support.~~†~~

554 (d) Coordination of effort and sharing of information with  
 555 entities that are expected to bear the responsibility for  
 556 providing care or support to identified persons upon discharge.~~†~~  
 557 and

558 (e) Provision of sufficient medication, medical equipment  
 559 and supplies, clothing, transportation, and other basic  
 560 resources necessary to ensure ~~assure~~ that the health and well-  
 561 being of identified persons are not jeopardized upon their  
 562 discharge.

563 Section 9. Section 420.6265, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 564 to read:

565 420.6265 Rapid ReHousing.—

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

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

571 ~~(b) The Legislature also finds that public and private~~  
 572 ~~solutions to homelessness in the past have focused on providing~~  
 573 ~~individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness with~~  
 574 ~~emergency shelter, transitional housing, or a combination of~~  
 575 ~~both. While emergency shelter and transitional housing programs~~

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

576 ~~may provide critical access to services for individuals and~~  
 577 ~~families in crisis, the programs often fail to address their~~  
 578 ~~long-term needs.~~

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

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

589 ~~(e) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to~~  
 590 ~~encourage homeless continuums of care to adopt the Rapid~~  
 591 ~~ReHousing approach to preventing homelessness for individuals~~  
 592 ~~and families who do not require the intense level of supports~~  
 593 ~~provided in the permanent supportive housing model.~~

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

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



ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

601           (2)~~(b)~~ In Rapid ReHousing, when an individual or a family  
 602 is identified as being homeless, the individual or family is  
 603 assessed and prioritized for housing through the continuum of  
 604 care's coordinated entry system, temporary assistance is  
 605 provided to allow the individual or family to obtain permanent  
 606 housing as quickly as possible, and necessary,~~if needed,~~  
 607 assistance is provided to allow the individual or family to  
 608 retain housing.

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

614           Section 10. Section 420.6275, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 615 to read:

616           420.6275 Housing First.—

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

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

620           ~~(b) The Legislature also finds that for most of the past~~  
 621 ~~two decades, public and private solutions to homelessness have~~  
 622 ~~focused on providing individuals and families who are~~  
 623 ~~experiencing homelessness with emergency shelter, transitional~~  
 624 ~~housing, or a combination of both. While emergency shelter~~  
 625 ~~programs may provide critical access to services for individuals~~

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

626 ~~and families in crisis, they often fail to address their long-~~  
627 ~~term needs.~~

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

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

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

636 (1)(a) The Housing First approach to homelessness provides  
637 permanent ~~differs from traditional approaches by providing~~  
638 housing assistance, followed by case management, and support  
639 services responsive to individual or family needs once after  
640 housing is obtained. By using this approach ~~when appropriate,~~  
641 communities can significantly reduce the amount of time that  
642 individuals and families are homeless and prevent further  
643 episodes of homelessness. Housing First emphasizes that social  
644 services provided to enhance individual and family well-being  
645 can be more effective when people are in their own home, and:

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

647 (b)2. The housing is not contingent on compliance with  
648 services. Instead, participants must comply with a standard  
649 lease agreement.

650 (c) Individuals and families ~~and~~ are provided with

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

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

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

657 (2) ~~(b)~~ The Housing First approach addresses the societal  
 658 causes of homelessness and advocates for the immediate return of  
 659 individuals and families into housing and communities. Housing  
 660 First links affordable housing with community-based social  
 661 service and health care organizations ~~Housing First provides a~~  
 662 ~~critical link between the emergency and transitional housing~~  
 663 ~~system and community based social service, educational, and~~  
 664 ~~health care organizations~~ and consists of four components:

- 665 (a) ~~1.~~ Crisis intervention and short-term stabilization.
- 666 (b) ~~2.~~ Screening, intake, and needs assessment.
- 667 (c) ~~3.~~ Provision of housing resources.
- 668 (d) ~~4.~~ Provision of case management.

669 Section 11. Paragraph (d) of subsection (22) of section  
 670 420.507, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

671 420.507 Powers of the corporation.—The corporation shall  
 672 have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and  
 673 effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part, including  
 674 the following powers which are in addition to all other powers  
 675 granted by other provisions of this part:

ENROLLED

HB 163

2020 Legislature

676 (22) To develop and administer the State Apartment  
 677 Incentive Loan Program. In developing and administering that  
 678 program, the corporation may:

679 (d) In counties or rural areas of counties that do not  
 680 have existing units set aside for homeless persons, forgive  
 681 indebtedness for loans provided to create permanent rental  
 682 housing units for persons who are homeless, as defined in s.  
 683 420.621 ~~s. 420.621(5)~~, or for persons residing in time-limited  
 684 transitional housing or institutions as a result of a lack of  
 685 permanent, affordable housing. Such developments must be  
 686 supported by a ~~local homeless assistance~~ continuum of care  
 687 developed under s. 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~, be developed by  
 688 nonprofit applicants, be small properties as defined by  
 689 corporation rule, and be a project in the local housing  
 690 assistance continuum of care plan recognized by the State Office  
 691 on Homelessness.

692 Section 12. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.