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

A bill to be entitled

An act relating to homelessness; amending s. 420.621, F.S.; revising, adding, and deleting defined terms; amending s. 420.622, F.S.; expanding the membership of the Council on Homelessness to include a representative of the Florida Housing Coalition and the Secretary of the Department of Elderly Affairs or his or her designee; providing that the Governor is encouraged to appoint council members who have certain experience; revising the duties of the State Office on Homelessness; revising requirements for the state's homeless programs; requiring entities that receive state funding to provide summary aggregated data to assist the council in providing certain information; removing the requirement that the office have the concurrence of the council to accept and administer moneys appropriated to it to provide certain annual challenge grants to continuums of care lead agencies; increasing the maximum amount of grant awards per continuum of care lead agency; conforming provisions to changes made by the act; revising requirements for the use of grant funds by continuum of care lead agencies; revising preference criteria for certain grants; increasing the maximum percentage of its funding which a continuum of care lead agency may spend on administrative costs; requiring such agencies to submit a final report to the Department of Children



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28 and Families documenting certain outcomes achieved by  
29 grant-funded programs; removing the requirement that  
30 the office have the concurrence of the council to  
31 administer moneys given to it to provide homeless  
32 housing assistance grants annually to certain  
33 continuum of care lead agencies to acquire, construct,  
34 or rehabilitate permanent housing units for homeless  
35 persons; conforming a provision to changes made by the  
36 act; requiring grant applicants to be ranked  
37 competitively based on criteria determined by the  
38 office; deleting preference requirements; increasing  
39 the 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 purposes of a continuum of care;  
55 requiring each continuum of care, pursuant to federal  
56 law, to designate a collaborative applicant that is



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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 the office for  
64 the purpose of awarding certain federal funding for  
65 continuum of care programs; requiring that each  
66 continuum of care create a continuum of care plan for  
67 specified purposes; specifying requirements for such  
68 plans; requiring continuums of care to promote  
69 participation by all interested individuals and  
70 organizations, subject to certain requirements;  
71 creating s. 420.6227, F.S.; providing legislative  
72 findings and program purpose; establishing a grant-in-  
73 aid program to help continuums of care prevent and end  
74 homelessness, which may include any aspect of the  
75 local continuum of care plan; requiring continuums of  
76 care to submit an application for grant-in-aid funds  
77 to the office for review; requiring the office to  
78 develop guidelines for the development, evaluation,  
79 and approval of spending plans; requiring grant-in-aid  
80 funds for continuums of care to be administered by the  
81 office and awarded on a competitive basis; requiring  
82 the office to distribute such funds to local agencies  
83 to fund programs that are required by the local  
84 continuum of care plan, based on certain  
85 recommendations; limiting the percentage of the total



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86 state funds awarded under a spending plan which may be  
87 used by the continuum of care lead agency for staffing  
88 and administrative expenditures; requiring entities  
89 that contract with local agencies to provide services  
90 and that receive certain financial assistance to  
91 provide a specified minimum percentage of the funding  
92 necessary for the support of project operations;  
93 authorizing in-kind contributions to be evaluated and  
94 counted as part or all of the required local funding,  
95 at the discretion of the office; repealing s. 420.623,  
96 F.S., relating to local coalitions for the homeless;  
97 repealing s. 420.624, F.S., relating to local homeless  
98 assistance continuums of care; repealing s. 420.625,  
99 F.S., relating to a grant-in-aid program; amending s.  
100 420.626, F.S.; revising procedures that certain  
101 facilities and institutions are encouraged to develop  
102 and implement to reduce the discharge of persons into  
103 homelessness when such persons are admitted to or  
104 housed for a specified period at such facilities or  
105 institutions; amending s. 420.6265, F.S.; revising  
106 legislative findings and intent for Rapid ReHousing;  
107 revising the Rapid ReHousing methodology; amending s.  
108 420.6275, F.S.; revising legislative findings relating  
109 to Housing First; revising the Housing First  
110 methodology to reflect current practice; amending s.  
111 420.507, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing  
112 an effective date.

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



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

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

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

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

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



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144        ~~(4)~~<sup>(3)</sup> "Department" means the Department of Children and  
145 Families.

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

148        (5) "Homeless," means an individual who or a family that:

149        (a) Lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime  
150 residence, as defined under "homeless" in 24 C.F.R. 578.3; or

151        (b) Will imminently lose his, her, or its primary nighttime  
152 residence, as defined under "homeless" in 24 C.F.R. 578.3

153 ~~applied to an individual, or "individual experiencing~~  
154 ~~homelessness" means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular,~~  
155 ~~and adequate nighttime residence and includes an individual who:~~

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

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

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

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

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

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

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171 ~~The terms do not refer to an individual imprisoned pursuant to~~  
172 ~~state or federal law or to individuals or families who are~~



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173 ~~sharing housing due to cultural preferences, voluntary~~  
174 ~~arrangements, or traditional networks of support. The terms~~  
175 ~~include an individual who has been released from jail, prison,~~  
176 ~~the juvenile justice system, the child welfare system, a mental~~  
177 ~~health and developmental disability facility, a residential~~  
178 ~~addiction treatment program, or a hospital, for whom no~~  
179 ~~subsequent residence has been identified, and who lacks the~~  
180 ~~resources and support network to obtain housing.~~

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

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

185 ~~(6)-(8)~~ (6) "State Office on Homelessness" means the state  
186 office created in s. 420.622.

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

189 420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on  
190 Homelessness.—

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

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



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202 council on issues related to rural development; the State  
203 Surgeon General, or his or her designee; the Executive Director  
204 of Veterans' Affairs, or his or her designee; the Secretary of  
205 Corrections, or his or her designee; the Secretary of Health  
206 Care Administration, or his or her designee; the Commissioner of  
207 Education, or his or her designee; the Director of CareerSource  
208 Florida, Inc., or his or her designee; the Executive Director of  
209 the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, or his or her designee;  
210 the Secretary of the Department of Elderly Affairs, or his or  
211 her designee; one representative of the Florida Association of  
212 Counties; one representative of the Florida League of Cities;  
213 one representative of the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition;  
214 one representative of the Florida Coalition for the Homeless;  
215 one representative of the Florida Housing Coalition ~~the~~  
216 ~~Executive Director of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation,~~  
217 ~~or his or her designee; one representative of the Florida~~  
218 ~~Coalition for the Homeless;~~ and four members appointed by the  
219 Governor, who is encouraged to appoint members who have  
220 experience in the administration or the provision of resources  
221 or services that address, or of housing that addresses, the  
222 needs of persons experiencing homelessness. The council members  
223 shall be nonpaid volunteers and shall be reimbursed only for  
224 travel expenses. The ~~appointed~~ members of the council appointed  
225 by the Governor shall be appointed to staggered 2-year terms.~~7~~  
226 ~~and~~ The council shall meet at least four times per year. The  
227 importance of minority, gender, and geographic representation  
228 must ~~shall~~ be considered in appointing members to the council.

229 (3) The State Office on Homelessness, pursuant to the  
230 policies set by the council and subject to the availability of





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231 funding, shall:

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

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

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

245 (b) Collect, maintain, and make available information  
246 concerning persons who are homeless ~~or at risk for homelessness,~~  
247 including summary demographic ~~demographics~~ information drawn  
248 from the local continuum of care Homeless Management Information  
249 System or the annual Point-in-Time Count and the local continuum  
250 of care Housing Inventory Chart required by the Department of  
251 Housing and Urban Development, ~~current services and resources~~  
252 ~~available, the cost and availability of services and programs,~~  
253 ~~and the met and unmet needs of this population.~~ To assist the  
254 council in providing this information, all entities that receive  
255 state funding must provide the council with summary aggregated  
256 ~~access to all data they maintain in summary form,~~ which may not  
257 include ~~with no~~ individual identifying information, ~~to assist~~  
258 ~~the council in providing this information.~~ The State Office on  
259 Homelessness, in consultation with the designated lead agencies



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260 for a ~~local homeless~~ continuum of care and with the Council on  
261 Homelessness, shall develop a process by which summary data is  
262 collected ~~the system and process of data collection~~ from all  
263 lead agencies for the purpose of analyzing trends and assessing  
264 impacts in the ~~statewide homeless delivery system~~ for delivering  
265 services to the homeless. ~~Any statewide homelessness survey and~~  
266 ~~database system must comply with all state and federal statutory~~  
267 ~~and regulatory confidentiality requirements.~~

268 (c) Annually evaluate state and continuum of care programs  
269 ~~local services and resources~~ and develop a consolidated plan for  
270 addressing the needs of the homeless or those at risk for  
271 homelessness.

272 (d) Explore, compile, and disseminate information regarding  
273 public and private funding sources for state and local programs  
274 serving the homeless and provide technical assistance in  
275 applying for such funding.

276 (e) Monitor and provide recommendations for coordinating  
277 the activities and programs of continuums of care ~~local~~  
278 ~~coalitions for the homeless~~ and promote the effectiveness of  
279 programs to prevent and end homelessness in the state ~~addressing~~  
280 ~~the needs of the homeless~~.

281 (f) Provide technical assistance to facilitate efforts to  
282 support and strengthen ~~establish, maintain, and expand local~~  
283 ~~homeless assistance~~ continuums of care.

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

288 (h) Spearhead outreach efforts for maximizing access by



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289 people who are homeless or at risk for homelessness to state and  
290 federal programs and resources.

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

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

300 (k) Formulate policies and legislative proposals aimed at  
301 preventing and ending homelessness in this state ~~to address more~~  
302 ~~effectively the needs of the homeless~~ and coordinate the  
303 implementation of state and federal legislative policies.

304 (l) Convene meetings and workshops of state and local  
305 agencies, continuums of care ~~local coalitions and programs~~, and  
306 other stakeholders for the purpose of developing and reviewing  
307 policies, services, activities, coordination, and funding of  
308 efforts to end homelessness ~~meet the needs of the homeless.~~

309 (m) With the input of the continuums of care, conduct or  
310 promote research on the effectiveness of current programs and  
311 propose pilot projects aimed at ending homelessness ~~improving~~  
312 ~~services.~~

313 (n) Serve as an advocate for issues relating to  
314 homelessness.

315 (o) ~~Investigate ways to improve access to participation in~~  
316 ~~state funding and other programs for prevention and alleviation~~  
317 ~~of homelessness to faith-based organizations and Collaborate and~~



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318 coordinate with faith-based organizations, investigate ways to  
319 improve such organizations' access to state funding, and  
320 investigate ways to improve such organizations' participation in  
321 other programs that are intended to prevent and reduce  
322 homelessness.

323 (4) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~  
324 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ shall accept and administer  
325 moneys appropriated to it to provide annual "challenge grants"  
326 to lead agencies of ~~homeless assistance~~ continuums of care  
327 designated by the State Office on Homelessness pursuant to s.  
328 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~. The department shall establish varying  
329 levels of grant awards up to \$750,000 ~~\$500,000~~ per continuum of  
330 care lead agency. The department, in consultation with the  
331 Council on Homelessness, shall specify a grant award level in  
332 the notice of the solicitation of grant applications.

333 (a) To qualify for a ~~the~~ grant, a continuum of care lead  
334 agency must develop and implement a local ~~homeless assistance~~  
335 continuum of care plan for its designated catchment area. The  
336 services and housing funded through the grant must be  
337 implemented through the continuum of care's ~~continuum of care~~  
338 ~~plan must implement a coordinated assessment or central intake~~  
339 entry system as provided in s. 420.6225(4)(b) and must be  
340 designed to ~~screen,~~ assess, and refer persons seeking assistance  
341 to the appropriate housing intervention and service provider.  
342 The continuum of care lead agency shall also document the  
343 commitment of local government or private organizations to  
344 provide matching funds or in-kind support in an amount equal to  
345 25 percent of the grant requested. Expenditures of leveraged  
346 funds or resources, including third-party cash or in-kind



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347 contributions, may be made ~~are authorized~~ only for eligible  
348 activities carried out in connection with a ~~committed on one~~  
349 project. Such funds or resources may ~~which have not~~ have been  
350 used as leverage or match for any other project or program. The  
351 expenditures ~~and~~ must be certified through a written commitment.

352 (b) Preference must be given to continuum of care ~~these~~  
353 lead agencies that have demonstrated the ability of their  
354 continuum of care to help households move out of homelessness  
355 ~~provide quality services to homeless persons and the ability to~~  
356 ~~leverage federal homeless assistance funding under the Stewart~~  
357 ~~B. McKinney Act with local government funding or private funding~~  
358 ~~for the provision of services to homeless persons.~~

359 (c) ~~Preference must be given to lead agencies in catchment~~  
360 ~~areas with the greatest need for the provision of housing and~~  
361 ~~services to the homeless, relative to the population of the~~  
362 ~~catchment area.~~

363 (c) ~~(d)~~ The grant may be used to fund any of the housing,  
364 program, or service needs included in the local ~~homeless~~  
365 ~~assistance~~ continuum of care plan. The continuum of care lead  
366 agency may allocate the grant to programs, services, or housing  
367 providers that implement the local ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum  
368 of care plan. The lead agency may provide subgrants to a local  
369 agency to implement programs or services or provide housing  
370 identified for funding in the lead agency's application to the  
371 department. A lead agency may spend a maximum of 10 ~~8~~ percent of  
372 its funding on administrative costs.

373 (d) ~~(e)~~ The continuum of care lead agency shall submit a  
374 final report to the department documenting the outcomes achieved  
375 by the grant-funded programs ~~grant~~ in enabling persons who are



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376 homeless to return to permanent housing, thereby ending such  
377 person's episode of homelessness.

378 (5) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~  
379 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ may administer moneys given  
380 ~~appropriated~~ to it to provide homeless housing assistance grants  
381 annually to continuum of care lead agencies ~~for local homeless~~  
382 ~~assistance continuum of care,~~ as recognized by the State Office  
383 on Homelessness, to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate  
384 ~~transitional or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.  
385 These moneys shall consist of any sums that the state may  
386 appropriate, as well as money received from donations, gifts,  
387 bequests, or otherwise from any public or private source, which  
388 are intended to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate ~~transitional~~  
389 ~~or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.

390 (a) Grant applicants shall be ranked competitively based on  
391 criteria determined by the State Office on Homelessness.  
392 ~~Preference must be given to applicants who leverage additional~~  
393 ~~private funds and public funds, particularly federal funds~~  
394 ~~designated for the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation~~  
395 ~~of transitional or permanent housing for homeless persons; who~~  
396 ~~acquire, build, or rehabilitate the greatest number of units; or~~  
397 ~~who acquire, build, or rehabilitate in catchment areas having~~  
398 ~~the greatest need for housing for the homeless relative to the~~  
399 ~~population of the catchment area.~~

400 (b) Funding for any particular project may not exceed  
401 \$750,000.

402 (c) Projects must reserve, for a minimum of 20 ~~10~~ years,  
403 the number of units acquired, constructed, or rehabilitated  
404 through homeless housing assistance grant funding to serve



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405 persons who are homeless at the time they assume tenancy.

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

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

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

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



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434 ~~households that are no longer homeless, the rate of recidivism~~  
435 ~~to homelessness, and the number of persons who obtain gainful~~  
436 ~~employment.~~

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

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

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

451 (10) The State Office on Homelessness may administer moneys  
452 appropriated to it for distribution among the continuum of care  
453 lead agencies and entities funded in the 2020-2021 state fiscal  
454 year which are designated by the office as local coalitions for  
455 the homeless ~~28 local homeless continuums of care designated by~~  
456 ~~the Department of Children and Families.~~

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

459 420.6225 Continuum of care.—

460 (1) The purposes of a continuum of care, as defined in s.  
461 420.621, are to coordinate community efforts to prevent and end  
462 homelessness in its catchment area designated as provided in





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463 subsection (3) and to fulfill the responsibilities set forth in  
464 this chapter.

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

477 (3) For the purpose of awarding federal homeless assistance  
478 funding for continuum of care programs, the State Office on  
479 Homelessness shall do both of the following:

480 (a) Designate and, as necessary, revise continuum of care  
481 catchment areas, which must be consistent with the continuum of  
482 care catchment areas recognized by the United States Department  
483 of Housing and Urban Development.

484 (b) Recognize a single continuum of care lead agency for  
485 each such catchment area, which must be consistent with the  
486 continuum of care collaborative applicant designation recognized  
487 by the United States Department of Housing and Urban  
488 Development.

489 (4) Each continuum of care shall create a continuum of care  
490 plan, the purpose of which is to implement an effective and  
491 efficient housing crisis response system to prevent and end



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492 homelessness in the continuum of care catchment area. A  
493 continuum of care plan must include all of the following  
494 components:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

517 (5) Continuums of care must promote participation by all  
518 interested individuals and organizations and may not exclude  
519 individuals and organizations on the basis of race, color,  
520 national origin, sex, handicap, familial status, or religion.



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521 Faith-based organizations, local governments, and persons who  
522 have experienced homelessness are encouraged to participate. To  
523 the extent possible, these individuals and organizations must be  
524 coordinated and integrated with other mainstream health, social  
525 services, and employment programs for which homeless populations  
526 may be eligible, including, but not limited to, Medicaid, the  
527 State Children's Health Insurance Program, the Temporary  
528 Assistance for Needy Families Program, the Food Assistance  
529 Program, and services funded through the Mental Health and  
530 Substance Abuse Block Grant, the Workforce Innovation and  
531 Opportunity Act, and the welfare-to-work grant program.

532 Section 4. Section 420.6227, Florida Statutes, is created  
533 to read:

534 420.6227 Grant-in-aid program.—

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

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

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



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550 (b) Help homeless households move to permanent housing as  
551 quickly as possible.

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

594       420.626 Homelessness; discharge guidelines.—

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

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

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



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608 upon discharge.~~†~~

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

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

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

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

627 Section 9. Section 420.6265, Florida Statutes, is amended  
628 to read:

629 420.6265 Rapid ReHousing.—

630 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

631 (a) The Legislature finds that Rapid ReHousing is a  
632 strategy of using temporary financial assistance ~~and case~~  
633 ~~management~~ to quickly move an individual or family out of  
634 homelessness and into permanent housing, and using housing  
635 stabilization support services to help them remain stably  
636 housed.



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

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

651 (d) The Legislature further finds that Rapid ReHousing is a  
652 cost-effective ~~is an alternative~~ approach to ending homelessness  
653 which reduces ~~to the current system of emergency shelter or~~  
654 ~~transitional housing which tends to reduce~~ the length of time  
655 that a person is homeless and which is demonstrably more ~~has~~  
656 ~~proven to be~~ cost effective than alternative approaches.

657 (e) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to  
658 encourage ~~homeless~~ continuums of care to adopt the Rapid  
659 ReHousing approach to ending ~~preventing~~ homelessness for  
660 individuals who and families that ~~who~~ do not require the  
661 intensive ~~intense~~ level of supports provided in the permanent  
662 supportive housing model.

663 (2) RAPID REHOUSING METHODOLOGY.—

664 (a) The Rapid ReHousing response to homelessness differs  
665 from traditional approaches to addressing homelessness by



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666 focusing on each individual's or family's barriers to housing.  
667 By using this approach, communities can significantly reduce the  
668 amount of time that individuals and families are homeless and  
669 prevent further episodes of homelessness.

670 (b) In Rapid ReHousing, when an individual or a family is  
671 identified as being homeless, the individual or family is  
672 assessed and prioritized for housing through the continuum of  
673 care's coordinated entry system, temporary assistance is  
674 provided to allow the individual or family to obtain permanent  
675 housing as quickly as possible, and necessary, ~~if needed~~,  
676 assistance is provided to allow the individual or family to  
677 retain housing.

678 (c) The objective of Rapid ReHousing is to provide  
679 assistance for as short a term as possible so that the  
680 individual or family receiving assistance attains stability and  
681 integration into the community as quickly as possible ~~does not~~  
682 ~~develop a dependency on the assistance.~~

683 Section 10. Section 420.6275, Florida Statutes, is amended  
684 to read:

685 420.6275 Housing First.—

686 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—

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

689 (b) The Legislature also finds that for nearly ~~most of the~~  
690 ~~past~~ two decades, public and private solutions to homelessness  
691 ~~have~~ focused on providing individuals and families who were ~~are~~  
692 experiencing homelessness with emergency shelter, transitional  
693 housing, or a combination of both. This strategy failed to  
694 recognize that, while emergency shelter programs may provide





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695 critical access to services for individuals and families in  
696 crisis, they often fail to address their long-term needs.

697 (c) The Legislature further finds that Housing First is a  
698 cost-effective ~~an alternative approach to the current system of~~  
699 ~~emergency shelter or transitional housing which tends to ending~~  
700 homelessness and reducing ~~reduce~~ the length of time of  
701 homelessness for many individuals and families ~~and has proven to~~  
702 ~~be cost-effective.~~

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

706 (2) HOUSING FIRST METHODOLOGY.—

707 (a) The Housing First approach to homelessness provides  
708 permanent ~~differs from traditional approaches by providing~~  
709 housing assistance, followed by ~~case management,~~ and support  
710 services responsive to individual or family needs once ~~after~~  
711 housing is obtained. By using this approach ~~when appropriate,~~  
712 communities can significantly reduce the amount of time that  
713 individuals and families are homeless and prevent further  
714 episodes of homelessness. Housing First emphasizes that social  
715 services provided to enhance individual and family well-being  
716 can be more effective when people are in their own home, and:

717 1. The housing is not time-limited.

718 2. The housing is not contingent on compliance with  
719 services. Instead, participants must comply with a standard  
720 lease agreement.

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



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

728 (b) The Housing First approach addresses the societal  
729 causes of homelessness and advocates for the immediate return of  
730 individuals and families into housing and communities. Housing  
731 First links affordable housing with community-based social  
732 service and health care organizations ~~Housing First provides a~~  
733 ~~critical link between the emergency and transitional housing~~  
734 ~~system and community-based social service, educational, and~~  
735 ~~health care organizations~~ and consists of four components:

- 736 1. Crisis intervention and short-term stabilization.  
737 2. Screening, intake, and needs assessment.  
738 3. Provision of housing resources.  
739 4. Provision of case management.

740 Section 11. Paragraph (d) of subsection (22) of section  
741 420.507, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

742 420.507 Powers of the corporation.—The corporation shall  
743 have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and  
744 effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part, including  
745 the following powers which are in addition to all other powers  
746 granted by other provisions of this part:

747 (22) To develop and administer the State Apartment  
748 Incentive Loan Program. In developing and administering that  
749 program, the corporation may:

750 (d) In counties or rural areas of counties that do not have  
751 existing units set aside for homeless persons, forgive  
752 indebtedness for loans provided to create permanent rental



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753 housing units for persons who are homeless, as defined in s.  
754 420.621 ~~s. 420.621(5)~~, or for persons residing in time-limited  
755 transitional housing or institutions as a result of a lack of  
756 permanent, affordable housing. Such developments must be  
757 supported by a ~~local homeless assistance~~ continuum of care  
758 developed under s. 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~, be developed by  
759 nonprofit applicants, be small properties as defined by  
760 corporation rule, and be a project in the local housing  
761 assistance continuum of care plan recognized by the State Office  
762 on Homelessness.

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