

By the Committee on Appropriations; and Senator Book

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to homelessness; amending s. 420.621,
3 F.S.; revising, adding, and deleting defined terms;
4 amending s. 420.622, F.S.; expanding the membership of
5 the Council on Homelessness to include a
6 representative of the Florida Housing Coalition and
7 the Secretary of the Department of Elderly Affairs or
8 his or her designee; providing that the Governor is
9 encouraged to appoint council members who have certain
10 experience; revising the duties of the State Office on
11 Homelessness; revising requirements for the state's
12 homeless programs; requiring entities that receive
13 state funding to provide summary aggregated data to
14 assist the council in providing certain information;
15 removing the requirement that the office have the
16 concurrence of the council to accept and administer
17 moneys appropriated to it to provide certain annual
18 challenge grants to continuums of care lead agencies;
19 increasing the maximum amount of grant awards per
20 continuum of care lead agency; conforming provisions
21 to changes made by the act; revising requirements for
22 the use of grant funds by continuum of care lead
23 agencies; revising preference criteria for certain
24 grants; increasing the maximum percentage of its
25 funding which a continuum of care lead agency may
26 spend on administrative costs; requiring such agencies
27 to submit a final report to the Department of Children
28 and Families documenting certain outcomes achieved by
29 grant-funded programs; removing the requirement that

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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
57 responsible for submitting the continuum of care
58 funding application for the designated catchment area

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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
86 state funds awarded under a spending plan which may be
87 used by the continuum of care lead agency for staffing

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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.

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

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

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117 read:

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

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

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

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

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

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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).~~

170
171 ~~The terms do not refer to an individual imprisoned pursuant to~~
172 ~~state or federal law or to individuals or families who are~~
173 ~~sharing housing due to cultural preferences, voluntary~~
174 ~~arrangements, or traditional networks of support. The terms~~

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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
202 council on issues related to rural development; the State
203 Surgeon General, or his or her designee; the Executive Director

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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
231 funding, shall:

232 (a) Coordinate among state, local, and private agencies and

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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
260 for a ~~local homeless~~ continuum of care and with the Council on
261 Homelessness, shall develop a process by which summary data is

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

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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
318 coordinate with faith-based organizations, investigate ways to
319 improve such organizations' access to state funding, and

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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
347 contributions, may be made ~~are authorized~~ only for eligible
348 activities carried out in connection with a ~~committed on one~~

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

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

406 (d) No more than two grants may be awarded annually in any

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

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

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

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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.
521 Faith-based organizations, local governments, and persons who
522 have experienced homelessness are encouraged to participate. To

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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.

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

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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.

579 (8) LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS.—If an entity contracts with local
580 agencies to provide services and receives financial assistance

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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
608 upon discharge.†

609 (b) Development and implementation of a discharge plan

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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.

637 (b) The Legislature also finds that public and private
638 solutions to homelessness in the past have focused on providing

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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
666 focusing on each individual's or family's barriers to housing.
667 By using this approach, communities can significantly reduce the

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

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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.~~

724 ~~3. A background check and any rehabilitation necessary to~~
 725 ~~combat an addiction related to alcoholism or substance abuse has~~

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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
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

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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.