

2SHB 1922 - S COMM AMD
By Committee on Ways & Means

ADOPTED 04/10/2007

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that providing
4 needy youth aging out of the state dependency system with safe and
5 viable options for housing to avoid homelessness confers a valuable
6 benefit on the public that is intended to improve public health,
7 safety, and welfare.

8 (2) It is the goal of this state to:

9 (a) Ensure that all youth aging out of the state dependency system
10 have access to a decent, appropriate, and affordable home in a healthy
11 safe environment to prevent such young people from experiencing
12 homelessness; and

13 (b) Reduce each year the percentage of young people eligible for
14 state assistance upon aging out of the state dependency system.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.63A RCW
16 to read as follows:

17 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter
18 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

19 (1) "Department" means the department of community, trade, and
20 economic development.

21 (2) "Eligible youth" means an individual who:

22 (a) On or after September 1, 2006, is at least eighteen, was a
23 dependent of the state under chapter 13.34 RCW in the month before his
24 or her eighteenth birthday, and has not yet reached the age of
25 twenty-three;

26 (b) Except as provided in section 4(2)(a) of this act, has a total
27 income from all sources, except for temporary sources that include, but
28 are not limited to, overtime wages, bonuses, or short-term temporary

1 assignments, that does not exceed fifty percent of the area median
2 income;

3 (c) Is not receiving services under RCW 74.13.031(10)(b);

4 (d) Complies with other eligibility requirements the department may
5 establish.

6 (3) "Fair market rent" means the fair market rent in each county of
7 the state, as determined by the United States department of housing and
8 urban development.

9 (4) "Independent housing" means a housing unit that is not owned by
10 or located within the home of the eligible youth's biological parents
11 or any of the eligible youth's former foster care families or
12 dependency guardians. "Independent housing" may include a unit in a
13 transitional or other supportive housing facility.

14 (5) "Individual development account" or "account" means an account
15 established by contract between a low-income individual and a
16 sponsoring organization for the benefit of the low-income individual
17 and funded through periodic contributions by the low-income individual
18 that are matched with contributions by or through the sponsoring
19 organization.

20 (6) "Subcontractor organization" means an eligible organization
21 described under RCW 43.185A.040 that contracts with the department to
22 administer the independent youth housing program.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.63A RCW
24 to read as follows:

25 (1) The independent youth housing program is created in the
26 department to provide housing stipends to eligible youth to be used for
27 independent housing. In developing a plan for the design,
28 implementation, and operation of the independent youth housing program,
29 the department shall:

30 (a) Adopt policies, requirements, and procedures necessary to
31 administer the program;

32 (b) Contract with one or more eligible organizations described
33 under RCW 43.185A.040 to provide services and conduct administrative
34 activities as described in subsection (3) of this section;

35 (c) Establish eligibility criteria for youth to participate in the
36 independent youth housing program, giving priority to youth who have
37 been dependents of the state for at least one year;

1 (d) Refer interested youth to the designated subcontractor
2 organization administering the program in the area in which the youth
3 intends to reside;

4 (e) Develop a method for determining the amount of the housing
5 stipend, first and last month's rent, and security deposit, where
6 applicable, to be dedicated to participating youth. The method for
7 determining a housing stipend must take into account a youth's age, the
8 youth's total income from all sources, the fair market rent for the
9 area in which the youth lives or intends to live, and a variety of
10 possible living situations for the youth. The amount of housing
11 stipends must be adjusted, by a method and formula established by the
12 department, to promote the successful transition for youth to complete
13 housing self-sufficiency over time;

14 (f) Ensure that the independent youth housing program is integrated
15 and aligned with other state rental assistance and case management
16 programs operated by the department, as well as case management and
17 supportive services programs, including the independent living program,
18 the transitional living program, and other related programs offered by
19 the department of social and health services; and

20 (g) Consult with the department of social and health services and
21 other stakeholders involved with dependent youth, homeless youth, and
22 homeless young adults, as appropriate.

23 (2) The department of social and health services shall collaborate
24 with the department in implementing and operating the independent youth
25 housing program including, but not limited to, the following:

26 (a) Refer potential eligible youth to the department before the
27 youth's eighteenth birthday, if feasible, to include an indication, if
28 known, of where the youth plans to reside after aging out of foster
29 care;

30 (b) Provide information to all youth aged fifteen or older, who are
31 dependents of the state under chapter 13.34 RCW, about the independent
32 youth housing program, encouraging dependents nearing their eighteenth
33 birthday to consider applying for enrollment in the program;

34 (c) Encourage organizations participating in the independent living
35 program and the transitional living program to collaborate with
36 independent youth housing program providers whenever possible to
37 capitalize on resources and provide the greatest amount and variety of
38 services to eligible youth;

1 (d) Annually provide to the department data reflecting changes in
2 the percentage of youth aging out of the state dependency system each
3 year who are eligible for state assistance, as well as any other data
4 and performance measures that may assist the department to measure
5 program success; and

6 (e) Annually, beginning by December 31, 2007, provide to the
7 appropriate committees of the legislature and the interagency council
8 on homelessness as described under RCW 43.185C.170 recommendations of
9 strategies to reach the goals described in section 5(2)(g) of this act.

10 (3) Under the independent youth housing program, subcontractor
11 organizations shall:

12 (a) Use moneys awarded to the organizations for housing stipends,
13 security deposits, first and last month's rent stipends, case
14 management program costs, and administrative costs;

15 (i) Administrative costs for each subcontractor organization may
16 not exceed twelve percent of the estimated total annual grant amount to
17 the subcontractor organization;

18 (ii) All housing stipends must be payable only to a landlord or
19 housing manager of any type of independent housing;

20 (b) Enroll eligible youth who are referred by the department and
21 who choose to reside in their assigned service area;

22 (c) Enter eligible youth program participants into the homeless
23 client management information system as described in RCW 43.185C.180;

24 (d) Monitor participating youth's housing status;

25 (e) Evaluate participating youth's eligibility and compliance with
26 department policies and procedures at least twice a year;

27 (f) Assist participating youth to develop or update an independent
28 living plan focused on obtaining and retaining independent housing or
29 collaborate with a case manager with whom the youth is already involved
30 to ensure that the youth has an independent living plan;

31 (g) Educate participating youth on tenant rights and
32 responsibilities;

33 (h) Provide support to participating youth in the form of general
34 case management and information and referral services, when necessary,
35 or collaborate with a case manager with whom the youth is already
36 involved to ensure that the youth is receiving the case management and
37 information and referral services needed;

1 (i) Connect participating youth, when possible, with individual
2 development account programs, other financial literacy programs, and
3 other programs that are designed to help young people acquire economic
4 independence and self-sufficiency, or collaborate with a case manager
5 with whom the youth is already involved to ensure that the youth is
6 receiving information and referrals to these programs, when
7 appropriate;

8 (j) Submit expenditure and performance reports, including
9 information related to the performance measures in section 5 of this
10 act, to the department on a time schedule determined by the department;
11 and

12 (k) Provide recommendations to the department regarding program
13 improvements and strategies that might assist the state to reach its
14 goals as described in section 5(2)(g) of this act.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 43.63A RCW
16 to read as follows:

17 (1) An eligible youth participating in the independent youth
18 housing program must:

19 (a) Sign a program compliance agreement stating that the youth
20 agrees to:

21 (i) Timely pay his or her portion of the independent housing cost;
22 (ii) Comply with an independent living plan; and
23 (iii) Comply with other program requirements and policies the
24 department may establish; and

25 (b) Maintain his or her status as an eligible youth, except as
26 provided in subsection (2) of this section.

27 (2) The department shall establish policies and procedures to allow
28 the youth to remain in the program and continue to receive a housing
29 stipend if the youth's total income exceeds fifty percent of the area
30 median income during the course of his or her participation in the
31 program. The policies must require the youth to:

32 (a) Participate in the individual development account program
33 established under RCW 43.31.460 and invest a portion, to be determined
34 by the department, of his or her income that exceeds fifty percent of
35 the area median income in an individual development account; or

36 (b) If the youth is unable to participate in the individual
37 development account program due to the program's capacity limits or

1 eligibility requirements, participate in an alternate supervised
2 savings program approved by the department, as long as the youth
3 qualifies for and may participate in this savings program.

4 (3) An eligible youth may participate in the independent youth
5 housing program for any duration of time and may apply to enroll in the
6 program with the department at any time.

7 (4)(a) A youth may be terminated from the independent youth housing
8 program for a violation of department policies.

9 (b) Youth who are terminated from the program may apply to the
10 department for reenrollment in the program through a procedure to be
11 developed by the department. The department shall establish criteria
12 to evaluate a reenrollment application and may accept or deny a
13 reenrollment application based on the department's evaluation.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 43.63A RCW
15 to read as follows:

16 Beginning in 2007, the department must annually review and report
17 on the performance of subcontractor organizations participating in the
18 independent youth housing program, as well as the performance of the
19 program as a whole.

20 (1) Reporting should be within the context of the state homeless
21 housing strategic plan under RCW 43.185C.040 and any other relevant
22 state or local homeless or affordable housing plans. The outcomes of
23 the independent youth housing program must be included in the
24 measurement of any performance measures described in chapter 43.185C
25 RCW.

26 (2) The independent youth housing program report must include, at
27 a minimum, an update on the following program performance measures, as
28 well as any other performance measures the department may establish,
29 for enrolled youth in consultation with the department of social and
30 health services, to be measured statewide and by county:

- 31 (a) Increases in housing stability;
- 32 (b) Increases in economic self-sufficiency;
- 33 (c) Increases in independent living skills;
- 34 (d) Increases in education and job training attainment;
- 35 (e) Decreases in the use of all state-funded services over time;
- 36 (f) Decreases in the percentage of youth aging out of the state

1 dependency system each year who are eligible for state assistance as
2 reported to the department by the department of social and health
3 services; and

4 (g) Recommendations to the legislature and to the interagency
5 council on homelessness as described under RCW 43.185C.170 on program
6 improvements and on departmental strategies that might assist the state
7 to reach its goals of:

8 (i) Ensuring that all youth aging out of the state dependency
9 system have access to a decent, appropriate, and affordable home in a
10 healthy safe environment to prevent such youth from experiencing
11 homelessness; and

12 (ii) Reducing each year the percentage of young people eligible for
13 state assistance upon aging out of the state dependency system.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 43.63A RCW
15 to read as follows:

16 This act does not create:

17 (1) An entitlement to services;

18 (2) Judicial authority to (a) extend the jurisdiction of juvenile
19 court in a proceeding under chapter 13.34 RCW to a youth who has
20 reached the age of eighteen or (b) order the provision of services to
21 the youth; or

22 (3) A private right of action or claim on the part of any
23 individual, entity, or agency against the department, the department of
24 social and health services, or any contractor of the departments.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 43.63A RCW
26 to read as follows:

27 The independent youth housing account is created in the state
28 treasury. All revenue directed to the independent youth housing
29 program must be deposited into this account. Moneys in the account may
30 be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may
31 only be used for the independent youth housing program as described in
32 section 3 of this act.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** Beginning in September 2008, the Washington
34 state institute for public policy shall conduct a study measuring the
35 outcomes for youth who are participating or who have participated in

1 the independent youth housing program created in section 3 of this act.
2 The institute shall issue a report containing its preliminary findings
3 to the legislature by December 1, 2009, and a final report by December
4 1, 2010.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** If specific funding for the purposes of this
6 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by
7 June 30, 2007, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and
8 void."

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9 On page 1, line 1 of the title, after "program;" strike the
10 remainder of the title and insert "adding new sections to chapter
11 43.63A RCW; and creating new sections."

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