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**HOUSE BILL 1939**

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**State of Washington**

**66th Legislature**

**2019 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Steele, Chapman, Reeves, and Valdez

Read first time 02/06/19. Referred to Committee on Housing,  
Community Development & Veterans.

1 AN ACT Relating to housing and supportive services for homeless  
2 and at-risk veterans in rural areas; and adding a new section to  
3 chapter 73.08 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 73.08  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The department of veterans affairs must establish a program  
8 to provide outreach and resources for rural homeless and at-risk  
9 veterans in need of emergency or transitional housing and related  
10 resources that can assist the veteran in becoming self-sufficient.  
11 The program must include counties with significant populations in  
12 rural areas that are remotely located from access to emergency or  
13 transitional housing.

14 (2) The program must include the following services for homeless  
15 and at-risk veterans:

16 (a) Outreach services to identify and locate homeless or at-risk  
17 veteran populations within each county rural area;

18 (b) Transportation services to local or regional emergency or  
19 transitional housing programs;

20 (c) Housing at an emergency shelter or transitional housing  
21 program; and

1 (d) Supportive services and case management available in  
2 conjunction with emergency or transitional housing.

3 (3) The department of veterans affairs must work with each  
4 designated county's veterans' assistance program, other state and  
5 local agencies, and community groups, to develop and implement the  
6 services provided by the program. The department must identify  
7 available state, local, and private homeless housing resources within  
8 the county and determine which resources are available in the area,  
9 such as employment assistance and job training, health care,  
10 counseling, substance abuse treatment, and mental health treatment.

11 (4) The program outreach and transportation services must provide  
12 opportunities for identified homeless and at-risk veterans to access  
13 emergency or transitional housing. The program must also offer all  
14 related available services to promote well-being, stability, and  
15 self-sufficiency. The program must also work with the veterans to  
16 ensure access to all available federal veterans' benefits and  
17 reintegration services.

18 (5) The program may provide housing for a homeless and at-risk  
19 veteran for up to two years. Within program resources, the department  
20 of veterans affairs is authorized to issue vouchers or contract with  
21 an emergency shelter or transitional housing program to provide  
22 emergency or transitional housing. The program must coordinate with  
23 any available federal veteran homeless housing program.

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