
HOUSE BILL 1905

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Representatives Senn, Macri, Berry, Leavitt, Taylor, Ryu, Santos, Simmons, Peterson, Chopp, Goodman, Ormsby, J. Johnson, Dolan, Eslick, Ramel, Kloba, Callan, Frame, Davis, Bateman, Harris-Talley, Valdez, and Pollet

Read first time 01/11/22. Referred to Committee on Children, Youth & Families.

1 AN ACT Relating to reducing homelessness for youth and young
2 adults discharging from a publicly funded system of care; adding a
3 new section to chapter 43.216 RCW; adding new sections to chapter
4 43.330 RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that young
7 people discharging from publicly funded systems of care are at
8 increased risk of homelessness. Youth and young adults experiencing
9 homelessness face traumatic events at a higher rate than their peers
10 who have stable housing. Homelessness has long-term impacts on brain
11 development and well-being and creates barriers to education and
12 employment.

13 (2) RCW 43.330.720 establishes a goal that any unaccompanied
14 youth discharged from a publicly funded system of care in our state
15 will be discharged into safe and stable housing. The office of
16 homeless youth prevention and protection programs and the department
17 of children, youth, and families published the improving stability
18 for youth exiting systems of care report in 2020 outlining steps to
19 achieve this goal. These steps provide a multipronged approach to
20 ensure youth exit publicly funded systems of care into safe and
21 stable housing, including:

1 (a) System-level support while youth are in the custody of
2 publicly funded systems of care to ensure effective transition from
3 care;

4 (b) Community-level connections and services to provide support
5 when youth transition back to the community; and

6 (c) Resources to secure and maintain stable housing.

7 (3) The legislature intends to implement community services,
8 system response, and flexible resources to support the goal
9 established under RCW 43.330.720 that youth discharged from publicly
10 funded systems of care are discharged into safe and stable housing
11 with the appropriate supports in place to provide a strong footing.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.216
13 RCW to read as follows:

14 (1) The department, in coordination with the office of homeless
15 youth prevention and protection programs, the department of social
16 and health services, and the health care authority, shall develop and
17 implement a rapid response team that is prepared to respond
18 appropriately to support youth and young adults exiting a publicly
19 funded system of care. As part of the development and implementation
20 of the rapid response team, the department shall develop and
21 implement a system for:

22 (a) Identifying youth and young adults that should be served by
23 the rapid response team;

24 (b) Initiating use of the rapid response team in a timely manner
25 that will allow for the best possible transition planning; and

26 (c) Locating services and connecting youth and young adults with
27 those services to establish stability.

28 (2) The rapid response team developed under this section may
29 provide assistance and support to youth and young adults who are at
30 risk of becoming homeless and who are exiting a publicly funded
31 system of care with the goal of securing appropriate housing and
32 other supports for the youth or young adult. If there is no housing
33 identified for a youth or young adult upon exit, the rapid response
34 team shall meet before a youth or young adult transitions out of a
35 publicly funded system of care to allow the youth or young adult to
36 better prepare for the exit. The assistance and support provided
37 under this subsection should occur as soon as possible, particularly
38 if a youth or young adult presents risk factors that place the youth
39 at higher risk of possible homelessness.

1 (3) Any of the following individuals may refer a youth to the
2 rapid response team:

3 (a) A youth or young adult themselves;

4 (b) A family member of a youth or young adult;

5 (c) An advocate for a youth or young adult;

6 (d) A behavioral health service provider serving a youth or young
7 adult; or

8 (e) A service provider contracting with the office of homeless
9 youth prevention and protection programs.

10 (4) For the purposes of this section:

11 (a) "Publicly funded system of care" has the same meaning as
12 provided in RCW 43.330.720;

13 (b) "Rapid response team" means a team of representatives from
14 relevant state agencies that meet to respond to complex cases
15 involving a youth or young adult located anywhere in the state
16 exiting a publicly funded system of care to support those youth or
17 young adults with the goal of securing appropriate housing and other
18 supports for the youth or young adult. Services and supports under
19 this section must incorporate youth or young adult voice and choice.
20 The services under this section must be responsive to the individual
21 needs of each youth or young adult and may include, but are not
22 limited to:

23 (i) Behavioral health services;

24 (ii) Civil legal aid;

25 (iii) Peer support;

26 (iv) Family reconciliation or engagement services;

27 (v) Employment support;

28 (vi) Education support;

29 (vii) Case management;

30 (viii) Housing and financial support; or

31 (ix) Other navigation support to secure safe and stable housing;

32 and

33 (c) "Youth" and "young adult" have the same meaning as provided
34 in RCW 43.330.702.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.330
36 RCW to read as follows:

37 (1) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection
38 programs, in coordination with the department of children, youth, and
39 families, shall administer flexible funding, subject to the amounts

1 appropriated for this specific purpose, to support persons under the
2 age of 25 exiting publicly funded systems of care that need discrete
3 support or funding to secure safe housing. The flexible funding
4 provided under this section may be provided for immediate needs of
5 the person. A person may receive support under this section more than
6 once. Uses of the flexible funding provided under this section may
7 include, but are not limited to, the following:

8 (a) Car repair or other transportation assistance;

9 (b) Rental application fees, a security deposit, or short-term
10 rental assistance; or

11 (c) Other uses that will help support the person's housing
12 stability, education, or employment, or meet immediate basic needs.

13 (2) The flexible funding provided under this section may be given
14 to:

15 (a) Persons under the age of 25;

16 (b) Community-based providers, assisting persons under the age of
17 25 in planning for discharge and successfully discharging from a
18 publicly funded system of care into safe and stable housing; and

19 (c) Individuals or entities, including landlords, providing safe
20 housing or other housing-related support for persons under the age of
21 25.

22 (3) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection
23 programs shall make training available to publicly funded systems of
24 care and other professionals working with youth exiting publicly
25 funded systems of care on how to access the flexible funds created
26 under this section and best practices to divert youth from
27 homelessness.

28 (4) For purposes of this section, "publicly funded system of
29 care" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 43.330.720.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 43.330
31 RCW to read as follows:

32 (1) Subject to the amounts appropriated for this specific
33 purpose, the office of homeless youth prevention and protection
34 programs shall select, monitor, and provide funding and assistance
35 for a minimum of six total counties that implement housing stability
36 for youth in crisis programs as described in this section for a
37 period of three years.

38 (2) The housing stability for youth in crisis pilot programs must
39 include the following components:

1 (a) Regular trainings provided to all appropriate juvenile court
2 staff regarding risk factors and identifiers for youth homelessness;

3 (b) An identification and referral system used throughout the
4 juvenile court system where all appropriate court staff use routine
5 data flags to identify youth at risk for youth homelessness and refer
6 youth to the housing stability coordinator described under (c) of
7 this subsection;

8 (c) A dedicated housing stability coordinator in each
9 participating county that receives referrals, conducts housing
10 stability assessments with youth and caregivers, connects youth and
11 caregivers with relevant community providers based on assessments,
12 and follows up on referrals;

13 (d) A model of homelessness prevention services that provides the
14 appropriate amount of intervention based on the youth or family
15 needs; and

16 (e) Coordinated housing services for youth experiencing
17 homelessness.

18 (3) By October 1, 2025, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the
19 office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall
20 submit a report to the relevant committees of the legislature and the
21 governor that includes:

22 (a) An evaluation of the housing stability for youth in crisis
23 programs that includes outcome data for participants;

24 (b) Recommendations for improving the housing stability for youth
25 in crisis programs; and

26 (c) Recommendation for expanding the housing stability for youth
27 in crisis programs.

28 (4) This section expires July 1, 2026.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 43.330
30 RCW to read as follows:

31 (1) Subject to the amounts appropriated for this specific
32 purpose, the office of homeless youth prevention and protection
33 programs shall provide system of care grants that prevent youth from
34 exiting a publicly funded system of care into homelessness.

35 (2) The system of care grants funded under this section shall
36 provide support to youth exiting a publicly funded system of care and
37 may include:

38 (a) Behavioral health services;

39 (b) Civil legal aid;

- 1 (c) Peer navigators and support;
2 (d) Family reconciliation or engagement services;
3 (e) Employment support;
4 (f) Education support;
5 (g) Case management;
6 (h) Housing and financial support; or
7 (i) Other navigation support to secure safe and stable housing.
8 (3) For purposes of this section, "publicly funded system of
9 care" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 43.330.720.

--- END ---