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**Human Services, Youth, & Early  
Learning Committee**

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**SSB 5398**

**Brief Description:** Concerning domestic violence funding allocation.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators MacEwen and Wilson, L.).

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Directs the Department of Social and Health Services Domestic Violence Services Program to convene a work group to review and update the formula used to determine the allocation of funding for domestic violence victim services agencies.

**Hearing Date:** 3/22/23

**Staff:** Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

**Background:**

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Domestic Violence Services Program administers state and federal funding dedicated to providing emergency shelter and supportive services for victims of domestic violence and their dependent children.

The DSHS, in consultation with relevant agencies and other stakeholders, must develop and maintain a plan for delivering domestic violence victim services, prevention efforts, and access to emergency shelters across the state, establish minimum standards for certain domestic violence programs and emergency shelter programs, distribute grants and evaluate funded programs for compliance, and administer funds from the Domestic Violence Prevention Account for culturally specific prevention efforts and services, age appropriate prevention and

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intervention services for children and youth, and awareness and prevention outreach efforts.

The DSHS may award grants on a contract basis to public or private nonprofit entities, or individuals providing community-based domestic violence services, emergency shelter services, domestic violence hotline or information and referral services, or prevention efforts meeting minimum standards established by the DSHS. In awarding grants, the DSHS must consider need, geographic location, population ratios, the needs of specific underserved and cultural populations, and the extent of existing services.

**Summary of Bill:**

The DSHS Domestic Violence Services Program must convene a work group to review and update the formula used to determine the allocation of funding for domestic violence victim services agencies. The work group must include, but is not limited to, representatives of:

- the DSHS;
- the Office of Crime Victims Advocacy;
- the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence;
- at least nine DSHS contracted domestic violence victim services agencies, three each from the DSHS' regions 1, 2, and 3, representing both small and large capacity shelters; and
- three at-large community-based or tribal domestic violence victim services providers.

The DSHS may hire external consultants, as needed, to assist with the goals of the work group.

By December 1, 2023, the work group must develop recommendations for formulation allocation and provide a copy of the recommendations to the Legislature. The final decision regarding whether to implement the formula allocation recommendations of the work group remains within the discretion of the DSHS; however, implementation of any of the recommendations must be effective starting July 1, 2024.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.