

**RCW 43.330.705 Homeless youth—Office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs.** (1) There is created the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs within the department.

(2) Activities of the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs must be carried out by a director of the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs, supervised by the director of the department or his or her designee.

(3) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs is responsible for leading efforts under this subchapter to coordinate a spectrum of ongoing and future funding, policy, and practice efforts related to homeless youth and improving the safety, health, and welfare of homeless youth in this state.

(4) The measurable goals of the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs are to: (a) Measurably decrease the number of homeless youth and young adults by identifying programs that address the initial causes of homelessness, and (b) measurably increase permanency rates among homeless youth by decreasing the length and occurrences of youth homelessness caused by a youth's separation from family or a legal guardian.

(5) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall (a) gather data and outcome measures, (b) initiate data-sharing agreements, (c) develop specific recommendations and timelines to address funding, policy, and practice gaps within the state system for addressing the five key components in RCW 43.330.700, (d) make reports, (e) increase system integration and coordinate efforts to prevent state systems from discharging youth and young adults into homelessness, (f) develop measures to include by county and statewide the number of homeless youth, dependency status, family reunification status, housing status, program participation, and runaway status, and (g) develop a comprehensive plan to encourage identification of youth experiencing homelessness, promote family stability, and eliminate youth and young adult homelessness.

(6) (a) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall regularly consult with an advisory committee, comprised of advocates, at least two legislators, at least two parent advocates, at least two youth representatives, at least one representative from law enforcement, service providers, and other stakeholders knowledgeable in the provision of services to homeless youth and young adults, including the prevention of youth and young adult homelessness, the dependency system, and family reunification, for a total of twelve members. The advisory committee shall provide guidance and recommendations to the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs regarding funding, policy, and practice gaps within and among state programs.

(b) The advisory committee must be staffed by the department.

(c) The members of the advisory committee must be appointed by the governor, except for the legislators who must be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate.

(d) The advisory committee must have its initial meeting no later than March 1, 2016.

(7) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs must be operational no later than January 1, 2016. Transfer of powers, duties, and functions of the department of children, youth, and families to the department of commerce pertaining to youth

homeless services and programs identified in RCW 43.330.710(2) may occur before this date. [2019 c 124 s 5; 2015 c 69 s 5.]