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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1905**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2022 Regular Session**

**By** House Children, Youth & Families (originally sponsored 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 01/27/22.

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; providing an effective date; and  
5 providing an expiration date.

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

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

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

1 ensure youth exit publicly funded systems of care into safe and  
2 stable housing, including:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 if a youth or young adult presents risk factors that place the youth  
2 at higher risk of possible homelessness.

3 (3) Any of the following individuals may refer a youth or young  
4 adult to the rapid response team:

- 5 (a) A youth or young adult themselves;
- 6 (b) A family member of a youth or young adult;
- 7 (c) An advocate for a youth or young adult;
- 8 (d) An educator;
- 9 (e) A law enforcement officer;
- 10 (f) An employee of the department or the office of homeless youth  
11 prevention and protection programs;
- 12 (g) A service provider contracting with or licensed by the  
13 department;
- 14 (h) A behavioral health service provider serving a youth or young  
15 adult; or
- 16 (i) A service provider contracting with the office of homeless  
17 youth prevention and protection programs.

18 (4) For the purposes of this section:

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

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

- 31 (i) Behavioral health services;
- 32 (ii) Civil legal aid;
- 33 (iii) Peer support;
- 34 (iv) Family reconciliation or engagement services;
- 35 (v) Employment support;
- 36 (vi) Education support;
- 37 (vii) Case management;
- 38 (viii) Housing and financial support; or
- 39 (ix) Other navigation support to secure safe and stable housing;

40 and

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

3 (5) By November 1, 2022, and annually thereafter, the department,  
4 in coordination with the office of homeless youth prevention and  
5 protection programs shall provide a report to the legislature and the  
6 governor including data and recommendations related to the rapid  
7 response team created in this section. The report required under this  
8 subsection must be submitted in compliance with RCW 43.01.036. The  
9 report required under this subsection must include the following:

10 (a) The number of people referred to the rapid response team and  
11 the types of people making referrals to the rapid response team;

12 (b) The demographic data of the people served by the rapid  
13 response team;

14 (c) The types of services identified as needed for the people  
15 served by the rapid response team;

16 (d) The availability of the services identified as needed for the  
17 people served by the rapid response team; and

18 (e) The barriers identified to adequately address the needs of  
19 people referred to the rapid response team and recommendations to  
20 address those barriers.

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

23 (1) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection  
24 programs, in coordination with the department of children, youth, and  
25 families, shall administer flexible funding, subject to the amounts  
26 appropriated for this specific purpose, to support persons under the  
27 age of 25 exiting publicly funded systems of care that need discrete  
28 support or funding to secure safe housing. The flexible funding  
29 provided under this section may be provided for immediate needs of  
30 the person. A person may receive support under this section more than  
31 once. Uses of the flexible funding provided under this section may  
32 include, but are not limited to, the following:

33 (a) Car repair or other transportation assistance;

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

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

38 (2) The flexible funding provided under this section may be given  
39 to:

1 (a) Persons under the age of 25;

2 (b) Community-based providers, assisting persons under the age of  
3 25 in planning for discharge and successfully discharging from a  
4 publicly funded system of care into safe and stable housing; and

5 (c) Individuals or entities, including landlords, providing safe  
6 housing or other housing-related support for persons under the age of  
7 25.

8 (3) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection  
9 programs shall make training available to publicly funded systems of  
10 care and other professionals working with youth exiting publicly  
11 funded systems of care on how to access the flexible funds created  
12 under this section and best practices to divert youth from  
13 homelessness.

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

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

18 (1) Subject to the amounts appropriated for this specific  
19 purpose, the office of homeless youth prevention and protection  
20 programs shall select, monitor, and provide funding and assistance  
21 for a minimum of six total counties that implement housing stability  
22 for youth in crisis programs as described in this section for a  
23 period of three years.

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

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

28 (b) An identification and referral system used throughout the  
29 juvenile court system where all appropriate court staff use routine  
30 data flags to identify youth at risk for youth homelessness and refer  
31 youth to the housing stability coordinator described under (c) of  
32 this subsection;

33 (c) A dedicated housing stability coordinator in each  
34 participating county that receives referrals, conducts housing  
35 stability assessments with youth and caregivers, connects youth and  
36 caregivers with relevant community providers based on assessments,  
37 and follows up on referrals;

1 (d) A model of homelessness prevention services that provides the  
2 appropriate amount of intervention based on the youth or family  
3 needs; and

4 (e) Coordinated housing services for youth experiencing  
5 homelessness.

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

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

12 (b) Recommendations for improving the housing stability for youth  
13 in crisis programs; and

14 (c) Recommendation for expanding the housing stability for youth  
15 in crisis programs.

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

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

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

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

26 (a) Behavioral health services;

27 (b) Civil legal aid;

28 (c) Peer navigators and support;

29 (d) Family reconciliation or engagement services;

30 (e) Employment support;

31 (f) Education support;

32 (g) Case management;

33 (h) Housing and financial support; or

34 (i) Other navigation support to secure safe and stable housing.

35 (3) For purposes of this section, "publicly funded system of  
36 care" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 43.330.720.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 6.**    Section 2 of this act takes effect January  
2    1, 2023.

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