
HOUSE BILL 2649

State of Washington

66th Legislature

2020 Regular Session

By Representatives Ryu, Doglio, Lekanoff, Ormsby, and Pollet; by request of Office of the Governor

Read first time 01/16/20. Referred to Committee on Housing, Community Development & Veterans.

1 AN ACT Relating to homeless shelter capacity; amending RCW
2 43.185C.050 and 43.185C.080; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that leaving
5 people living outside is unacceptable and constitutes an emergency,
6 and that immediate action is necessary to bring more people inside
7 before the next winter. The legislature recognizes that long-term
8 reforms are needed to reduce homelessness by expanding the supply of
9 affordable housing and ensuring adequate behavioral health treatment,
10 but finds that current shelter capacity is inadequate to address the
11 immediate need. Therefore, the legislature intends to incentivize
12 local governments to increase shelter capacity by requiring them
13 promptly to develop local sheltering plans, including specific
14 recommendations to the legislature regarding policy and resource
15 changes necessary to successfully implement the local sheltering
16 plans.

17 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.185C.050 and 2018 c 85 s 5 are each amended to
18 read as follows:

19 (1) Each local homeless housing task force shall prepare and
20 recommend to its local government legislative authority a five-year

1 homeless housing plan for its jurisdictional area, which shall be not
2 inconsistent with the department's statewide guidelines issued by
3 December 1, 2018, and thereafter the department's five-year homeless
4 housing strategic plan, and which shall be aimed at eliminating
5 homelessness. The local government may amend the proposed local plan
6 and shall adopt a plan by December 1, 2019. Performance in meeting
7 the goals of this local plan shall be assessed annually in terms of
8 the performance measures published by the department. Local plans may
9 include specific local performance measures adopted by the local
10 government legislative authority, and may include recommendations for
11 any state legislation needed to meet the state or local plan goals.

12 (a) In counties with a population of more than forty thousand
13 persons, the county and each city with a population of more than
14 fifteen thousand shall amend current plans by December 1, 2020, to
15 expand shelter or sanctioned camping capacity equivalent to at least
16 fifty percent of the people in the jurisdiction who are living
17 outside or other places unfit for human habitation. Determination of
18 the number of individuals living outside or other places unfit for
19 human habitation shall be based on information from the homeless
20 management information system, the annual point in time count, or
21 other generally accepted method of determining unmet housing needs
22 within a community. All subsequent five-year plans shall include the
23 shelter or sanctioned camping strategy.

24 (b) Plans shall be completed by December 2020, and shall include:

25 (i) An accounting of the law, policy, and resource changes that
26 will be implemented by the local government to achieve the goal; and

27 (ii) Recommendations to the state regarding law, policy, and
28 resource changes needed at the state level to achieve the local goal.

29 (2) Eligible activities under the local plans include:

30 (a) Rental and furnishing of dwelling units for the use of
31 homeless persons;

32 (b) Costs of developing affordable housing for homeless persons,
33 and services for formerly homeless individuals and families residing
34 in transitional housing or permanent housing and still at risk of
35 homelessness;

36 (c) Operating subsidies for transitional housing or permanent
37 housing serving formerly homeless families or individuals;

38 (d) Services to prevent homelessness, such as emergency eviction
39 prevention programs including temporary rental subsidies to prevent
40 homelessness;

1 (e) Temporary services to assist persons leaving state
2 institutions and other state programs to prevent them from becoming
3 or remaining homeless;

4 (f) Outreach services for homeless individuals and families;

5 (g) Development and management of local homeless plans including
6 homeless census data collection; identification of goals, performance
7 measures, strategies, and costs and evaluation of progress towards
8 established goals;

9 (h) Rental vouchers payable to landlords for persons who are
10 homeless or below thirty percent of the median income or in immediate
11 danger of becoming homeless; and

12 (i) Other activities to reduce and prevent homelessness as
13 identified for funding in the local plan.

14 **Sec. 3.** RCW 43.185C.080 and 2005 c 484 s 12 are each amended to
15 read as follows:

16 (1) Only a local government is eligible to receive a homeless
17 housing grant from the (~~homeless housing~~) home security fund
18 account. Any city may assert responsibility for homeless housing
19 within its borders if it so chooses, by forwarding a resolution to
20 the legislative authority of the county stating its intention and its
21 commitment to operate a separate homeless housing program. The city
22 shall then receive a percentage of the surcharge assessed under RCW
23 36.22.179 equal to the percentage of the city's local portion of the
24 real estate excise tax collected by the county. A participating city
25 may also then apply separately for homeless housing program grants. A
26 city choosing to operate a separate homeless housing program shall be
27 responsible for complying with all of the same requirements as
28 counties and shall adopt a local homeless housing plan meeting the
29 requirements of this chapter for county local plans. However, the
30 city may by resolution of its legislative authority accept the
31 county's homeless housing task force as its own and based on that
32 task force's recommendations adopt a homeless housing plan specific
33 to the city.

34 (2) Local governments applying for homeless housing funds may
35 subcontract with any other local government, housing authority,
36 community action agency or other nonprofit organization for the
37 execution of programs contributing to the overall goal of ending
38 homelessness within a defined service area. All subcontracts shall be
39 consistent with the local homeless housing plan adopted by the

1 legislative authority of the local government, time limited, and
2 filed with the department and shall have specific performance terms.
3 While a local government has the authority to subcontract with other
4 entities, the local government continues to maintain the ultimate
5 responsibility for the homeless housing program within its borders.

6 (3) A county may decline to participate in the program authorized
7 in this chapter by forwarding to the department a resolution adopted
8 by the county legislative authority stating the intention not to
9 participate. A copy of the resolution shall also be transmitted to
10 the county auditor and treasurer. If such a resolution is adopted,
11 all of the funds otherwise due to the county under RCW 43.185C.060
12 shall be remitted monthly to the state treasurer for deposit in the
13 (~~homeless housing~~) home security fund account, without any
14 reduction by the county for collecting or administering the funds.
15 Upon receipt of the resolution, the department shall promptly begin
16 to identify and contract with one or more entities eligible under
17 this section to create and execute a local homeless housing plan for
18 the county meeting the requirements of this chapter. The department
19 shall expend all of the funds received from the county under this
20 subsection to carry out the purposes of chapter 484, Laws of 2005 in
21 the county, provided that the department may retain six percent of
22 these funds to offset the cost of managing the county's program.

23 (4) A resolution by the county declining to participate in the
24 program shall have no effect on the ability of each city in the
25 county to assert its right to manage its own program under this
26 chapter, and the county shall monthly transmit to the city the funds
27 due under this chapter.

28 (5) If a county or city does not adopt a complete local
29 sheltering plan as required by RCW 43.185C.050, the department will
30 notify the county auditor and treasurer, and all of the funds
31 otherwise due to the county or city under RCW 43.185C.060 shall be
32 remitted monthly to the state treasurer for deposit in the home
33 security fund account, without any reduction by the county for
34 collecting or administering the funds. After notifying the county
35 auditor, the department shall promptly begin to identify and contract
36 with one or more entities eligible under this section to create and
37 execute a sheltering plan for the county or city meeting the
38 requirements of RCW 43.185C.050, and may award shelter expansion
39 funds as appropriated by the legislature directly to organizations
40 able to provide shelter in the county or city that did not adopt a

1 complete local sheltering plan. The department shall expend all of
2 the funds received from the county or city under this subsection to
3 carry out the purposes of chapter 484, Laws of 2005 in the county or
4 city, provided that the department may retain six percent of these
5 funds to offset the cost of managing the county or city program.

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