

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1657

As Passed House:
March 1, 2019

Title: An act relating to services provided by the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs.

Brief Description: Concerning services provided by the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Callan, Eslick, Kilduff, Leavitt, Senn, Dolan, Lovick, Frame, Dent, Corry, Appleton, Ryu, Robinson, Jinkins, Goodman, Doglio, Fey, Macri, Ormsby and Davis; by request of Department of Commerce.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Human Services & Early Learning: 2/8/19, 2/13/19 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/1/19, 94-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Defines "street outreach services" to mean a program that provides services and resources either directly or through referral to street youth and unaccompanied young adults and authorizes the Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs to provide these services.
- Eliminates the 75-bed cap for HOPE centers and the prohibition on youth who are subject to a child in need of services petition receiving HOPE center services.
- Eliminates educational and experiential qualifications for HOPE center staff, but requires licensure of HOPE center staff by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families.
- Allows innovative youth and young adult homelessness approaches to serve both youth and young adults.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & EARLY LEARNING

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Senn, Chair; Callan, Vice Chair; Frame, Vice Chair; Dent, Ranking Minority Member; Eslick, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Corry, Goodman, Griffey, Kilduff, Klippert, Lovick and Ortiz-Self.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Luke Wickham (786-7146).

Background:

Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs.

The Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs (OHY) was created in 2015 as an office within the Department of Commerce (Commerce). The OHY provides services for youth and young adults up to 24 years of age, including:

- the Independent Youth Housing Program, which provides rental assistance and case management for eligible youth who have aged out of the state foster care system;
- street youth services;
- HOPE centers; and
- crisis residential centers, which are short-term, semi-secure, and secure facilities for runaway youth and adolescents in conflict with their families.

HOPE Centers.

HOPE centers provide voluntary and temporary residential placements for youths under age 18 who, without placement in a HOPE center, will continue to participate in increasingly risky behavior, including truancy. Youth residing in a HOPE center receive a comprehensive assessment that may include referrals and permanency planning. Generally, youth can stay in a HOPE center for up to 30 calendar days and can extend his or her stay up to 60 calendar days. HOPE center administrators accompany a resident leaving the HOPE center to attend school or other necessary appointments.

Street Youth Services.

Street Youth Services provide voluntary and temporary residential placements for youth under age 18 who live outdoors or in another unsafe location not intended for occupancy by the minor, and who is not residing with the minor's parent or at the minor's legally authorized residence.

Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Program Advisory Committee.

The OHY must regularly consult with a 12-member advisory committee that includes:

- advocates;
- at least two legislators;
- at least two parent advocates;
- at least one representative from law enforcement;
- service providers; and
- other stakeholders knowledgeable in the provision of services to homeless youth and young adults.

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.

Child in Need of Services.

A child in need of services (CHINS) court process allows a child, parent, guardian, or the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to petition the court if the child meets at least one of the following requirements:

- The child is beyond parental control such that the child's behavior endangers the health, safety, or welfare of the child or another person.
- The child has been reported to law enforcement as absent without consent for at least 24 consecutive hours from the parent's home, a crisis residential center, an out-of-home placement, or a court-ordered placement on two or more separate occasions and has exhibited a serious substance abuse problem or behaviors that create a serious risk of harm to the health, safety, or welfare of the child or any other person.
- The child is in need of necessary services, including food, shelter, health care, clothing, educational, or services designed to maintain or reunite the family and lacks access to or has declined to utilize these services, and whose parents have evidenced continuing but unsuccessful efforts to maintain the family structure or are unable or unwilling to continue efforts to maintain the family structure.
- The child is sexually exploited.

The purpose of filing a CHINS petition is to obtain a court order mandating temporary placement, for up to six months, of the child in a residence other than the home of his or her parent or guardian, because a serious conflict exists between the parent and child that cannot be resolved by delivery of services to the family during continued placement of the child in the parental home, and reasonable efforts have been made to prevent the need for removal of the child from the parental home.

Children who are the subject of a CHINS petition are not eligible for HOPE centers.

Summary of Bill:

The DCYF may place a child in a HOPE center after the filing of a CHINS services petition.

"Street outreach services" is defined to mean a program that provides services and resources either directly or through referral to street youth and unaccompanied young adults. Crisis intervention, emergency supplies, case management, and referrals may be provided through community outreach or drop-in centers. The OHY is authorized to provide management and oversight guidance and direction for street outreach services.

The cap of 75 HOPE center beds is eliminated.

HOPE centers are no longer required to have a professional with a master's degree in counseling, social work, or a related field and at least one year of experience working with street youth or a bachelor's degree in social work or a related field and 5 years experience working with street youth, but are required to have staff licensed by the DCYF.

Innovative youth and young adult homelessness approaches are allowed to serve both youth and young adults instead of segregating these populations.

Two youth representative members are added to the OHY Advisory Committee.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 28, 2019.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) In King County alone, there are over 10,000 youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. This is a statewide problem. It would be very meaningful to have youth representative participation on the OHY Advisory Committee. There is currently a youth representative participating on the OHY Advisory Committee, but there is not technically a seat for this person. It makes sense to have two seats available to youth representatives. There are children who have filed CHINS petitions who were unable to access available HOPE center beds because of the legal prohibition on children subject to a CHINS petition accessing HOPE center beds. Because of this prohibition, these youth are placed in detention as a safe place to stay.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Callan, prime sponsor; Kim Justice, Department of Commerce; Tatyana Barron, The Mockingbird Society; and Pamela Crone, Washington Coalition of Homeless Youth Advocacy.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.