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**HOUSE BILL 2229**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2024 Regular Session**

**By** Representative Christian

AN ACT Relating to coordination and collaboration of homeless services; adding new sections to chapter 43.185C RCW; creating a new section; and providing effective dates.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature recognizes the critical role that provider organizations perform in delivering services to prevent and respond to homelessness. Different provider organizations often focus on different services, approaches, and populations.

The legislature finds communities and individuals would benefit from improved coordination and collaboration between provider organizations delivering services to prevent and respond to homelessness. The legislature intends to encourage coordination and collaboration between provider organizations to improve outcomes and foster integrated systems of services.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.185C RCW to read as follows:

(1) The board of county commissioners for counties with a population of 200,000 or more shall hold and administer a county coordination meeting of qualifying local providers that provide housing and services within the county for persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness. The board of county commissioners must hold at least two, but no more than four, meetings each state fiscal year for the purpose of coordinating homelessness assistance services provided within the county. The meetings may be held virtually or in person.

(2)(a) A qualifying local provider operating within a county with a population of 200,000 or more shall attend at least one of the county coordination meetings held by the board of county commissioners each state fiscal year.

(b) For the duration of a state contract, qualifying local providers shall submit an attestation annually, but no later than June 20th of each year, to the awarding state agency attesting to its compliance with the requirements under this section. The attestation must include the date of the meeting attended and the name of the representative who attended the meeting.

(c) A qualifying local provider who does not attend at least one coordination meeting and submit the attestation as required under this section is ineligible to apply for or receive any future state contracts in the state fiscal year immediately following the year of noncompliance with this section.

(3) State agencies awarding contracts to a qualifying local provider operating within a county with a population of 200,000 or more shall:

(a) Include as a provision in the contract:

(i) The requirement that the provider attend at least one county coordination meeting held pursuant to subsection (1) of this section; and

(ii) Notice that the failure to comply with this section makes the qualifying local provider ineligible to apply for or receive any future state contracts in the following fiscal year; and

(b) Periodically provide the board of county commissioners for counties with a population of 200,000 or more with an updated list of qualifying local providers that were awarded a state contract by that agency.

(4) Local providers that provide housing and services for persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness and are not qualifying local providers may be invited by the board of county commissioners to attend county coordination meetings. Attendance for local providers that are not qualifying local providers is optional but encouraged.

(5) If there is a proclamation of a state of emergency in accordance with chapter 43.06 RCW that prevents the board of county commissioners from holding at least two county coordination meetings as required under this section, the requirements under this section do not apply during the year that the proclamation of a state of emergency is in effect.

(6) For purposes of this section:

(a) "State contract" means a contract under chapter 39.04 or 39.26 RCW, grant, memorandum of understanding or any other similar agreement, or a combination of contracts, grants, memoranda of understanding or other similar agreements, for services in a single county, in the amount of at least $250,000 for any state fiscal year that is awarded by a single state agency directly to a qualifying local provider.

(b) "Qualifying local provider" means a provider of housing and services for persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness, other than a county, city, or tribal government, that is awarded a state contract or state contracts by a single state agency to provide services in the amount of at least $250,000 during any fiscal year. Examples of services include permanent housing; temporary housing; emergency shelter; housing assistance; case coordination or management; behavioral health support; and food, transportation, or employment assistance.

(7) This section applies to state contracts awarded on or after July 1, 2024.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 43.185C RCW to read as follows:

(1) A state agency may not award a state contract to a qualifying local provider for the provision of housing and services for persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness in a given county if any state agency awarded that qualifying local provider a state contract for the prior fiscal year for the provision of housing and services for persons at risk of or experiencing homelessness in a given county and the qualifying local provider was both subject to and failed to comply with the requirements under section 2 of this act.

(2) A state agency awarding contracts to a qualifying local provider operating within a county with a population of 200,000 or more shall determine whether a potential provider is eligible by requiring the potential provider to attest that the provider:

(a) Attended at least one county coordination meeting in the prior state fiscal year; or

(b) Was not a qualifying local provider in the prior state fiscal year.

(3) For purposes of this section, "state contract" and "qualifying local provider" have the same meaning as in section 2 of this act.

(4) This section applies to state contracts awarded on or after July 1, 2025.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Sections 1 and 2 of this act take effect July 1, 2024.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Section 3 of this act takes effect July 1, 2025.

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