

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5398

C 401 L 23
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning domestic violence funding allocation.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Human Services (originally sponsored by Senators MacEwen and Wilson, L.).

Senate Committee on Human Services

Senate Committee on Ways & Means

House Committee on Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning

Background: The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) administers state and federal funds for domestic violence programs, which includes shelters. A community-based domestic violence program is a nonprofit program or organization that provides, as its primary purpose, assistance and advocacy for domestic violence victims. Domestic violence assistance and advocacy includes crisis intervention, individual and group support, information and referrals, and safety assessment and planning. Domestic violence assistance and advocacy may also include, but is not limited to:

- provision of shelter;
- emergency transportation;
- self-help services;
- culturally specific services;
- legal advocacy;
- economic advocacy;
- community education;
- primary and secondary prevention efforts; and
- accompaniment and advocacy through medical, legal, immigration, human services, and financial assistance systems.

An emergency shelter is a place of supportive services and safe, temporary lodging offered on a 24-hour, seven-day per week basis to victims of domestic violence and their children.

DSHS awards grants on a contract basis to public or private nonprofit agencies,

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organizations, or individuals providing community-based domestic violence services, emergency shelter services, domestic violence hotline or information and referral services, and prevention efforts meeting minimum standards established by DSHS. Consideration as to need, geographic location, population ratios, the needs of specific underserved and cultural populations, and the extent of existing services is made when awarding grants.

In 2022, SB 5693 provided an appropriation of \$750,000 above base funding, to be distributed proportionately based on bed capacity. This funding allocation expires June 30, 2023.

Summary: DSHS's Domestic Violence Services Program is directed to convene a workgroup to review and update the formula used to determine the allocation of funding for domestic violence victim services agencies. The workgroup includes, but is not limited to, representatives from the following:

- DSHS;
- Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence;
- Department of Commerce Office of Crime Victims Advocacy;
- a minimum of nine DSHS contracted domestic violence victim services agencies—three each from DSHS regions 1, 2, and 3, and representing both small and large capacity shelters; and
- three at-large community-based, or tribal domestic violence victim services providers, or both.

The workgroup is to develop formula allocation recommendations by December 1, 2024, and provide a copy of the recommendations to the Legislature.

DSHS has the final decision regarding implementing the formula allocation recommendations, and any recommendations implemented are effective July 1, 2025. DSHS may hire external consultants as needed.

The provisions of this act expire August 1, 2025.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0	
House	97	0	(House amended)
Senate	48	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 23, 2023