
SENATE BILL 5082

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senator C. Wilson

Prefiled 12/19/24.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a housing assistance program for
2 youth enrolled in extended foster care; adding a new section to
3 chapter 74.13 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 13.34 RCW; and
4 creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that approximately
7 13 percent of young people in extended foster care experienced
8 homelessness in state fiscal year 2024. To obtain housing, many young
9 people who are dependent at age 18 are required to exit extended
10 foster care to access certain federal housing vouchers and thereby
11 lose the support of extended foster care.

12 Accordingly, the state is unable to leverage existing resources,
13 including federal benefits, as young people use up their eligibility
14 for time-limited federal programs while they simultaneously decline
15 other programs needed for long-term success. Statutory changes are
16 required to ensure dependent young people in extended foster care are
17 stably housed as they prepare for independence.

18 It is the intent of the legislature to create a housing program
19 which provides a benefit to dependent young people in extended foster
20 care that is equivalent to the benefit provided by the federal foster
21 youth to independence program, such that young people in extended

1 foster care can receive housing assistance while they are dependent
2 and still benefit from the federal program when they turn 21.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 74.13
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) The extended foster care housing program is established to
6 provide rental assistance and associated housing fees to eligible
7 youth. The extended foster care housing program is intended to
8 prevent and alleviate homelessness among youth enrolled in extended
9 foster care.

10 (2) Youth are eligible for the extended foster care housing
11 program if they are:

12 (a) Receiving extended foster care services pursuant to RCW
13 13.34.267; and

14 (b) Experiencing homelessness or at imminent risk of experiencing
15 homelessness as defined by RCW 13.34.030.

16 (3) The department shall conduct a competitive procurement
17 process to identify an entity or entities to contract with for
18 operation of the extended foster care housing program. The
19 contractors must have a demonstrated understanding of the importance
20 of stable housing for youth involved with the child welfare system.
21 If no outside entity or entities are available to operate the program
22 or specific parts of the program, the department may operate the
23 program or the specific parts that are not operated by an outside
24 entity.

25 (4) The extended foster care housing program shall provide rental
26 assistance based on the following criteria:

27 (a) Rental assistance is provided to eligible dependent youth for
28 up to 36 months not to extend for any young person beyond age 21;

29 (b) The amount of rental assistance must be based on the fair
30 market rent in the eligible youth's location;

31 (c) Eligible youth shall pay no more than 30 percent of their
32 adjusted gross income toward rent, including the extended foster care
33 subsidy; and

34 (d) If the youth's rent and utilities exceed the fair market rent
35 for that location, the youth's contribution may not exceed 40 percent
36 of their monthly adjusted gross income, including the extended foster
37 care subsidy.

38 (5) The department shall ensure that all eligible youth receive
39 access to rental housing assistance.

1 (6) The department shall collect data on the housing status of
2 youth in extended foster care on an annual basis.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 13.34
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 The department shall conduct a transition planning process with
6 youth enrolled in extended foster care at least three months prior to
7 their 21st birthday. The transition planning process must include,
8 but is not limited to:

9 (1) Assessing the youth's continued housing and financial
10 stability;

11 (2) Supporting the youth to apply to a federally funded housing
12 voucher program, when available, and if applicable;

13 (3) Providing referrals to housing assistance; and

14 (4) Providing referrals to benefits and services that support the
15 financial stability of the youth including education, employment,
16 physical and behavioral health care, and other available public
17 benefits.

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