

A-Engrossed
House Bill 3420

Ordered by the House April 27
Including House Amendments dated April 27

Sponsored by Representative HOYLE, Senator GELSER

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure.

Directs Housing and Community Services Department, with advice of State Housing Council and in collaboration with Community Action Partnership of Oregon, [*and*] Department of Human Services **and Oregon Health Authority**, to [*develop, implement and administer*] **establish** Housing First **Pilot** Program for purpose of providing housing assistance, case management and support services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness **in cities of Eugene and Albany** by utilizing [*continuum*] **system** of care.

Creates Housing First **Pilot** Program Fund. Continuously appropriates moneys in fund to Housing and Community Services Department.

Directs department to report to Legislative Assembly during 2017 regular session regarding pilot program.

Appropriates moneys to department for purposes of pilot program.

Sunsets June 30, 2017.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

Relating to assistance for persons experiencing homelessness; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. The Legislative Assembly finds and declares that:

(1) Many Oregon communities engage in planning that manages the condition of homelessness rather than planning to end the condition of homelessness.

(2) Efforts to manage homelessness in the past several decades have involved public and private solutions that focus on providing individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness with either emergency shelter or transitional housing, or both. Individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness, especially the chronically homeless with disabilities such as addictions and mental illness, are extremely fragile. Chronically homeless individuals and families are the least likely of the population to achieve independent living, and while efforts to manage homelessness provide critical access to temporary housing and services for individuals and families in crisis, these efforts fail to address long-term needs. By creating a stable housing environment for such individuals and families, other issues can be addressed, including employment, job training and health care.

(3) Ending child homelessness in Oregon is a goal that is urgent and achievable through the provision of a system of care for children and their families. Efforts to end child homelessness must be coordinated across traditional areas of practice and governmental structures to provide the most effective network of support and opportunities for children who are experiencing homelessness and to ensure that resources are distributed effectively and strategically. Stakeholders and state agencies that provide services to children, including

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 but not limited to the Department of Human services, must collaborate to develop and im-
2 plement practices that reduce the number of children and young adults who experience
3 homelessness while in, or after leaving, the child welfare or juvenile justice system.

4 (4) The Housing First Pilot Program established under section 3 of this 2015 Act is an
5 alternative to current approaches to dealing with homelessness that is intended to be more
6 cost-effective and to reduce the length of time that individuals and families experience
7 homelessness. This approach to homelessness differs from traditional approaches by provid-
8 ing housing assistance, case management and support services responsive to individual or
9 family needs after housing is obtained. By using this approach when appropriate, communi-
10 ties can significantly reduce the amount of time that individuals and families experience
11 homelessness and prevent further episodes of homelessness.

12 (5) Oregon will benefit from different approaches to care for individuals and families ex-
13 perience homelessness, ranging from current approaches that address the short-term,
14 critical needs of such persons to the Housing First Pilot Program that addresses the long-
15 term needs of these persons. The Housing First Pilot Program emphasizes that social ser-
16 vices provided to enhance individual and family well-being can be more effective when
17 individuals and families have first obtained housing.

18 **SECTION 2. As used in sections 1 to 3 of this 2015 Act:**

19 (1)(a) "Homelessness" means:

20 (A) Living in one of the following conditions:

21 (i) Lacking a fixed, regular, adequate and habitable nighttime residence; or

22 (ii) Having a primary nighttime residence that is:

23 (I) Housing shared with another person due to loss of housing or economic hardship;

24 (II) A motel, hotel, travel trailer as defined in ORS 801.565 or campground, due to lack
25 of alternative housing;

26 (III) An emergency or transitional shelter;

27 (IV) A public or private shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations,
28 including but not limited to hotels for persons receiving welfare benefits and transitional
29 housing for persons with mental illness;

30 (V) An institution that provides temporary residence for individuals who have been or
31 will be institutionalized under the laws of this state;

32 (VI) A public or private place that is not designed for or ordinarily used as regular
33 sleeping accommodations for human beings; or

34 (VII) A car, park, public space, abandoned building, bus or train station or other similar
35 setting not intended for human habitation.

36 (B) Being migratory and living under one or more of the conditions listed in subpara-
37 graph (A)(ii) of this paragraph.

38 (C) Being released from a jail, a prison, the juvenile justice system, the child welfare
39 system, a mental health facility, a facility for persons with developmental disabilities, a res-
40 idential addiction treatment program or a hospital, with no subsequent residence identified
41 or provided and lacking the resources and support to obtain housing.

42 (b) "Homelessness" does not mean being imprisoned or otherwise detained pursuant to
43 state or federal law or to sharing housing due to cultural preferences, voluntary arrange-
44 ments or traditional networks of support.

45 (2) "System of care" means an approach to provide housing assistance, case management

1 and support services that meets the specific, noncritical needs of individuals and families
2 experiencing homelessness after initial, critical housing needs have been met and as these
3 persons move toward the goal of stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency, with the ul-
4 timate objective being to end homelessness and to prevent a return to homelessness for
5 these persons.

6 **SECTION 3.** (1) The Housing and Community Services Department, with the advice of the
7 State Housing Council and in collaboration with the Community Action Partnership of
8 Oregon, the Department of Human Services and the Oregon Health Authority, shall establish
9 the Housing First Pilot Program for the purpose of providing housing assistance, case man-
10 agement and support services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness in the
11 cities of Eugene and Albany. The program shall be designed to address the societal causes
12 of homelessness by obtaining housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness
13 and providing a critical link between emergency and transitional housing systems and
14 community-based social services, education and health care in the communities in which
15 such individuals and families live.

16 (2) The program must include, at a minimum, the following:

17 (a) Housing assistance that is not time-limited and not contingent on compliance with
18 support services;

19 (b) Crisis intervention and short-term stabilization;

20 (c) Screening, intake and needs assessment;

21 (d) Case management; and

22 (e) Support services provided through community-based social service, educational and
23 health care programs and entities, as necessary to make possible the success of participants
24 in avoiding homelessness on a permanent basis.

25 (3) In consultation with the Community Action Partnership of Oregon, the Housing and
26 Community Services Department shall create pilot projects in the cities of Eugene and
27 Albany that contract with community action agencies described in ORS 458.505 that the de-
28 partment determines are eligible to implement the system of care in the area served by the
29 community action agency.

30 (4) The contract between a community action agency and the Housing and Community
31 Services Department to implement the system of care shall, at a minimum, provide that the
32 community action agency shall:

33 (a) Provide screening, intake and needs assessment to identify individuals and families
34 who are eligible to participate in the Housing First Pilot Program based upon likelihood of
35 success, need and other factors as set forth in rules adopted by the department;

36 (b) Assist eligible participants to obtain housing and to enter into standard lease agree-
37 ments for housing;

38 (c) Provide case management and support services as appropriate to make less likely a
39 state of homelessness or a return to homelessness for participants; and

40 (d) Provide information to the department as identified in rules adopted by the depart-
41 ment to ensure that the system of care is being implemented and that the objectives of the
42 program are being achieved at the pilot project sites.

43 (5) In implementing the Housing First Pilot Program and to the extent possible, the State
44 Housing Council, the Housing and Community Services Department, the Department of Hu-
45 man Services and the Oregon Health Authority shall:

1 (a) Prioritize state and federal funding opportunities that support efforts to reduce and
2 end homelessness through the system of care implemented by the program;

3 (b) Identify and implement initiatives and other programs that:

4 (A) Increase the supply of rental housing needed to meet the demand for housing for
5 individuals and families who are experiencing or may experience homelessness; and

6 (B) Increase the availability of employment opportunities for individuals who are experi-
7 encing homelessness;

8 (c) Train homelessness specialists and place them in centers that are easily accessed by
9 individuals and families experiencing homelessness; and

10 (d) Contract with a state institution of higher education to research and document the
11 costs of homelessness in this state, including but not limited to the costs incurred by law
12 enforcement agencies, courts, jails and hospitals responding to situations involving individ-
13 uals and families experiencing homelessness, for the purpose of obtaining recommendations
14 on how best to allocate public funds to prevent and end homelessness.

15 (6) The Housing and Community Services Department, in consultation with the Commu-
16 nity Action Partnership of Oregon, shall adopt rules to implement the provisions of this
17 section.

18 **SECTION 4.** (1) There is created within the State Treasury, separate and distinct from
19 the General Fund, the Housing First Pilot Program Fund. Interest earned by the Housing
20 First Pilot Program Fund shall be credited to the fund.

21 (2) Moneys in the Housing First Pilot Program Fund shall consist of:

22 (a) Amounts donated to the fund;

23 (b) Amounts appropriated or otherwise transferred to the fund by the Legislative As-
24 sembly;

25 (c) Investment earnings received on moneys in the fund; and

26 (d) Other amounts deposited in the fund from any source.

27 (3) Moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated to the Housing and Community
28 Services Department to carry out the provisions of sections 1 to 3 of this 2015 Act.

29 (4) The department may use moneys in the fund to pay the administrative costs associ-
30 ated with the fund and with carrying out the provisions of sections 1 to 3 of this 2015 Act.

31 **SECTION 5.** The Housing and Community Services Department shall report to the com-
32 mittees related to human services and housing during the 2017 regular session of the
33 Seventy-ninth Legislative Assembly regarding the status, outcome and findings of the Hous-
34 ing First Pilot Program.

35 **SECTION 6.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
36 ated to the Housing and Community Services Department, for the biennium beginning July
37 1, 2015, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$2 million, which may be expended for pur-
38 poses of implementing and administering the Housing First Pilot Program established under
39 section 3 of this 2015 Act.

40 **SECTION 7.** (1) Sections 1 to 4 of this 2015 Act are repealed on June 30, 2017.

41 (2) Any balance in the Housing First Pilot Program Fund established under section 4 of
42 this 2015 Act that is unexpended and unobligated on the date set forth in subsection (1) of
43 this section, shall revert to the General Fund and be available for general governmental
44 purposes.

45 **SECTION 8.** This 2015 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public

1 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2015 Act takes effect**
2 **on its passage.**

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