



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 735

January Session, 2015

Substitute Senate Bill No. 408

Senate, April 23, 2015

The Committee on Children reported through SEN. BARTOLOMEO of the 13th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 17a-62a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2017*):

3 (a) As used in this section:

4 (1) "Homeless youth" means a person [under twenty-one] twenty-
5 three years of age or younger who is without shelter where
6 appropriate care and supervision are available and who lacks a fixed,
7 regular and adequate nighttime residence, including a youth under the
8 age of eighteen whose parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling
9 to provide shelter and appropriate care;

10 (2) "Fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence" means a
11 dwelling at which a person resides on a regular basis that adequately
12 provides safe shelter, but does not include (A) a publicly or privately

13 operated institutional shelter designed to provide temporary living
14 accommodations; (B) transitional housing; (C) a temporary placement
15 with a peer, friend or family member who has not offered a permanent
16 residence, residential lease or temporary lodging for more than thirty
17 days; or (D) a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily
18 used as a regular sleeping place by human beings; and

19 (3) "Aftercare services" means continued counseling, guidance or
20 support for not more than six months following the provision of
21 services.

22 (b) The Department of Housing, in collaboration with the
23 Department of Children and Families, within available appropriations,
24 shall establish a program that provides one or more of the following
25 services for homeless youth: Public outreach, respite housing, and
26 transitional living services for homeless youth and youth at risk of
27 homelessness. The [department] Department of Housing may enter
28 into a contract with nonprofit organizations or municipalities to
29 implement this section. Such program may have the following
30 components:

31 (1) A public outreach and drop-in component that provides youth
32 drop-in centers with walk-in access to crisis intervention and ongoing
33 supportive services, including one-to-one case management services
34 on a self-referral basis and public outreach that locates, contacts and
35 provides information, referrals and services to homeless youth and
36 youth at risk of homelessness. Such component may include, but need
37 not be limited to, information, referrals and services for (A) family
38 reunification services, conflict resolution or mediation counseling; (B)
39 respite housing, case management aimed at obtaining food, clothing,
40 medical care or mental health counseling, counseling regarding
41 violence, prostitution, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases,
42 HIV and pregnancy, and referrals to agencies that provide support
43 services to homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness; (C)
44 education, employment and independent living skills; (D) aftercare
45 services; and (E) specialized services for highly vulnerable homeless

46 youth, including teen parents, sexually exploited youth and youth
47 with mental illness or developmental disabilities;

48 (2) A respite housing component that provides homeless youth with
49 referrals and walk-in access to respite care on an emergency basis that
50 includes voluntary housing, with private shower facilities, beds and at
51 least one meal each day, and assistance with reunification with family
52 or a legal guardian when required or appropriate. Services provided at
53 respite housing may include, but need not be limited to, (A) family
54 reunification services or referral to safe housing; (B) individual, family
55 and group counseling; (C) assistance in obtaining clothing; (D) access
56 to medical and dental care and mental health counseling; (E) education
57 and employment services; (F) recreational activities; (G) case
58 management, advocacy and referral services; (H) independent living
59 skills training; and (I) aftercare services and transportation; and

60 (3) A transitional living component that (A) assists homeless youth
61 in finding and maintaining safe housing, and (B) includes rental
62 assistance and related supportive services. Such component may
63 include, but need not be limited to, (i) educational assessment and
64 referral to educational programs; (ii) career planning, employment, job
65 skills training and independent living skills training; (iii) job
66 placement; (iv) budgeting and money management; (v) assistance in
67 securing housing appropriate to needs and income; (vi) counseling
68 regarding violence, prostitution, substance abuse, sexually transmitted
69 diseases and pregnancy, referral for medical services or chemical
70 dependency treatment; and (vii) parenting skills, self-sufficiency
71 support services or life skills training and aftercare services.

72 (c) On or before February 1, [2012] 2018, and annually thereafter, the
73 [Commissioner of Children and Families] Commissioners of Housing
74 and Children and Families shall submit a report regarding the
75 program established under subsection (b) of this section, in accordance
76 with section 11-4a, to the joint standing [committee] committees of the
77 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to housing
78 and children. The report shall include recommendations for any

79 changes to the program to ensure that the best available services are
80 being delivered to homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness.
81 The report shall include key outcome indicators and measures and
82 shall set benchmarks for evaluating progress in accomplishing the
83 purposes of subsection (b) of this section.

84 Sec. 2. Section 8-37r of the general statutes is repealed and the
85 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2017*):

86 (a) There shall be a Department of Housing, which shall be within
87 the Department of Economic and Community Development for
88 administrative purposes only, which shall be the lead agency for all
89 matters relating to housing. The department head shall be the
90 Commissioner of Housing, who shall be appointed by the Governor in
91 accordance with the provisions of sections 4-5 to 4-8, inclusive, with
92 the powers and duties therein prescribed. Said commissioner shall be
93 responsible at the state level for all aspects of policy, development,
94 redevelopment, preservation, maintenance and improvement of
95 housing and neighborhoods. Said commissioner shall be responsible
96 for developing strategies to encourage the provision of housing in the
97 state, including housing for very low, low and moderate income
98 families.

99 (b) The Department of Housing shall constitute a successor to the
100 functions, powers and duties of the Department of Economic
101 Development relating to housing, community development,
102 redevelopment and urban renewal as set forth in chapters 128, 129,
103 130, 135 and 136 in accordance with the provisions of sections 4-38d, 4-
104 38e and 4-39. The Department of Housing is designated a public
105 housing agency for the purpose of administering the Section 8 existing
106 certificate program and the housing voucher program pursuant to the
107 Housing Act of 1937.

108 (c) The commissioner shall, in consultation with the interagency
109 council on affordable housing established pursuant to section 8-37nnn,
110 review the organization and delivery of state housing programs and
111 submit a report with recommendations, in accordance with the

112 provisions of section 11-4a, not later than January 15, 2013, to the joint
113 standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of
114 matters relating to housing and appropriations.

115 (d) Any order or regulation of the Department of Housing or
116 Department of Economic and Community Development that is in force
117 on January 1, 2013, shall continue in force and effect as an order or
118 regulation until amended, repealed or superseded pursuant to law.

119 (e) On and after July 1, 2017, the Department of Housing shall
120 constitute a successor department, in accordance with the provisions of
121 sections 4-38d, 4-38e and 4-39, to the Department of Children and
122 Families with respect to the homeless youth program as set forth in
123 section 17a-62a, as amended by this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	July 1, 2017	17a-62a
Sec. 2	July 1, 2017	8-37r

KID Joint Favorable Subst.

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 16 \$	FY 17 \$
Department of Housing	GF - Cost	None	None
Children & Families, Dept.	GF - Savings	None	None

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill results in an annual cost of \$2.5 million to the Department of Housing (DOH) and an equal savings to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) beginning in FY 18 by transferring the responsibility of administering the state's homeless youth program from DCF to DOH. The bill requires DOH to work in collaboration with DCF on this program.

DCF's FY 15 budget includes \$2.5 million for a third party contractor to administer the homeless youth service program.

The bill also expands the program from homeless youth under the age of 21 to homeless youth under the age of 23 beginning in FY 18. There is no anticipated fiscal impact. The current third party contractor for the homeless youth program provides services to youth ages 16 - 24.

The Out Years

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 18 \$	FY 19 \$	FY 20 \$
Department of Housing	GF - Cost	\$2.5 million	\$2.5 million	\$2.5 million
Children &	GF - Savings	\$2.5 million	\$2.5 million	\$2.5 million

Families, Dept.				
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Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

The bill transfers the homeless youth program on July 1, 2017. The fiscal impact listed above would therefore begin in FY 18 and each year thereafter subject to inflation.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 408*****AN ACT CONCERNING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill transfers, from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to the Department of Housing (DOH), responsibility for administering the state's homeless youth program. However, it requires DOH to establish the program in collaboration with DCF. DOH must run the program within available appropriations, just as DCF must do under existing law.

The bill expands program eligibility to include homeless youth age 23 or younger, instead of only those under age 21. By law, the program may provide public outreach, respite housing, or transitional living services to youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Beginning by February 1, 2018, the bill requires the DOH and DCF commissioners to jointly submit an annual program report to the Housing and Children's committees. Currently, the DCF commissioner submits the report to the Children's Committee. By law, the report must include recommendations for programmatic changes, outcome indicators and measures, and benchmarks for evaluating progress.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2017

BACKGROUND***Legislative History***

The Senate referred the bill (File 246) to the Children's Committee, which reported a substitute that, among other things, (1) requires DOH to collaborate with DCF in establishing the program and submitting the annual report and (2) changes the effective date.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Housing Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 13 Nay 0 (03/11/2015)

Committee on Children

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 0 (04/14/2015)