



General Assembly

February Session, 2024

**Raised Bill No. 5174**

LCO No. 924



Referred to Committee on PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Introduced by:  
(PD)

**AN ACT CONCERNING TEMPORARY SHELTER UNITS FOR PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS LOCATED ON REAL PROPERTY OWNED BY RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS.**

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

1 Section 1. Section 8-1a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2024*):

3 (a) "Municipality" as used in this chapter shall include a district  
4 establishing a zoning commission under section 7-326. Wherever the  
5 words "town" and "selectmen" appear in this chapter, they shall be  
6 deemed to include "district" and "officers of such district", respectively.

7 (b) As used in this chapter and section 2 of this act:

8 (1) "Accessory apartment" means a separate dwelling unit that (A) is  
9 located on the same lot as a principal dwelling unit of greater square  
10 footage, (B) has cooking facilities, and (C) complies with or is otherwise  
11 exempt from any applicable building code, fire code and health and  
12 safety regulations;

13 (2) "Affordable accessory apartment" means an accessory apartment  
14 that is subject to binding recorded deeds which contain covenants or  
15 restrictions that require such accessory apartment be sold or rented at,  
16 or below, prices that will preserve the unit as housing for which, for a  
17 period of not less than ten years, persons and families pay thirty per cent  
18 or less of income, where such income is less than or equal to eighty per  
19 cent of the median income;

20 (3) "As of right" means able to be approved in accordance with the  
21 terms of a zoning regulation or regulations and without requiring that  
22 a public hearing be held, a variance, special permit or special exception  
23 be granted or some other discretionary zoning action be taken, other  
24 than a determination that a site plan is in conformance with applicable  
25 zoning regulations;

26 (4) "Cottage cluster" means a grouping of at least four detached  
27 housing units, or live work units, per acre that are located around a  
28 common open area;

29 (5) "Middle housing" means duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, cottage  
30 clusters and townhouses;

31 (6) "Mixed-use development" means a development containing both  
32 residential and nonresidential uses in any single building; [and]

33 (7) "Religious organization" has the same meaning provided in  
34 section 49-31k;

35 (8) "Temporary shelter unit" means a nonpermanent commercially  
36 prefabricated accessory structure that is designed to be easily  
37 dismantled or removed, but does not include tarps, tents, other nonrigid  
38 materials or motor vehicles; and

39 [(7)] (9) "Townhouse" means a residential building constructed in a  
40 grouping of three or more attached units, each of which shares at least  
41 one common wall with an adjacent unit and has exterior walls on at least  
42 two sides.

43       Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2024*) (a) Any zoning regulations  
44 adopted pursuant to section 8-2 of the general statutes shall allow the  
45 installation and maintenance of temporary shelter units to provide  
46 shelter to persons experiencing homelessness upon any real property  
47 owned by a religious organization as of right, provided a municipality  
48 may:

49       (1) Prohibit the installation of more than eight temporary shelter units  
50 on any single lot;

51       (2) Prescribe a maximum size of four hundred square feet for any  
52 temporary shelter unit;

53       (3) Require that each temporary shelter unit be structurally sound,  
54 protect occupants from the elements and not pose a threat to the health  
55 and safety of any occupant;

56       (4) Require that each temporary shelter unit be equipped with  
57 necessary heating and cooling equipment in proper operating condition;

58       (5) Require that each temporary shelter unit have sufficient electrical  
59 sources to permit the safe use of personal electrical appliances and  
60 devices and lighting fixtures in the unit;

61       (6) Prohibit the occupancy of any shelter unit by more than one family  
62 or two unrelated individuals;

63       (7) Prohibit an individual from occupying a temporary shelter unit  
64 for a period exceeding twelve consecutive months;

65       (8) Prohibit the installation of any temporary shelter unit within one  
66 thousand feet of any public or private elementary or secondary school;

67       (9) Require any religious organization that installs a temporary  
68 shelter unit on the real property of such organization provide sufficient  
69 numbers of male and female toilets and shower facilities to  
70 accommodate the occupants of any such unit, including (A) a minimum  
71 of one toilet for every eight such occupants per gender, and (B) a

72 minimum of one shower for every eight such occupants per gender;

73 (10) Require that any temporary shelter unit be set back not less than  
74 ten feet from any adjacent real property not owned by the religious  
75 organization;

76 (11) Require that any outdoor storage of the personal belongings of  
77 any occupant of a temporary shelter unit be obscured from public view  
78 by a minimum six-foot-tall wall or fence; and

79 (12) Require the illumination by exterior lighting of the entire outdoor  
80 and parking area of the property upon which any temporary shelter unit  
81 is installed.

82 (b) The as of right permit application and review process for approval  
83 of any temporary shelter unit shall require that a decision on any such  
84 application be rendered not later than sixty-five days after receipt of  
85 such application by the applicable zoning commission, except that an  
86 applicant may consent to one or more extensions of not more than an  
87 additional sixty-five days or may withdraw such application.

88 (c) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to exempt a temporary  
89 shelter unit from any applicable provision of any building code or fire  
90 code, except no provision of the State Building Code that would have  
91 the effect of limiting the duration of the permitted use of a temporary  
92 shelter unit shall apply to such unit.

93 (d) A municipality shall not condition the approval of a temporary  
94 shelter unit on the correction of a nonconforming use, structure or lot.

95 (e) A municipality, special district, sewer or water authority shall not  
96 (1) consider a temporary shelter unit to be a new residential use for the  
97 purposes of calculating connection fees or capacity charges for utilities,  
98 including water and sewer service, or (2) require the installation of a  
99 new or separate utility connection directly to a temporary shelter unit  
100 or impose a related connection fee or capacity charge.

101 (f) If a municipality fails to adopt new regulations or amend existing

102 regulations by July 1, 2025, for the purpose of complying with the  
103 provisions of subsections (a) to (e), inclusive, of this section, any  
104 noncompliant existing regulation shall become void. No municipality  
105 shall use or impose additional standards beyond those set forth in  
106 subsections (a) to (f), inclusive, of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2024</i>	8-1a
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2024</i>	New section

**Statement of Purpose:**

To allow the installation of temporary shelter units for persons experiencing homelessness on real property owned by religious organizations.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*