
HOUSE BILL 1492

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By Representatives Pedersen, Pettigrew, Haler, Kagi, Walsh, Darneille, Dickerson, Nelson, Moeller, Appleton, Roberts, Ormsby, and Kenney

Read first time 01/21/09. Referred to Committee on Local Government & Housing.

1 AN ACT Relating to the independent youth housing program; and
2 amending RCW 43.63A.305 and 43.63A.307.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 43.63A.305 and 2007 c 316 s 3 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 (1) The independent youth housing program is created in the
7 department to provide housing stipends to eligible youth to be used for
8 independent housing. In developing a plan for the design,
9 implementation, and operation of the independent youth housing program,
10 the department shall:

11 (a) Adopt policies, requirements, and procedures necessary to
12 administer the program;

13 (b) Contract with one or more eligible organizations described
14 under RCW 43.185A.040 to provide services and conduct administrative
15 activities as described in subsection (3) of this section;

16 (c) Establish eligibility criteria for youth to participate in the
17 independent youth housing program, giving priority to youth who have
18 been dependents of the state for at least one year;

1 (d) Refer interested youth to the designated subcontractor
2 organization administering the program in the area in which the youth
3 intends to reside;

4 (e) Develop a method for determining the amount of the housing
5 stipend, first and last month's rent, and security deposit, where
6 applicable, to be dedicated to participating youth. The method for
7 determining a housing stipend must take into account a youth's age, the
8 youth's total income from all sources, the fair market rent for the
9 area in which the youth lives or intends to live, and a variety of
10 possible living situations for the youth. The amount of housing
11 stipends must be adjusted, by a method and formula established by the
12 department, to promote the successful transition for youth to complete
13 housing self-sufficiency over time;

14 (f) Ensure that the independent youth housing program is integrated
15 and aligned with other state rental assistance and case management
16 programs operated by the department, as well as case management and
17 supportive services programs, including the independent living program,
18 the transitional living program, and other related programs offered by
19 the department of social and health services; and

20 (g) Consult with the department of social and health services and
21 other stakeholders involved with dependent youth, homeless youth, and
22 homeless young adults, as appropriate.

23 (2) The department of social and health services shall collaborate
24 with the department in implementing and operating the independent youth
25 housing program including, but not limited to, the following:

26 (a) Refer potential eligible youth to the department before the
27 youth's eighteenth birthday, if feasible, to include an indication, if
28 known, of where the youth plans to reside after aging out of foster
29 care;

30 (b) Provide information to all youth aged fifteen or older, who are
31 dependents of the state under chapter 13.34 RCW, about the independent
32 youth housing program, encouraging dependents nearing their eighteenth
33 birthday to consider applying for enrollment in the program;

34 (c) Encourage organizations participating in the independent living
35 program and the transitional living program to collaborate with
36 independent youth housing program providers whenever possible to
37 capitalize on resources and provide the greatest amount and variety of
38 services to eligible youth;

1 (d) Annually provide to the department data reflecting changes in
2 the percentage of youth aging out of the state dependency system each
3 year who are eligible for state assistance, as well as any other data
4 and performance measures that may assist the department to measure
5 program success; and

6 (e) Annually, beginning by December 31, 2007, provide to the
7 appropriate committees of the legislature and the interagency council
8 on homelessness as described under RCW 43.185C.170 recommendations of
9 strategies to reach the goals described in RCW 43.63A.311(2)(g).

10 (3) Under the independent youth housing program, subcontractor
11 organizations shall:

12 (a) Use moneys awarded to the organizations for housing stipends,
13 security deposits, first and last month's rent stipends, case
14 management program costs, and administrative costs. When subcontractor
15 organizations determine that it is necessary to assist participating
16 youth in accessing and maintaining independent housing, subcontractor
17 organizations may also use moneys awarded to pay for professional
18 mental health services and tuition costs for court-ordered classes and
19 programs;

20 (i) Administrative costs for each subcontractor organization may
21 not exceed twelve percent of the estimated total annual grant amount to
22 the subcontractor organization;

23 (ii) All housing stipends, security deposits, and first and last
24 month's rent stipends must be payable only to a landlord or housing
25 manager of any type of independent housing;

26 (b) Enroll eligible youth who are referred by the department and
27 who choose to reside in their assigned service area;

28 (c) Enter eligible youth program participants into the homeless
29 client management information system as described in RCW 43.185C.180;

30 (d) Monitor participating youth's housing status;

31 (e) Evaluate participating youth's eligibility and compliance with
32 department policies and procedures at least twice a year;

33 (f) Assist participating youth to develop or update an independent
34 living plan focused on obtaining and retaining independent housing or
35 collaborate with a case manager with whom the youth is already involved
36 to ensure that the youth has an independent living plan;

37 (g) Educate participating youth on tenant rights and
38 responsibilities;

1 (h) Provide support to participating youth in the form of general
2 case management and information and referral services, when necessary,
3 or collaborate with a case manager with whom the youth is already
4 involved to ensure that the youth is receiving the case management and
5 information and referral services needed;

6 (i) Connect participating youth, when possible, with individual
7 development account programs, other financial literacy programs, and
8 other programs that are designed to help young people acquire economic
9 independence and self-sufficiency, or collaborate with a case manager
10 with whom the youth is already involved to ensure that the youth is
11 receiving information and referrals to these programs, when
12 appropriate;

13 (j) Submit expenditure and performance reports, including
14 information related to the performance measures in RCW 43.63A.311, to
15 the department on a time schedule determined by the department; and

16 (k) Provide recommendations to the department regarding program
17 improvements and strategies that might assist the state to reach its
18 goals as described in RCW 43.63A.311(2)(g).

19 **Sec. 2.** RCW 43.63A.307 and 2007 c 316 s 2 are each amended to read
20 as follows:

21 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter
22 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

23 (1) "Department" means the department of community, trade, and
24 economic development.

25 (2) "Eligible youth" means an individual who:

26 (a) On or after September 1, 2006, is at least eighteen, was a
27 dependent of the state under chapter 13.34 RCW (~~in the month~~) at any
28 time during the four-month period before his or her eighteenth
29 birthday, and has not yet reached the age of twenty-three;

30 (b) Except as provided in RCW 43.63A.309(2)(a), has a total income
31 from all sources, except for temporary sources that include, but are
32 not limited to, overtime wages, bonuses, or short-term temporary
33 assignments, that does not exceed fifty percent of the area median
34 income;

35 (c) Is not receiving services under RCW 74.13.031(10)(b);

36 (d) Complies with other eligibility requirements the department may
37 establish.

1 (3) "Fair market rent" means the fair market rent in each county of
2 the state, as determined by the United States department of housing and
3 urban development.

4 (4) "Independent housing" means a housing unit that is not owned by
5 or located within the home of the eligible youth's biological parents
6 or any of the eligible youth's former foster care families or
7 dependency guardians. "Independent housing" may include a unit in a
8 transitional or other supportive housing facility.

9 (5) "Individual development account" or "account" means an account
10 established by contract between a low-income individual and a
11 sponsoring organization for the benefit of the low-income individual
12 and funded through periodic contributions by the low-income individual
13 that are matched with contributions by or through the sponsoring
14 organization.

15 (6) "Subcontractor organization" means an eligible organization
16 described under RCW 43.185A.040 that contracts with the department to
17 administer the independent youth housing program.

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