

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 852
Appropriations

(Delegate Carter, *et al.*)

Finance

Human Resources - Homeless Shelters - Best Practices and Models

This bill requires the Interagency Council on Homelessness to determine best practices and models for providing emergency shelter and shelter diversion, including ensuring the health, safety, and security of shelter residents; providing client-centered and trauma-informed support services; and ensuring equal access to protected classes under applicable federal, State, and local civil rights laws.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The bill's requirements can be handled with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness was created pursuant to executive order in 2002. The council coordinated State policy regarding the homeless and devised strategies by which State agencies could collaborate to help those without shelter and prevent homelessness in Maryland. Chapter 341 of 2014 created the Interagency Council on Homelessness, which must:

- coordinate State policy and working relationships among State, local, and nonprofit agencies concerning efforts to remedy and prevent homelessness;

- coordinate data sharing between local Continuums of Care (regional or local planning bodies that coordinate housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals);
- coordinate outreach to each Continuum of Care to develop joint strategies that impact State and federal funding efforts to remedy and prevent homelessness;
- determine comprehensive and effective collaborative strategies and best practices for remediation and prevention of homelessness in the State, in particular addressing the differing needs of the State’s geographic areas;
- review and analyze the need for and availability of affordable and accessible housing resources to address the needs of homeless individuals throughout the State;
- recommend changes necessary to alleviate or prevent homelessness, including making recommendations to the General Assembly and appropriate State agencies and organizations regarding effective policies, effective distribution of resources, and access to available services and programs;
- identify supportive services for special populations, including veterans, youth, families, and individuals with behavioral health problems;
- disseminate information and educate the public about the prevalence and causes of and responses to homelessness; and
- solicit input from the advocacy community, the business community, the faith community, and consumers regarding policy and program development.

The Department of Human Resources provides staff assistance to the council and is required to adopt regulations to govern the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies and programs to make homelessness rare and, if it occurs, of brief duration.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Human Resources, Governor’s Office, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 2015
md/lgc Revised - House Third Reader - April 1, 2015

Analysis by: Jennifer K. Botts

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510