

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1432

Introduced by Assembly Member Hoover

February 21, 2025

An act to amend Section 8255 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to homelessness.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1432, as introduced, Hoover. Housing First.

Existing law requires a state agency or department that funds, implements, or administers a state program that provides housing or housing-related services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, except as specified, to revise or adopt guidelines and regulations to include enumerated Housing First policies. Existing law requires the Governor to create the California Interagency Council on Homelessness to oversee the implementation of the Housing First guidelines and regulations and, among other things, to identify resources, benefits, and services that can be accessed to prevent and end homelessness in California.

This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes to those provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 8255 of the Welfare and Institutions Code
2 is amended to read:

1 8255. For purposes of this ~~chapter~~, *chapter*, the following
2 *definitions apply*:

3 (a) “Council” means the California Interagency Council on
4 Homelessness, formerly known as the Homeless Coordinating and
5 Financing Council established pursuant to Section 8257.

6 (b) “Core components of Housing First” means all of the
7 following:

8 (1) Tenant screening and selection practices that promote
9 accepting applicants regardless of their sobriety or use of
10 substances, completion of treatment, or participation in services.

11 (2) Applicants are not rejected on the basis of poor credit or
12 financial history, poor or lack of rental history, criminal convictions
13 unrelated to tenancy, or behaviors that indicate a lack of “housing
14 readiness.”

15 (3) Acceptance of referrals directly from shelters, street outreach,
16 drop-in centers, and other parts of crisis response systems
17 frequented by vulnerable people experiencing homelessness.

18 (4) Supportive services that emphasize engagement and problem
19 solving over therapeutic goals and service plans that are highly
20 tenant-driven without predetermined goals.

21 (5) Participation in services or program compliance is not a
22 condition of permanent housing tenancy.

23 (6) Tenants have a lease and all the rights and responsibilities
24 of tenancy, as outlined in California’s Civil, Health and Safety,
25 and Government codes.

26 (7) The use of alcohol or drugs in and of itself, without other
27 lease violations, is not a reason for eviction.

28 (8) In communities with coordinated assessment and entry
29 systems, incentives for funding promote tenant selection plans for
30 supportive housing that prioritize eligible tenants based on criteria
31 other than “first-come-first-serve,” including, but not limited to,
32 the duration or chronicity of homelessness, vulnerability to early
33 mortality, or high utilization of crisis services. Prioritization may
34 include triage tools, developed through local data, to identify
35 high-cost, high-need homeless residents.

36 (9) Case managers and service coordinators who are trained in
37 and actively employ evidence-based practices for client
38 engagement, including, but not limited to, motivational
39 interviewing and client-centered counseling.

1 (10) Services are informed by a harm-reduction philosophy that
2 recognizes drug and alcohol use and addiction as a part of tenants’
3 lives, where tenants are engaged in nonjudgmental communication
4 regarding drug and alcohol use, and where tenants are offered
5 education regarding how to avoid risky behaviors and engage in
6 safer practices, as well as connected to evidence-based treatment
7 if the tenant so chooses.

8 (11) The project and specific apartment may include special
9 physical features that accommodate disabilities, reduce harm, and
10 promote health and community and independence among tenants.

11 (c) “Homeless” has the same definition as that term is defined
12 in Section 91.5 of Title 24 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

13 (d) (1) “Housing First” means the evidence-based model that
14 uses housing as a tool, rather than a reward, for recovery and that
15 centers on providing or connecting homeless people to permanent
16 housing as quickly as possible. Housing First providers offer
17 services as needed and requested on a voluntary basis and that do
18 not make housing contingent on participation in services.

19 (2) (A) “Housing First” includes time-limited rental or services
20 assistance, so long as the housing and service provider assists the
21 recipient in accessing permanent housing and in securing longer
22 term rental assistance, income assistance, or employment.

23 (B) For time-limited, supportive services programs serving
24 homeless youth, programs should use a positive youth development
25 model and be culturally competent to serve unaccompanied youth
26 under 25 years of age. Providers should work with the youth to
27 engage in family reunification efforts, where appropriate and when
28 in the best interest of the youth. In the event of an eviction,
29 programs shall make every effort, which shall be documented, to
30 link tenants to other stable, safe, decent housing options. Exit to
31 homelessness should be extremely rare, and only after a tenant
32 refuses assistance with housing search, location, and move-in
33 assistance.

34 (e) “State programs” means any programs a California state
35 agency or department funds, implements, or administers for the
36 purpose of providing emergency shelter, interim housing, housing,
37 or housing-based services to people experiencing homelessness

- 1 or at risk of homelessness, with the exception of *a* federally funded
- 2 ~~programs~~ *program* with requirements inconsistent with this chapter.

O