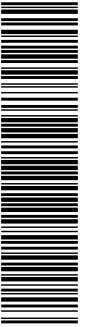


An act to amend Section 16523.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code,
relating to public social services.

SECURED
COPY



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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Section 16523.1 of the Welfare and Institutions Code is amended to read:

16523.1. (a) To the extent funds are appropriated in the annual Budget Act, the department shall award program funds to counties and tribal governments for the purpose of providing housing-related supports to eligible families experiencing homelessness if that homelessness prevents reunification between an eligible family and a child receiving child welfare services, or where lack of housing prevents a parent or guardian from addressing issues that could lead to foster care placement.

(b) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), this section does not create an entitlement to housing-related assistance, which is intended to be provided at the discretion of the county or tribe as a service to eligible families.

(c) (1) It is the intent of the Legislature that housing-related assistance provided pursuant to this article utilize evidence-based models, including evidence-based practices in rapid rehousing and supportive housing.

(2) Housing-related supports available to participating families shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(A) An assessment of each family's housing and service needs, including a plan to assist them in meeting those needs, using an assessment tool developed in the local community or an assessment tool used in other jurisdictions.

(B) Housing navigation or search assistance to recruit landlords, and assist families in locating housing affordable to the family.

(C) The use of evidence-based models, such as motivational interviewing and trauma-informed care, to build relationships with a parent or guardian.

(D) Housing-related financial assistance, including rental assistance, security deposit assistance, utility payments, moving cost assistance, and interim housing assistance while housing navigators are actively seeking permanent housing options for the family.

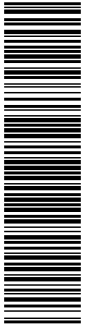
(E) (i) Housing stabilization services, including ongoing tenant engagement, case management, public systems assistance, legal services, credit repair assistance, life skills training, and conflict mediation with landlords and neighbors.

(ii) Services provided pursuant to clause (i) shall be provided with input from the family, based on the needs of the family, and in coordination with other services being provided by child welfare services or tribes, family resource centers, family courts, and other services.

(F) If the family requires supportive housing, long-term housing through tenant or project-based rental assistance or operating subsidies and services promoting housing stability, subject to available funding pursuant to subdivision (a).

(d) The department shall award program funds to county child welfare agencies and tribes according to criteria developed by the department, in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association of California, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, and Housing California, subject to all of the following requirements:

(1) (A) Except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (B), a county or tribe that receives state funds under this program shall match that funding on a dollar-by-dollar



basis. The county or tribal funds used for this purpose shall supplement, not supplant, county or tribal funding already intended for these purposes.

(B) Between July 1, 2021, and June 30, ~~2025~~, 2026, a county or tribe that receives state funds under this article shall not be required to match any funding provided during that period.

(2) A county or tribe that receives state funds under this program shall partner with a local homeless continuum of care that participates in a homeless services coordinated entry and assessment system, as required by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

(3) A county or tribe that receives state funds under the program shall utilize a cross-agency liaison to coordinate activities under the program with the homeless continuum of care and the county child welfare or tribal agency, including housing-related and child welfare services for families.

(e) The department, in consultation with Housing California, the Corporation for Supportive Housing, and the County Welfare Directors Association of California, shall develop all of the following:

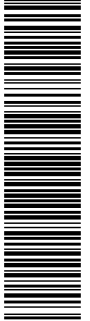
(1) The criteria by which counties and tribal governments may be awarded funds to provide housing-related assistance to eligible families pursuant to this article.

(2) The proportion of program funding to be expended on reasonable and appropriate administrative activities to minimize overhead and maximize services.

(3) Eligible sources of funds for a county's or tribe's matching contribution.

(4) Tracking and reporting procedures for the program.

(5) A process for evaluating program data.



LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

Bill No.
as introduced, _____.
General Subject: Bringing Families Home Program.

Existing law establishes the Bringing Families Home Program, and, subject to an appropriation, requires the State Department of Social Services to award program funds to counties and tribal governments for the purpose of providing housing-related supports to eligible families experiencing homelessness, as defined, if that homelessness prevents reunification between an eligible family and a child receiving child welfare services, as defined, or when lack of housing prevents a parent or guardian from addressing issues that could lead to foster care placement. Existing law requires a county or tribe that receives state funds under this program to match that funding on a dollar-by-dollar basis, beginning on July 1, 2025.

This bill would instead require that matching funding to begin on July 1, 2026.

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

