

Date of Hearing: March 25, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Matt Haney, Chair

AB 1573 (Bryan) – As Amended March 16, 2026

SUBJECT: Land use: housing elements: target population

SUMMARY: Adds “victims of domestic violence” and “victims of human trafficking” to the definition of “target population” in Housing Element Law.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Defines “Domestic violence” as abuse perpetrated against any of the following persons:
 - a) A spouse or former spouse;
 - b) A cohabitant or former cohabitant, as defined;
 - c) A person with whom the respondent is having or has had a dating or engagement relationship;
 - d) A person with whom the respondent has had a child, where the presumption applies that the male parent is the father of the child of the female parent;
 - e) A child of a party or a child who is the subject of an action under the Uniform Parentage Act, where the presumption applies that the male parent is the father of the child to be protected; and
 - f) Any other person related by consanguinity or affinity within the second degree. (Family Code Section 6211)
- 2) Defines “victims of human trafficking” to mean the definition of human trafficking in this section is equivalent to the federal definition of a severe form of trafficking found in Section 7102(11) of Title 22 of the United States Code. (Penal Code 236.1)
- 3) Defines “target population” for purpose of Housing Element Law to mean persons with low incomes who have one or more disabilities, including mental illness, HIV or AIDS, substance abuse, or other chronic health condition, or individuals eligible for services provided pursuant to the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act and may include, among other populations, adults, emancipated minors, families with children, elderly persons, young adults aging out of the foster care system, individuals exiting from institutional settings, veterans, and homeless people. (Government Code Section (GOV) 65582)
- 4) Requires each jurisdiction to prepare and adopt a General Plan, including a housing element, to guide the future growth of a community. The housing element must identify and analyze existing and projected housing needs, including the jurisdiction’s share of the regional housing needs allocation (RHNA); identify adequate sites with appropriate zoning to meet the housing needs of all income segments of the community; and demonstrate local efforts to remove governmental and nongovernmental constraints that hinder the jurisdiction from meeting its share of the regional housing need, among other requirements. (GOV 65583)

- 5) Requires a local government's housing element to include an assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints that are relevant to meeting these needs, including an analysis of potential and actual governmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels, including special needs housing, which must analyze land use controls, building codes and their enforcement, site improvements, fees and exactions, local processing and permit procedures, historic preservation practices and policies, and any locally adopted ordinances that directly impact the cost and supply of residential development. Further requires the analysis to demonstrate local efforts to remove governmental constraints that hinder the locality from meeting its share of RHNA, and from meeting the need for housing for persons with disabilities, supportive housing, transitional housing, and emergency shelters, as specified. (GOV 65583)
- 6) Requires each city and county to adopt a housing element, which must contain specified information, programs, and objectives, including:
 - a) An assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to the meeting of these needs, including a quantification of the locality's existing and projected housing needs for all income levels; an inventory of land suitable and available for residential development; an analysis of potential and actual governmental and nongovernmental constraints upon the maintenance, improvement, or development of housing for all income levels; and a demonstration of local efforts to remove constraints that hinder the locality from meeting its share of the RHNA, among other things;
 - b) A statement of the community's goals, quantified objectives, and policies relative to affirmatively furthering fair housing and to the maintenance, preservation, improvement, and development of housing; and
 - c) A program that sets forth a schedule of actions during the planning period, and timelines for implementation, that the local government is undertaking to implement the policies and achieve the goals and objectives of the housing element, including actions that will be taken to make sites available during the planning period with appropriate zoning and development standards and with services and facilities to accommodate that portion of the local government's share of the regional housing need for each income level that could not be accommodated on sites identified in the sites inventory without rezoning, among other things. (GOV 65583)
- 7) Requires each city and county to include an analysis of any special housing needs in the housing element, such as those of the elderly; persons with disabilities, including a developmental disability, extremely low income households; large families; farmworkers; families with female heads of households; and families and persons in need of emergency shelter. (GOV 65583)
- 8) Requires the need for emergency shelter to be assessed based on the capacity necessary to accommodate the most recent homeless point-in-time count conducted before the start of the planning period, the need for emergency shelter based on number of beds available on a year-round and seasonal basis, the number of shelter beds that go unused on an average monthly basis within a one-year period, and the percentage of those in emergency shelters that move to permanent housing solutions. Provides that the need for emergency shelter may be reduced by the number of supportive housing units that are identified in an adopted 10-year plan to

end chronic homelessness and that are either vacant or for which funding has been identified to allow construction during the planning period. An analysis of special housing needs by a city or county may include an analysis of the need for frequent user coordinated care housing services. Requires for the seventh and subsequent revisions of the housing element, the analysis to include the housing needs of acutely and extremely low income households. (GOV 65583)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown.

COMMENTS:

Author's statement: According to the author, "Survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking are overrepresented in the unhoused population, and the data shows that they stay unhoused for longer, return to homeless services more frequently, and have a lower rate of receiving permanent housing than the unhoused population at large. Clearly, the status quo does not adequately support survivors, and it needs to change. AB 1573 takes an important step by ensuring that survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking are included in the definition of the target populations of the housing element when cities and counties generate their general plan."

Domestic Violence Victims: In 2024, over 187,000 people in California experienced homelessness on a single night. Domestic violence, frequently referred to as intimate partner violence (IPV), (i.e., physical, sexual, emotional, or financial violence or abuse by a current or former intimate partner), is a common precipitant of homelessness, particularly among women (and their minor children). Intimate partner violence is common; 47% of women and 44% of men report experiencing sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime. For one in five unhoused women in California, domestic violence is a precursor to homelessness. Californians with a history of homelessness were three times more likely than those without to report sexual violence (20% vs 7%) in the past year.

Adoption and Implementation of Housing Elements: One important tool in addressing the state's housing crisis is to ensure that all of the state's 540 cities and counties appropriately plan for new housing. Such planning is required through the housing element of each community's General Plan, which outlines a long-term plan for meeting the community's existing and projected housing needs. Cities and counties are required to update their housing elements every eight years in most highly populated parts of the state, and five years in areas with smaller populations. Local governments must adopt a legally valid housing element by their statutory deadline for adoption. Failure to do so can result in certain escalating penalties, including exposure to the "builder's remedy" as well as public or private lawsuits, financial penalties, potential loss of permitting authority, or court receivership.

It is critical that local jurisdictions adopt legally compliant housing elements on time in order to meet statewide housing goals and create the environment locally for the successful construction of desperately needed housing at all income levels. Unless communities plan for the production and preservation of affordable housing, new housing construction will be slow to materialize. Adequate zoning, removal of regulatory barriers, protection of existing housing stock, and targeting resources are essential to obtaining a sufficient permanent supply of housing affordable to all economic segments of the community. Although it does not require the community to actually develop the housing, Housing Element Law requires the community to plan for housing

and set the regulatory landscape to facilitate housing development. Recognizing that local governments may lack adequate resources to house all those in need, the law nevertheless requires jurisdictions to make a good-faith effort to accommodate housing needs and to avoid exclusionary zoning practices or actions that perpetuate patterns of housing discrimination or impede fair housing.

Target population definition: Housing Element Law defines “target population” to mean persons with low incomes who have one or more disabilities, including mental illness, HIV or AIDS, substance abuse, or other chronic health condition, or individuals eligible for services provided pursuant to the Lanterman Developmental Disabilities Services Act. The definition outlines who may be considered as a target population to include, among other adults, emancipated minors, families with children, elderly persons, young adults aging out of the foster care system, individuals exiting from institutional settings, veterans, and homeless people.

The target population definition is included in Housing Element Law to identify those individuals that may require supportive housing, housing at an affordable cost with supportive services. As part of the housing element, a city and county must include an analysis of the needs of special populations, such as those of the elderly, persons with disabilities, including a developmental disability, extremely low-income households, large families, farmworkers, families with female heads of households, and families and persons in need of emergency shelter. This requires the city and county to determine the number of people in each subpopulation and factor their housing needs into the overall housing element. Cities and counties are required to analyze the programs available for special populations. They also can analyze the housing needs of special populations by looking at data from the homelessness management information system (HMIS), which identifies the number of people experiencing homelessness who are living in shelters or who are unsheltered. There is no requirement to identify victims of domestic violence or human trafficking as part of the data collected for HMIS, though some Continuums of Care do collect this data.

Although victims of domestic violence and human trafficking are not called out in the definition of target population or special population, they would be represented in the larger population of lower income households, acutely low income, extremely low-income households, families with female heads of household, and families and persons needing emergency shelter. Adding them to the definition of target population will not cause harm, but will not necessarily result in more supportive housing or shelter specifically for this group, as they can access supportive housing and emergency shelters made available to the broader population.

Arguments in Support: According to the Downtown Women’s Center, “today, city and county assessments of supportive housing services do not consider these vulnerable populations. This bill will ensure that local jurisdictions do their due diligence when formulating their housing element within their general plan to include survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault, allowing for urgently needed safe housing protection and support while strengthening communities and reducing homelessness. AB 1573 will ensure that survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, and sexual assault are included in the definition of the target populations in the assessment of supportive housing in a city’s or county’s general plan. This legislation would move California toward a more inclusive housing framework and affirm that these populations have unique needs that justify targeted supportive services and housing solutions beyond what is currently available. In doing so, AB 1573 will uphold California’s commitment to supporting survivors in

rebuilding their lives while strengthening the health, safety, and resilience of communities statewide.”

Arguments in Opposition: None on file.

Double-Referred: This bill was also referred to the Committee on Local Government, where it will be heard should it pass out of this Committee.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Downtown Women's Center (Sponsor)
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
Community Forward Sf, INC.
Domestic Violence & Homeless Services Coalition
Empower Tehama
Family Violence Law Center
Hub for Urban Initiatives
Jenesse Center
Loyola Law School, the Sunita Jain Anti-trafficking Initiative
Peace Over Violence
Safe Place for Youth
San Francisco Safehouse
San Francisco Women's Housing Coalition
Southern California Association of Nonprofit Housing
Supportive Housing Alliance
Survivor Justice Center
The People Concern
The Purple Monarchs
Weingart Center Association
Western Center on Law & Poverty, INC.
Women of Color Breast Cancer Survivors Support Project

Opposition

None on file.

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