

Date of Hearing: April 22, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Juan Carrillo, 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)

FISCAL EFFECT: None.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Summary and Author’s Statement.** This bill adds “victims of domestic violence” and “victims of human trafficking” to the definition of “target population” in Housing Element Law. This bill is sponsored by the Downtown Women’s Center.

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.”

- 2) **Survivors of Domestic Violence.** 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.
- 3) **Planning and Zoning Law.** State law provides powers and duties for cities and counties regarding land use. The Planning and Zoning Law requires every county and city to adopt a general plan that sets out planned uses for all of the areas covered by the plan. A general plan must include specified mandatory “elements,” including a housing element that establishes the locations and densities of housing, and a land use element that describes the general categories of uses (such as multifamily residential, single family residential, retail commercial, and open space) that are allowed in specific portions of a jurisdiction. Cities’ and counties’ major land use decisions—including zoning ordinances and other aspects of development permitting—must be consistent with their general plans. General plans also include policies, standards, and mitigation measures that developments must comply with, to protect against flood hazards, fire hazards, and climate change, and to further environmental justice, among other state goals.

Local governments use their police power to enact zoning ordinances that establish the types of land uses that are allowed or authorized in an area. Zoning ordinances also contain provisions to physically shape development and impose other requirements, such as setting maximum heights and densities for housing units, minimum numbers of required parking spaces, setbacks, and lot coverage ratios. These ordinances can also include conditions on development to address aesthetics, community impacts, or other particular site-specific considerations.

- 4) **Adoption and Implementation of Housing Elements.** One of California’s key tools for addressing the housing crisis is requiring all 539 cities and counties to plan for their current and future housing needs. This is done through the Housing Element—a mandatory component of each jurisdiction’s general plan—which provides a long-term strategy to meet projected housing demand across all income levels. Most jurisdictions in high-population areas must update their Housing Elements every eight years, while those in smaller-population regions must update every five years. We are currently in the 6th Housing Element Cycle (2021–2029), with the 7th Cycle (2029–2037) on the horizon.

A critical part of each Housing Element is showing how a jurisdiction will accommodate its share of the RHNA. RHNA figures are based on the RHND, which HCD establishes using demographic and housing data—developed in consultation with DOF and each region’s COG. The RHND identifies the total housing need for a region, which the COG then distributes to local governments via RHNA. Housing allocations are divided into four income categories: very low-income [0-50% of Area Median Income (AMI)], low-income (50-80% of AMI), moderate income (80-120% of AMI), and above moderate income (120% or more of AMI). Each city or county must demonstrate, through its Housing Element, how it will zone for its assigned housing units at each income level, while also addressing fair housing and special needs populations.

- 5) **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.

- 6) **Related Legislation.** AB 2351 (Bonta) requires local jurisdictions, beginning with the annual progress report (APR) that is due April 1, 2028, to report the number of emergency shelter beds and permanent housing units in the jurisdiction. This bill is pending in this committee.

- 7) **Arguments in Support.** Downtown Women’s Center, sponsor of the bill, writes in support, “In California, cities and counties are expected to develop a General Plan that serves as a blueprint for future development. Each plan consists of chapters, which are called ‘elements.’ The housing chapter or element includes an analysis of various forms of special housing, emergency shelter, and supportive housing needs for a particular city or county.

“The definition for the target population was placed in the Housing Element Law in 2014. The target population in existing law includes low-income people, veterans, people with developmental and physical disabilities, those with mental illness, chronic health conditions like HIV or AIDS, elderly persons, young adults aging out of the foster care system, individuals exiting from institutional settings, and homeless people.

“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.”

- 8) **Arguments in Opposition.** None on file.
- 9) **Double-Referral.** This bill is double-referred to the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee, where it passed on a 12-0 vote on March 25, 2026.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Downtown Women's Center- **SPONSOR**
 Abode Services
 California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
 Central City Association of Los Angeles
 Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking
 Community Forward SF, INC.
 Corporation for Supportive Housing
 Domestic Violence & Homeless Services Coalition
 Empower Tehama
 Family Violence Law Center
 Good Shepherd Shelter
 Housing California
 Hub for Urban Initiatives
 Jenesse Center
 Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
 Loyola Law School, the Sunita Jain Anti-trafficking Initiative
 National Alliance to End Homelessness
 National Women's Shelter Network, INC.
 Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath

Peace Over Violence
Safe Place for Youth
San Francisco Safehouse
San Francisco Women's Housing Coalition
Southern California Association of Nonprofit Housing
Su Casa - Ending Domestic Violence
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.

Analysis Prepared by: Linda Rios / L. GOV. / (916) 319-3958