

## ASSEMBLY THIRD READING

AB 1899 (Caloza)

As Amended May 18, 2026

Majority vote

**SUMMARY**

Creates the Office of Youth Homelessness Prevention (OYHP) in the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH).

**Major Provisions**

1) Gives the OYHP the following responsibilities:

- a) Developing and overseeing the implementation of a comprehensive framework, by September 15, 2027, to reduce youth homelessness to functional zero, with specific and measurable goals, including, but not limited to, all of the following:
  - i. Decreasing the number of youth who experience homelessness within 12 months of discharge from a public system of care, including foster care, inpatient residential treatment, and incarceration;
  - ii. Decreasing the length and occurrence of youth homelessness caused by a youth's separation from family or a legal guardian; and
  - iii. Decreasing the number of homeless youth experiencing homelessness to functional zero, through, among other things, identifying and enhancing programs that address the root causes of youth homelessness, including timelines within which to attain these measures of success.
- b) Leading the coordination of funding, policy, and practice to prevent youth homelessness across federal and state agencies and departments with jurisdiction over the state's child welfare, foster care, and juvenile justice systems, focused on all of the following:
  - i. Sufficient stable housing, including, but not limited to, the utilization of housing vouchers, rapid rehousing, rental support, and eviction prevention;
  - ii. Economic and employment support, including job training and placement, financial management skills, flexible financial assistance, and assistance connecting with public benefits;
  - iii. Education, including support to earn a high school degree and to pursue and complete postsecondary education and training programs;
  - iv. Prevention of youth homelessness, including family reconciliation, interventions to prevent exits from public systems of care, including child welfare, foster care, juvenile justice, and behavioral health, into homelessness, flexible financial assistance, and school-based supports;
  - v. Health and mental health, including support for youth to obtain and maintain mental health care; and

- vi. Services to assist youth to establish and maintain connections with supportive adults and peers.
  - c) Supporting, advising, or providing guidance to local agencies and entities, including, but not limited to, county child welfare agencies, and county probation departments, on funding, policy, and practice, including transition planning, housing services, aftercare supports, and other approaches to preventing youth from existing public systems into homelessness;
  - d) Developing best practices and policy recommendations, with proposed timelines for completion, to address gaps, shortfalls, and other inadequacies in the areas listed in 2) b).
  - e) Gathering data, including by initiating data sharing agreements, and analyzing the data to evaluate the progress toward desired outcomes, including tracking the rate at which youth exit foster care and other public systems of care into homelessness; and
  - f) Creating and posting on or before December 15, 2027, to its internet website a publicly accessible dashboard tracking the office's progress toward the goals.
- 2) Requires OYHP to consult with a 12-member advisory committee. Requires the Governor to appoint the members of the advisory committee by March 1, 2027.
  - 3) Requires the advisory committee to meet on or before June 1, 2027, and at least twice each calendar year thereafter.
  - 4) Requires at least one member of the OYHP to attend advisory committee meetings to provide administrative support and guidance as needed.

## COMMENTS

*Homeless Youth in California:* According to the 2024 United States Department of Housing and Urban Development Point-in-Time (PIT) count, there are over 187,000 people experiencing homelessness in California. This includes 9,052 homeless youth and 1,890 parenting youth and their children experiencing . Homelessness among some groups of youth is significantly disproportionate – up to 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ. Among racial and ethnic groups, African American youth were especially overrepresented, with an 83% increased risk of having experienced homelessness over youth of other races. Most telling, the lack of a high school diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) was the most strongly correlated indicator with the greatest risk of experiencing homelessness. These young adults, without a high school diploma or GED, had 4.5 times the risk of experiencing homelessness compared to peers who completed high school. Youth homelessness is often rooted in family conflict. Other contributing factors include economic circumstances like poverty and housing insecurity, racial disparities, and mental health and substance use disorders. Young people who have had involvement with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems are also more likely to become homeless. Evidence has also shown that being homeless as a youth is a key indicator of adult homelessness.

*Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAP) Youth Set Aside:* Beginning in 2018, in response to a growing number of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness, the state began investing significantly in the local homelessness response system through Homeless

Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAP). HHAP provides one-time grants to cities with populations over 300,000, Continuums of Care (CoCs), and counties to support regional coordination and expand or develop local capacity to address their immediate homelessness challenges. Investments are informed by a best-practices framework focused on moving homeless individuals and families into permanent housing and supporting the efforts of those individuals and families to maintain their permanent housing. The Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) and subsequently HHAP requires applicants to use a percentage of their allocation to assist homeless youth. The 10% set-aside for youth totals of \$276 million from both programs must be used by local jurisdictions to address youth homelessness. The John Burton Foundation analyzed the impact these funds had regionally on reducing the number of homeless youth by comparing the 2020 PIT count to the 2022 PIT count. They found a 21% reduction in homelessness among unaccompanied youth. California's decrease in youth homelessness is 2.6 times greater than the reduction in all other states – all other states decreased by 8%.

HHAP rounds 3 and 4 both authorized the use of HHAP funds to create a youth-specific CES or youth-specific coordinated entry access points, or to improve the coordinated entry assessment tool to ensure that it contemplates the specific needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

*Homeless Youth Act of 2018*: SB 918 (Weiner) Chapter 841, Statutes of 2018, established the Homeless Youth Act of 2018 to better serve the state's homeless youth population. Cal-ICH is required to set goals to prevent and end homelessness among youth in the state, defining outcome measures, and gathering data related to those goals. Specifically, Cal-ICH is required to set specific and measurable goals aimed at preventing and ending homelessness for youth in the state by defining outcome measures and gathering data related to the goals. In addition, coordinate with young people experiencing homelessness, the State Department of Social Services, and the appropriate agencies and departments to coordinate a spectrum of funding policy and practice efforts related to young people experiencing homelessness. SB 918 did not include any deadlines by which Cal-ICH would deliver on the goals of the bill or a reporting requirement on progress or outcomes.

*California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH)*: In 2016, SB 1380 (Mitchell), Chapter 847, Statutes of 2016 created the Homelessness Coordination and Financing Council (HCFC) to coordinate the state's response to homelessness. HCFC was later named Cal-ICH. Cal-ICH is made up of all state agencies or departments that operate programs that provide housing or housing-related services to people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness. The council meets quarterly and has an advisory committee which includes a current or formerly homeless youth who lives in California. One of the listed statutory goals of the Council is to prevent and end homelessness among California's youth. This bill would create the OYHP to be the lead state entity in coordination of funding, policy, and practice to prevent youth homelessness across federal and state agencies and departments with jurisdiction over the state's child welfare, foster care, and juvenile justice systems.

### **According to the Author**

"No young person should have to choose between school and the streets or between meaningful work and the street economy. No young person should be sleeping on a city bus or camping on a sidewalk. Creating an Office of Homeless Youth, as envisioned in AB 1899, will ensure that there are programs specifically designed to support and serve youth and young adults to prevent unnecessary suffering and prevent them from growing up and becoming chronically homeless. It is modeled after Washington State, which has reduced youth and young adult homelessness by

forty percent. California can, and must, do more for our young people who are experiencing homelessness. If youth or young adults do experience homelessness, then it must be rare, brief, and non-recurring."

### **Arguments in Support**

According to the Inner City Law Center this bill, "the State of Washington established an Office of Homeless Youth in 2015, with the goal of preventing state systems from discharging youth and young adults into homelessness. Washington has reduced youth and young adult homelessness by forty percent since the Office was created. Solving youth homelessness is a critical part of ending California's larger homelessness crisis because young people who experience homelessness are five times more likely than their peers to become homeless adults. While the Interagency Council on Homelessness is tasked with setting goals to reduce youth homelessness, a state-level Office of Youth Homelessness Prevention, focused exclusively on leading California to achieve function zero in youth and young adult homelessness, would ensure these goals are fulfilled."

### **Arguments in Opposition**

None on file.

## **FISCAL COMMENTS**

According to the Assembly Committee on Appropriations:

Cal ICH estimates General Fund costs of \$1.22 million in the first year and \$1.15 million annually thereafter for staff to lead statewide coordination across various stakeholders, develop a framework with measurable goals, and align funding and policy toward achieving functional zero youth homelessness.

The Legislative Analyst's Office recently warned of General Fund structural deficits of around \$35 billion per year in the 2027-28 fiscal year and ongoing.

## **VOTES**

### **ASM HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: 12-0-0**

**YES:** Haney, Patterson, Ward, Caloza, Garcia, Kalra, Lee, Quirk-Silva, Ta, Tangipa, Wicks, Wilson

### **ASM HUMAN SERVICES: 6-0-1**

**YES:** Lee, Calderon, Elhawary, Blanca Rubio, Ahrens, Tangipa

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Castillo

### **ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 15-0-0**

**YES:** Wicks, Hoover, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Dixon, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Ta, Tangipa

**UPDATED**

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