
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1924 (Gabriel) - Statewide homelessness prevention strategy

Version: June 15, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: HOUSING 10 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Mark McKenzie

Bill Summary: AB 1924 would require the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH) to develop and publicly issue a statewide homelessness prevention strategy with specified components by July 1, 2027, and to annually review, update, and publish revisions to the strategy.

Fiscal Impact:

- Staff estimates that Cal-ICH would incur ongoing costs at least in the low- to mid-hundreds of thousands of dollars, and potentially higher, to develop and update the statewide homelessness prevention strategy, including extensive coordination with relevant agencies to develop homelessness prevention action plans and annually evaluating the effectiveness of those plans, as specified. See Staff Comments. (General Plan)
- Unknown individual agency and overall costs for relevant agencies to work with Cal-ICH to develop specified homelessness prevention action plans that detail specific actions each agency will take to contribute to homelessness prevention. For instance, the Department of Social Services (CDSS) indicates that it could incur significant costs of over \$1 million if it assumes substantial new responsibilities for statewide planning, reporting, data coordination, and interagency engagement, but these costs would be materially lower if implementation utilizes existing planning and reporting processes, including Cal-ICH's existing Action Plan process, and limits CDSS responsibilities to current programs and expertise. The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) indicates that costs to follow the action plan created in the homelessness prevention strategy would likely be minor and absorbable. (General Fund, various special funds)
- The bill could also result in significant unknown cost pressures, to the extent that recommendations to implement homelessness prevention action plans and other relevant agency action items identified in the homelessness prevention strategy include recommendations for new or additional expenditures for homelessness prevention efforts. (General Fund)

Background: Existing law requires HCD to administer various housing programs. Existing law also establishes various programs to prevent homelessness or assist persons experiencing homelessness, including the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program, which makes available grant allocations to cities, counties, and continuums of care with flexible funding to prevent and end homelessness in their regions. Homelessness prevention programs are funded through local sources, through the state HHAP program, and through federal sources, including the Emergency

Solutions Grant Program and the Continuum of Care program. In HHAP Round 5, Prevention and Shelter Diversion programs accounted for roughly 5% of total funds awarded.

Existing law establishes Cal-ICH (originally the Homelessness Coordination and Financing Council, as enacted by SB 1380 (Mitchell), Chap. 847/2016) to coordinate the state's response to homelessness using "Housing First" practices. 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.

Cal-ICH annually publishes an Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness (Action Plan) as a three-year roadmap for addressing homelessness in the state that Cal-ICH uses to organize and assess its investments, ensuring that efforts are strategic, measurable, and aligned with our shared vision of preventing and ending homelessness. The most recent Action Plan, published in December of 2024, outlines five measurable goals to drive outcomes and assess progress, including the goal of preventing more people from entering homelessness by increasing access to publicly-funded health and social safety net services for people at-risk of homelessness in order to address health and economic vulnerabilities. The Action Plan identifies state administered programs that contribute to one or more of the goals. These include investments from the State General Fund or federal passthrough dollars that the state administers, but do not include federal or private dollars that are not administered by the state, such as Emergency Housing Vouchers, Housing Choice Vouchers, and public housing.

Proposed Law: AB 1924 would require Cal-ICH to develop and publicly issue a statewide homelessness prevention strategy by July 1, 2027 that includes all of the following:

- The identity of each "relevant agency," defined as any state agency or department that affects, or has the potential to affect, housing stability and the prevention of homelessness, including 12 specified entities.
- An inventory of each definition of homelessness prevention employed by each relevant agency and how those definitions differ.
- The actions each relevant agency is taking to promote housing stability and homelessness prevention, and the gaps in those actions.
- A homelessness prevention action plan for each relevant agency that is developed by Cal-ICH and the relevant agency that details specific actions the agency will take to contribute to housing stability and homelessness prevention, and the timeline for those actions, as specified.
- Recommendations for legislation or executive action to implement the homelessness prevention action plans.
- A plan to coordinate and integrate the homelessness prevention action plans.
- A plan to annually evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the homelessness prevention action plans that includes accountability measures and an assessment of the impact of the action plans on homelessness prevention.

- An inventory of state resources that are currently devoted specifically to preventing homelessness and a proposal for additional state resources and actions to prevent homelessness.
- Statewide homelessness prevention goals and accountability measures.
- An annual agenda recommending third-party evaluations of selected local or state homelessness prevention programs, other than the homelessness prevention action plans, that test the impact of those programs on homelessness prevention.
- Evidence-based model homelessness prevention practices identified or designed and developed by Cal-ICH that include all of the following:
 - Identification of persons most at risk of homelessness through evidence-based risk factors, as specified.
 - The use of predictive models to identify individuals most at risk of homelessness.
 - The targeting of resources to households most at risk of homelessness.
 - The most effective and efficient interventions to prevent homelessness, as specified.
 - Specific homelessness prevention practices that address the needs of sub-populations.
 - Successful integration of financial, legal, and case management assistance.
 - Evaluation of the effectiveness of homelessness prevention strategies on preventing homelessness, including performance metrics.
 - The most effective and efficient means of coordinating state and federal homelessness prevention efforts identified and proposed by Cal-ICH.
 - The most effective and efficient means of coordinating state and local homelessness prevention efforts identified and proposed by Cal-ICH.
 - Evidence-based state and local homelessness prevention programs and systems that have received evaluations validating their effectiveness in preventing homelessness identified by Cal-ICH and recommendations for scaling up those programs and systems to have a broader impact on homelessness prevention.
 - The compilation, acquisition, and use of relevant data necessary to effectuate homelessness prevention, including a universal system of data collection and reporting that facilitates access to data by all participants in a homelessness prevention system.

The bill would also require Cal-ICH to offer the homelessness prevention practices described above as guidance to local programs, and to propose to integrate relevant practices into state agencies and programs. Lastly, the bill would require Cal-ICH to annually review and update the statewide homelessness prevention strategy and publish any revisions.

Staff Comments: This bill would require Cal-ICH to develop, publish, and annually update a statewide homelessness prevention strategy and identify model homelessness prevention practices. This is intended to bring more focus on proactive prevention measures, which may be more cost effective in the long run, rather than directing resources solely on reactive efforts to move the homeless into stable housing.

Staff notes that one key potential cost driver in the bill is the requirement for Cal-ICH and the 12 specified relevant state agencies to jointly develop homeless prevention action plans that detail specific actions they will take to contribute to housing stability

and homelessness prevention and timelines for implementing those actions, while considering the specified model practices. The strategy must also include an annual evaluation of the effectiveness and efficiency of those agency action plans, including accountability measures and assessing the impacts of the action plans on homelessness prevention. These activities create a new oversight role for Cal-ICH over other state agencies who may have an impact on housing stability and the prevention of homelessness through the programs they administer. Evaluating each department's activities and assessing the impacts of their action plans would likely be time and cost intensive endeavors.

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