
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 2146
Author: Stefani (D), et al.
Amended: 8/13/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE HOUSING COMMITTEE: 8-1, 6/30/26

AYES: Arreguín, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cortese, Durazo, Grayson, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla

NOES: Seyarto

NO VOTE RECORDED: Gonzalez

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 5-2, 8/13/26

AYES: Cervantes, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

NOES: Seyarto, Dahle

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 59-11, 5/21/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Supportive housing: prospective tenants: barriers to access

SOURCE: Housing California

Non-profit Housing Association of Northern California

DIGEST: This bill allows a housing development serving people experiencing homelessness to accept self-certification that an individual is homeless, as specified, and requires the California Housing and Homelessness Agency (CHHA) to complete a comprehensive review of compliance documentation for specified units, and submit a report to the legislature by April 1, 2028.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Establishes the Multifamily Housing Program (MHP) at the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to assist the new construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of permanent and transitional rental housing for

lower income households through loans to local governments, as well as non- and for-profit developers.

- 2) Defines the composition of a Continuum of Care (CoC) to mean the group organized to carry out the responsibilities of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act composed of representatives of organizations, including nonprofit homeless providers, victim service providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses, advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals, universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement, organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless veterans, and homeless and formerly homeless persons to the extent these groups are represented within the geographic area and are available to participate.

This bill:

- 1) Includes the following definitions:
 - a) “CES” means a centralized or coordinated assessment system developed pursuant to federal law and designed to coordinate homelessness program participant intake, assessment, and provision of referrals;
 - b) “Equivalent referral system” means, in jurisdictions where a CES is not operational, another similar referral system which prioritizes based on need and barriers to housing stability, as determined by HCD;
 - c) “Housing history” means a report of an applicant's last known residential address or addresses, length of residency, and reason for departure, typically for a period of no less than two years preceding a housing application;
 - d) “Self-certification of homelessness” means an affidavit, signed under penalty of perjury by an individual seeking assistance indicating their status as chronically homeless, homeless, or at risk of homelessness. Provides that if a tenant or prospective tenant is found to have falsified information regarding their self-certification of homelessness, it shall be considered a just cause for eviction. Provides that a housing sponsor shall be held harmless for purposes of compliance with their regulatory requirements.
- 2) Provides that a housing sponsor will be held harmless under the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) or HCD regulatory agreement if a tenant is found to have falsified information regarding self-certification of homelessness.

- 3) Establishes the California Direct Access to Supportive Housing (DASH) designation to facilitate quick and accountable access to supportive housing.
- 4) Beginning July 1, 2027, requires a housing credit applicant to notify TCAC or HCD if a unit receiving an allocation of tax credits or funding from Homekey, NPLH, or MHP meets the criteria for DASH designation.
- 5) Provides that a housing sponsor may notify TCAC or HCD when any of the following occur:
 - a) Any time before the unit becomes vacant;
 - b) When submitting notification of the unit's availability to a CES or an equivalent referral system; and,
 - c) When submitting loan closing documents to the committee.
- 6) Provides that if TCAC or HCD disagrees with the housing sponsors' determination of DASH unit status, they must notify the applicant in writing within 60 days and allow the applicant 30 days to provide additional evidence to support their claim. Prohibits TCAC or HCD from penalizing an applicant as a result of any disagreement over a unit's DASH status.
- 7) Provides that if a unit's DASH designation is removed, a housing credit applicant must notify TCAC or HCD that the unit no longer meets the criteria.
- 8) Provides that beginning July 1, 2027, for a prospective tenant referred to a DASH unit through a CES or equivalent referral system, TCAC and HCD shall, to the extent not prohibited by federal law, apply the following expedited compliance documentation standards:
 - a) TCAC and HCD shall not require a housing credit applicant to obtain third-party documentation of a person's status as chronically homeless, homeless, or at risk of homelessness to establish tenant eligibility.
 - b) TCAC and HCD shall accept self-certification of homelessness from the prospective tenant;
 - c) TCAC and HCD shall not require housing history for prospective tenants;

- d) A housing credit applicant shall not request or require housing history or landlord or personal references for prospective tenants;
 - e) On or before June 30, 2027, TCAC and HCD shall adopt regulations to implement this section.
- 9) Requires the California Housing and Homelessness Agency (CHHA), by January 1, 2028, in consultation with sponsors of housing units designated as DASH, to complete a comprehensive review of compliance, which shall identify all of the following information:
- a) Compliance requirements that create barriers to housing access for individuals at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness;
 - b) Alternative methods of compliance to remove barriers and accelerate housing move-ins; and,
 - c) Opportunities to streamline documentation through alignment with existing standards for other programs, including, but not limited to, Medi-Cal or Transitional Rent.
- 10) Requires CHHA, by April 1, 2028, to submit a report on the review.
- 11) Requires CHHA to implement revised compliance requirements based on the completed review.

Background

Coordinated Entry Systems (CES). In 2012, HUD began requiring CoCs to use a CES, and in 2017 HUD mandated the use of CES for all CoCs as a condition of receiving federal funds. A CoC is a federally created entity that is responsible for administering federal funding to address homelessness, collecting data that is input into the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS), and managing the CES. CES is a CoC-established system-wide process to quickly and equitably coordinate the access, assessment, prioritization, and referrals to housing and services for people experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness. CES is an evidence-based strategy that focuses on housing and service coordination designed to link people experiencing homelessness to the most appropriate housing solution based on their needs. CES is also meant to remove racial bias in who is prioritized for housing and services, and prioritize people based on need. Significant racial disproportionality exists among those experiencing homelessness, with people who identify as Black/African American significantly overrepresented. CES prioritizes

individuals for housing based on the length of time they have experienced homelessness.

Comments

- 1) *Author's statement.* "Although California has been a leader in creating permanent supportive housing for people who need it most, too many individuals still face unnecessary documentation requirements that stall their access to these life-changing housing opportunities. AB 2146 addresses these barriers to access by removing the requirement that people "prove" they are homeless with hard-to-obtain documents pertaining to their housing history. This bill also gives affordable housing providers more flexibility to fill units that have been sitting vacant for too long by expanding where they can get referrals. Together these changes tackle the real-world barriers that housing administrators, nonprofit providers, and service agencies all agree are getting in the way of connecting people to available housing."
- 2) *Self-certification.* In California, under SB 1380 (Mitchell, Chapter 847, Statutes of 2016), homeless applicants cannot be denied supportive housing due to poor or inconsistent housing history. In fact, CES prioritizes applicants with such experiences. However, federal funding for CoCs requires applicants for housing to provide documentation related to their housing history, including third-party verification of homelessness, two years of rental history, and, in some cases, landlord or personal references. State law has mirrored this requirement in the MHP guidelines although there is no legal requirement to do so. When an applicant for housing rises to the top of the CES system and is in line for a referral, these requirements for documentation slow down the process of becoming housed.

For DASH designated units, those that do not receive federal funding, this bill would require TCAC/CDLAC and HCD for affordable housing developments that receive tax credits, MHP, and NPLH to accept self-certification from a prospective tenant that they are homeless. Affordable housing developers would not be required to obtain third party documentation of a person's status as homeless, any housing history, landlord or personal references.

- 3) *Senate Appropriations Amendments.* Authors amendments remove provisions that allow a housing developer to receive and process referrals of prospective tenants outside of CES, as specified, and limit a comprehensive review and legislative report of compliance documentation to CHHA.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee:

- The California Housing and Homelessness Agency (CHHA) estimates costs in the low hundreds of thousands of dollars for a contract to complete the comprehensive review of compliance documentation and identifying compliance requirements, alternative methods of compliance, and opportunities to streamline documentation, as well as implementing revised compliance requirements based on the review. (General Fund)
- The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) would incur minor workload costs in excess of \$50,000 to amend program guidelines to incorporate changes specified in the bill and to conduct ongoing oversight and other activities to verify that units qualify for a DASH designation, as well as respond to technical assistance requests from developers and other interested parties. HCD indicates that these costs are likely absorbable within existing resources. (General Fund)
- The California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) costs to update program guidelines would be minor and absorbable. (General Fund, Tax Credit Allocation Fee Account)

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/13/26)

Housing California (co-source)

Non-profit Housing Association of Northern California (co-source)

Alta Housing

California Housing Partnership

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence

City of Emeryville

City of Oakland

City of Sunnyvale

Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)

Downtown Women's Center

Eah Housing

East Bay Housing Organization - Ebho

Eden Housing

Enterprise Community Partners, INC.

Episcopal Community Services of San Francisco

Mental Health Association of San Mateo County

Midpen Housing

National Alliance to End Homelessness
Opportunities for Change
Resources for Community Development
Satellite Affordable Housing Associates
Self Help Enterprises
Southern California Association of Non-profit Housing (SCANPH)
Supportive Housing Alliance
The Kelsey

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/13/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 59-11, 5/21/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Connolly, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Gipson, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: Castillo, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Flora, Gallagher, Hadwick, Johnson, Macedo, Sanchez, Tangipa

NO VOTE RECORDED: Arambula, Chen, Garcia, Jeff Gonzalez, Hoover, Lackey, Patterson, Ramos, Celeste Rodriguez, Ta

Prepared by: Alison Hughes / HOUSING / (916) 651-4124
8/17/26 10:47:46

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