



identifying unstable housing situations for youth and referring youth to housing assistance programs.

- 4) Requires a child welfare agency that accepts HNMP funding to report specified data to HCD on an annual basis.

*Transitional Housing Program (THP)*

- 5) Requires HCD, upon an appropriation in the Budget, to allocate funding to county child welfare agencies to help young adults who are 18 to 24 years old secure and maintain housing with priority given to young adults formerly in the state's foster care or probation systems.
- 6) Requires HCD to consult with Department of Social Services (DSS), the Department of Finance (DOF), and the County Welfare Directors Association of California (CWDA) to develop an allocation schedule to distribute funds for the Transitional Housing Program.
- 7) Requires a child welfare agency that receives funds from the THP to report specified data to HCD each year.
- 8) Requires HCD to accept one county board resolution and one allocation acceptance form, and execute one standard agreement, for both the THP and the HNMP.
- 9) Defines "former foster youth" to mean a child or nonminor dependent who had been removed by the juvenile court from the custody of their parent, legal guardian, or Indian custodian, as specified, ordered into a specified placement and for whom juvenile court jurisdiction was terminated while the youth remained in placement.

**This bill:**

*HNMP*

- 1) Replaces "former foster youth" with "young adult formerly in the state's foster care or probation system."
- 2) Expands the age range a young adult formerly in the state's foster care or probation system can receive funding from HNMP from 18 to 24 years old to 18 to 28 years old.
- 3) Requires counties that receive funding from HNMP to prioritize nonminor dependents in addition to youth adults formerly in the state's foster care or probation system.

- 4) Specifies the eligible uses of HNMP funding to include, but not be limited to, the following:
    - a) Assisting young adults with identifying and applying for housing, including housing that qualifies as a supervised independent living placement, as specified;
    - b) Assisting young adults with applying for a federal housing choice voucher and identifying housing with the housing choice voucher;
    - c) Providing young adults with financial assistance to help cover the cost of housing application fees, security deposit, first month's rent, utility set-up, and other move-in costs;
    - d) Providing landlord incentives; and,
    - e) Providing young adults with supportive services that help them maintain stable housing, including education and employment support, financial literacy and planning, case management, and counseling.
  - 5) Requires a child welfare agency that accepts funds from HNMP to report the following to HCD annually:
    - a) A copy of the memorandum of understanding or letter of intent the child county welfare agency has with the housing authority to provide housing vouchers funded by the federal Family Unification Program (FUP) or the federal Foster Youth to Independence Initiative (FYI);
    - b) Provides that if the county child welfare agency does not partner with a housing authority to provide FUP or FYI vouchers, the child welfare agency shall state the reason why it does not partner with a housing authority to provide those housing vouchers; and,
    - c) The number of housing vouchers that have been issued to young adults in the county that are funded by the federal FUP or FYI programs. Provides that "issued" means the voucher has been assigned to a specific person, whether that person is searching for housing or has entered into a lease, and whether the voucher is new or recycled.
- THP*
- 6) Replaces "former foster youth" with "young adult formerly in the state's foster care or probation system" and conforms the definition of "homeless" with a federal definition.

**Comments**

- 1) *Author's statement.* "In California, about 3,000 young people annually make their final exit from care without the support of a family. Young adults can receive rental assistance through FYI/FUP federal housing vouchers for up to five years. Youth who receive their federal housing voucher at age 24 may keep their voucher and use it at any time through age 28. However, our state's HNMP services currently stop assisting young adults at age 24. Leaving these young adults without county resources that provide critical support to them beyond the age of 24, including help pursuing education, employment, and other self-sufficiency goals."
- 2) *THP.* THP provides funding to county child welfare agencies to assist young adults ages 18 to 24 in securing and maintaining housing. This funding was established to expand on local transitional housing programs (called "THP-Plus"). The THP-Plus model provides up to 36 months of subsidized (or free) housing and supportive services to former foster and out-of-home probation youth ages 18 to 24. Young adults formerly in the state's foster care or probation systems get priority funding. County child welfare agencies that accept THP funding are required to report the following to HCD annually: 1) the number of homeless youth served; 2) the number of former foster youth served; and, 3) the number of homeless youth who exited homelessness either into temporary or permanent housing. THP funding is very flexible, and counties that accept it are able to use it to expand existing programs or establish new programs based on local housing and service needs; however, the funding must be used to assist young adults with securing and maintaining housing. Funding can be used to help youth secure and maintain housing (with priority given to those formerly in the state's foster care or probation system); improving coordination of services and linkages to community resources within the child welfare system and the homeless continuums of care; and outreach and targeting to serve those with the most severe need. THP receives an annual \$33.3 million in funding.
- 3) *HNMP.* HNMP provides housing navigation and maintenance services to youth ages 18 through 24. County child welfare agencies receive funding from HCD to support housing navigators to assist young adults in securing and maintaining housing. Young adults currently in the foster care and probation systems are prioritized for funding. HNMP can be used to provide housing case management, including essential services in emergency supports to foster youth; to prevent young adults from becoming homeless; and to improve the coordination of services and linkages to key resources across the community,

including those from within the child welfare system and the local Continuum of Care. HNMP receives an annual \$13.7 million in the budget.

When a county child welfare agency accepts HNMP funding, they are required to provide training to their social workers and probation officers that provides an overview of the housing resources available through the local coordinated entry system, homeless continuum of care, and other county public agencies, such as housing navigation, permanent affordable housing, THP-Plus, and housing choice vouchers. The training must also address how to access and receive a referral to existing housing resources, the social worker's and probation officer's role in identifying unstable housing situations for youth, and referring youth to housing assistance programs. On an annual basis, county child welfare agencies that accept HNMP funding are required to provide a report to HCD regarding: the number of homeless youth served; the number of foster children served; the number of homeless youth who exited homelessness into temporary housing; and the number of homeless youth who exited homelessness into permanent housing.

The John Burton Foundation, the sponsor of this bill, showed data obtained by HCD that through June 2024, 10,560 participants had been served. Of those, 2,500 were homeless at the time of program entry, 8,610 had been in foster care and 406 reported being incarcerated prior to the program.

- 4) *Federal Youth Housing Vouchers*. The federal government makes special purpose housing choice vouchers available for former foster youth through the FYI and FUP. Housing authorities administer the FYI and FUP vouchers and rely on county child welfare agencies to refer youth, verify eligibility, and provide supportive services. HNMP funds the supportive services required by the federal government to utilize the vouchers. Prior to the creation of HNMP, FYI and FUP vouchers were underutilized because counties lacked funding to provide the services which are both required by HUD and necessary for youth to identify and secure housing with their voucher. According to the sponsor, since HNMP was expanded to include supportive services, California's vouchers have increased by a full 136% from 870 vouchers to over 2,000 in 2024.

The FYI and FUP vouchers are the only youth-focused housing program that assists young adults beyond age 24. Youth can receive rental assistance from their FYI/FUP voucher for up to five years. Youth who receive their voucher at age 24 --- the age cap for initiating assistance --- keep their voucher through age 28. However, the upper age limit of HNMP is 24. Counties therefore lack the resources to offer essential services to voucher holders beyond age 24, including supporting the pursuit of education, employment, and other self-

sufficiency-related goals. This bill would allow a county to use HNMP to serve young people who are former foster youth up to 28 years of age.

5) *Reporting Requirements.* As a condition of receiving HNMP grant funding, county child welfare agencies are required to report demographic and outcome data on the youth they serve with the funds. This bill would expand on these reporting elements to include whether the county child welfare agency partners with housing authorities to participate in FYI and FUP vouchers; the number of FYI and FUP vouchers they have requested from their housing authority; and, if no partnership exists to administer these vouchers, the reason why. HCD would be required to post the above information publicly to strengthen accountability for maximizing federal funding and increase access to vouchers by producing awareness of voucher capacity statewide.

6) *Double referral?* This bill was also referred to the Human Services Committee.

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

**POSITIONS:** (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday, June 3, 2026.)

**SUPPORT:**

None Received.

**OPPOSITION:**

None Received.

**-- END --**