
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 790
Author: Ávila Farías (D), et al.
Amended: 5/5/25 in Assembly
Vote: 21

SENATE HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE: 5-0, 6/30/25

AYES: Arreguín, Ochoa Bogh, Becker, Limón, Pérez

SENATE HOUSING COMMITTEE: 10-0, 7/15/25

AYES: Wahab, Seyarto, Arreguín, Caballero, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez,
Grayson, Ochoa Bogh, Padilla

NO VOTE RECORDED: Cabaldon

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 7-0, 8/29/25

AYES: Caballero, Seyarto, Cabaldon, Dahle, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 79-0, 6/2/25 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Homelessness: single women with children

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill adds “women with children” to the Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations (HELP) Act. It also requires cities, counties, and continuums of care (CoCs) to provide all analyses or goals required by the HELP Act to the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH).

ANALYSIS:

Existing Law:

- 1) Creates the Cal-ICH and requires it to set and measure progress toward goals to prevent and end homelessness in California. (Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) § 8255)

- 2) Finds and declares that “unaccompanied women” are individuals who identify as women, 18 years of age and older, who are experiencing homelessness while not in the company of children or other dependents. (WIC § 8255)
- 3) Requires Cal-ICH to set and measure progress toward goals to prevent and end homelessness among domestic violence survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women. Requires those goals to include measurably decreasing the number of homeless domestic violence survivors and their children, decreasing the duration of homelessness experienced by domestic abuse survivors and their children, decreasing barriers to services by increasing cross sector partnerships to expedite access to services including social services, domestic violence services, regional center services, housing services, and mental health services. (WIC § 8266(a))
- 4) Defines “Homelessness Data Integration System (HDIS)” as the statewide data system or warehouse that collects local data through Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), with the ultimate goal of matching data on homelessness to programs impacting homeless recipients of state programs, as provided and in compliance with federal law. (WIC § 8257(b)(13))
- 5) Requires cities, counties, and CoCs receiving state funding to address homelessness to develop analysis and goals with victim service providers to address the specific needs of families, people fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, and unaccompanied women within the vulnerable populations with data not included in HDIS. (WIC § 8264)

This Bill:

- 1) Requires cities, counties, and CoCs receiving state funding to address homelessness to include women with children in the vulnerable populations for whom specific system supports are developed to maintain homeless services and housing delivery.
- 2) Requires cities, counties, and CoCs that develop goals and analyses as required by the HELP Act to give that information to Cal-ICH.
- 3) Requires Cal- ICH to post the information provided as required by 2) on its internet website.
- 4) Requires Cal-ICH to set and measure progress toward goals to prevent and end homelessness among women with children.

Comments

According to the author, “California’s single mothers face disproportionate housing cost burdens, and over 16,300 children are experiencing homelessness, often due to gaps in service delivery and prioritization. Addressing these issues will not only help vulnerable families but also reduce long-term state costs associated with emergency services, welfare, and intergenerational poverty. While many programs exist, none specifically prioritize women with children—a group disproportionately at risk of homelessness or fleeing domestic violence. AB 790 builds upon previous legislative efforts by requiring the California Interagency Council on Homelessness to include women with children within the population they are required to set and measure progress toward goals to prevent and end homelessness.”

California Homelessness Data. Since 2016, homelessness in America, and particularly in California, has been growing at an increasing rate. Annually, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has local CoCs conduct a Point in Time (PIT) count of people experiencing homelessness in January. The annual PIT includes people experiencing homelessness who are “sheltered, living in temporary shelters, and those who are “unsheltered,” or living out in the open or in places not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for people (i.e. the streets, vehicles, or parks). The PIT count is required by HUD as a condition of receiving federal funding. The 2024 HUD Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress found:

- California had 187,084 homeless people, which accounted for 28% of the nation’s homeless population. California also had the highest rate of unsheltered people at 66%.
- In California, there were 25,369 people in families with children experiencing homelessness, 21% of which are unsheltered. In California, the number of homeless families increased by 156 from 2023 to 2024.

According to a report by American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, nationally, “34% of the total homeless population composed of families. Of these homeless families, 84% are headed by women. African American families are disproportionately represented among the homeless population, making up 43% of

homeless families”. The report also says domestic and sexual violence are the leading cause of homelessness for women and families.¹

Another study found, “the challenges [homeless women with children] face are often compounded by factors such as gender-based violence, limited access to resources, and the responsibility of caring for dependent children. Homeless women with children are at a higher risk of experiencing violence, including domestic violence and sexual assault.” The study also found that recurring instances of homelessness in childhood led to an increased likelihood of homelessness in adulthood.² This bill seeks to increase the focus on homeless families of women with children by requiring local governments to develop analyses and goals that address the unique needs of this population.

California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH). The Cal-ICH was created in 2021 by AB 1220 (Rivas, Chapter 398) as a successor to the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC) to address the coordination and oversight of homelessness programs. The bill also made changes to the membership of the Cal-ICH and provided the Cal-ICH with additional authority to access information from other departments. To ensure the Cal-ICH has access to information about homelessness programs throughout state agencies, the Cal-ICH is allowed to require state departments that have homelessness programs to participate in Cal-ICH workgroups or other collaborative work. They can also require those departments or agencies to provide the Cal-ICH data on those programs. Unlike the HCFC, the Cal-ICH also requires department directors, agency secretaries, and executive directors to participate on the council rather than their representatives.

In addition to improving coordination between agencies, the Cal-ICH is also charged with coordinating existing and competitive funding for homelessness initiatives, find new funding initiatives, make policy recommendations, broker agreements between state agencies, increase accountability, create reports for the Governor and Legislature, and create a statewide database for local homelessness data.

Cal-ICH published a three-year Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homeless in California in December 2024 to fulfill its mandate to meet statutorily defined

¹ <https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2013/10/health-care-for-homeless-women>

² Kohler, A., Pylypchuk, N., & Reisdorfer, E. (2024). Adverse childhood experiences, mothers and homelessness: a narrative review and recommendations. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1).

goals. The Action Plan outlines five action plan goals that will guide Cal-ICH's funding and strategic efforts. Those goals are:

- Help more people leave unsheltered homelessness
- Help more people move into housing
- Ensure people do not experience homelessness again
- Prevent more people from experiencing homelessness
- Create more housing

Each goal comes with more specific goals with targets, for example increasing access to publicly-funded health and social safety net services for people at-risk of homelessness and permitting 1.5 million new homes. The Action Plan also highlights that HDIS has gaps in its data collection. Specifically that it does not gather enough information from programs that primarily service people who have experienced domestic violence due to the confidentiality challenges. This bill requires increased analysis of the needs of homeless women with children and for that information to be shared with Cal-ICH and posted on their website. It also requires Cal-ICH to integrate goals to reduce homelessness among this population into their larger goals.

Related/Prior Legislation

SB 914 (Rubio, Chapter 665, Statutes of 2022) created Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations or HELP Act, which required cities, counties, and CoCs receiving state funding to include within the vulnerable populations that receive homeless services and housing delivery: families, people fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, and unaccompanied women. It also required Cal-ICH to establish initial goals to prevent and end homelessness among domestic violence survivors, their children and unaccompanied women, by January 1, 2025, and update these goals as needed every two years thereafter.

AB 140 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 111, Statutes of 2021) requires the Cal ICH to issue a standard agreement for cities, counties and CoCs applying for state homelessness funds to submit an application that includes a local homelessness action plan and specific outcome goals to prevent and reduce homelessness.

AB 1220 (Rivas, L., Chapter 398, Statutes of 2021) renames the Housing Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC), the Cal ICH, and makes changes to the membership of the Council, as provided.

AB 83 (Committee on Budget, Chapter 15, Statutes of 2020), among other things, provided 300 million in grant funding for a Round Two of HHAP program funding.

AB 1845 (Luz Rivas, 2020) would have created the Governor's Office to End Homelessness under the Direction of the Secretary of Homelessness and would have moved the HCFC from the Business Consumer Services and Housing Agency into the Governor's Office to End Homelessness. This bill was vetoed by the Governor.

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

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee, the Cal ICH estimates minor and absorbable costs for state operations.

Unknown, potential ongoing costs to cities and counties for administration. Cost to cities and counties would be potentially reimbursable by the state, subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/29/25)

None received

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/29/25)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 79-0, 6/2/25

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

Prepared by: Naima Ford Antal / HUMAN S. / (916) 651-1524
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