
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
Senator Aisha Wahab, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular

Bill No:	SB 814	Hearing Date:	4/29/25
Author:	Rubio		
Version:	2/21/2025	Introduced	
Urgency:	No	Fiscal:	Yes
Consultant:	Alison Hughes		

SUBJECT: Homelessness

DIGEST: This bill requires the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH) to annually evaluate its goals relating to domestic violence survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Defines “Housing First” as the evidence-based model that uses housing as a tool, rather than a reward, for recovery and that centers on providing or connecting homeless people to permanent housing as quickly as possible. Housing First providers offer services as needed and requested on a voluntary basis and that do not make housing contingent on participation in services.
- 2) Establishes Cal-ICH to coordinate the State’s response to homelessness using Housing First practices with a number of goals including, but not limited to:
 - a) Creating partnerships among state agencies and departments;
 - b) Promoting systems integration to increase efficiency and effectiveness;
 - c) Coordinating existing funding and application for competitive funding.
- 3) Requires Cal-ICH to, among other things, set specific, measurable goals aimed at preventing and ending homelessness among domestic violence survivors and their children, and among unaccompanied women in the state, as follows:
 - a) Requires these goals to include but not be limited to decreasing the rate, duration, and frequency of homelessness among domestic violence survivors and their children and unaccompanied women, as well as decreasing barriers

- to services through cross-systems partnerships to expedite access to specified services.
- b) Requires Cal-ICH to define outcome measures and gather data related to the goals.
 - c) Requires Cal-ICH, when funding is available, to provide technical assistance to cities, counties, and continuums of care to support the development of local programs and plans to address the needs of domestic violence survivors and their children and unaccompanied women. Also requires Cal-ICH to work with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to provide this assistance.
- 4) Requires Cal-ICH to establish initial goals by January 1, 2025, and evaluate these goals at least every two years to determine whether updated goals are needed.

This bill requires Cal-ICH to evaluate its goals to prevent and end homelessness among domestic violence survivors and their children, as well as among unaccompanied women, every year instead of every two years.

Background

Cal-ICH. Cal-ICF Formerly known as the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC) was created to oversee the implementation of “Housing First” policies, guidelines, and regulations to reduce the prevalence and duration of homelessness in California. Housing First is an evidence-based model that focuses on the idea that homeless individuals should be provided shelter and stability before underlying issues can be successfully addressed. Housing First utilizes a tenant screening process that promotes accepting applicants regardless of their sobriety, use of substances or participation in services. As the state’s homelessness crisis has worsened, the role of Cal-ICH has significantly increased, as it has been charged with administering two significant programs dedicated to addressing homelessness, the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) and the Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAPP).

Comments

- 1) *Author statement.* “Domestic violence is one of the leading drivers of homelessness for women, and unaccompanied women experiencing homelessness wait on average more than 10 years to access stable housing, a rate twice that of men. Despite making up a significant portion of the homeless population, our state’s homelessness response does not appropriately consider the needs of these two intersecting groups. As noted in a 2021 report from the

Little Hoover Commission, there is “difficulty in getting leaders at all levels of government to understand the intersection of domestic violence and homelessness and how widespread of a problem it is. I authored SB 914 in 2022 to address this issue and keep California at the forefront of innovative responses to homelessness and domestic violence by ensuring that data about these populations and the work of relevant service providers is incorporated into local homelessness planning. SB 914 also required the California Interagency Council on Homelessness to set and measure goals to prevent and end homelessness for domestic violence survivors and their children, and to evaluate those goals at least every two years. But as the state continues to confront challenges effectively serving domestic violence survivors experiencing homelessness, it is critical that the Council evaluate those goals at least annually.”

- 2) *Homelessness in California.* Based on the 2023 point in time count, California has the largest homeless population in the nation with 181,399 people experiencing homelessness on any given night, of which 113,660 are unsheltered, meaning they are living outdoors and not in temporary shelters. Nearly half of all unsheltered people in the country were in California during the 2023 count. The homelessness crisis is driven in large part by the lack of affordable rental housing for lower income people. In the current market, 2.2 million extremely low-income and very low-income renter households are competing for 664,000 affordable rental units. Of the six million renter households in the state, 1.7 million are paying more than 50% of their income toward rent. The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that the state needs an additional 1.5 million housing units affordable to very-low income Californians.
- 3) *Homelessness, Domestic Violence, and Unaccompanied Women.* In its 2025 action plan, Cal-ICH notes that 22% of individuals accessing homeless services in 2023 reported having experienced domestic violence.¹ Nationally, on just one day in 2020, 5,591 survivors received services, and there were 984 unmet requests for services; 65% of these unmet requests were for housing or emergency shelter.² The need for safe housing and the economic resources to maintain safe housing are two of the most pressing concerns among abused women who are planning to or have recently left the person causing that harm.³

¹ Cal-ICH, Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California, December 2024, [Cal ICH Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness](#).

² National Network to End Domestic Violence (2021). 15th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Report. Washington, DC. Retrieved from: <https://nnedv.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/15th-Annual-DV-Counts-Report-California-Summary.pdf>

³ Clough, A., Draughon, J. E., Njie-Carr, V., Rollins, C., & Glass, N. (2014). “Having housing made everything else possible”: Affordable, safe and stable housing for women survivors of violence. *Qualitative Social Work*, 13(5), 671-688.

- 4) *The HELP Act*. To help address concerns about unhoused victims of domestic violence, legislation was passed two years ago (SB 914, Rubio, Chapter 665, 2022) to establish the Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations (HELP) Act. The HELP Act, among other things, required Cal-ICH, by January 1, 2025, to establish initial goals to prevent and end homelessness among domestic violence survivors and their children, and unaccompanied women, as specified, and to evaluate these goals at least every two years to determine whether updates or needed. It is unclear whether these initial goals have been established. This bill would increase the evaluation of the goals to every year.
- 5) *Double referral*. This bill was heard by the Committee on Human Services on April 7th, which passed it 5-0.

Related/Prior Legislation

SB 914 (Rubio, 665, Statutes of 2022) – enacts the Homeless Equity for Left Behind Populations (HELP) Act, which requires cities, counties, and CoCs receiving state funding, on or after January 1, 2024, to take specific actions to address the needs of domestic violence survivors and unaccompanied women, as specified. Also requires Cal-ICH, by January 1, 2025, to establish initial goals to prevent and end homelessness among domestic violence survivors, their children, and unaccompanied women, as specified, and to evaluate these goals at least every two years to determine whether updates are needed.

SB 914 (Rubio, 2021) – would have established “unaccompanied women” as a sub-population of the state’s homelessness population and required the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council to set goals to prevent and end homelessness among unaccompanied women in the state. *This bill was held in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.*

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

POSITIONS: (Communicated to the committee before noon on Wednesday, April 23, 2025.)

SUPPORT:

California Partnership to End Domestic Violence
Downtown Women’s Center

OPPOSITION:

None received

-- END --