

AN ACT

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IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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To amend the Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005 to define the term “private room” and to clarify the rights of homeless families to access shelter services.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this act may be cited as the “Dignity for Homeless Families Amendment Act of 2014”.

Sec. 2. The Homeless Services Reform Act of 2005, effective October 22, 2005 (D.C. Law 16-35; D.C. Official Code § 4-751.01 *et seq.*), is amended as follows:

(a) Section 2 (D.C. Official Code § 4-751.01) is amended by adding a new paragraph (28A) to read as follows:

“(28A) “Private room” means a part or division of a building that has:

“(A) Four non-portable walls that meet the ceiling and floor at the edges so as to be continuous and uninterrupted; provided, that the room may contain a window if the window is capable of shutting and comes with an opaque covering such as blinds or shades;

“(B) A door that locks from both the inside and outside as its main point of access;

“(C) Sufficient insulation from sound so that family members sheltered in the room may have a conversation at a normal conversational volume and not be heard from the exterior;

“(D) Lighting within the room that the occupants can turn on or off as desired; and

“(E) Access to on-site hot shower facilities.”.

(b) Subsection 7(d) (D.C. Official Code § 4-753.01(d)) is amended by adding a new paragraph (3) to read as follows:

“(3) This subsection shall be applicable to all forms of shelter provided to families.”.

(c) Section 9 (D.C. Official Code § 4-754.11) is amended as follows:

(1) The existing text is designated as subsection (a).

(2) The newly designated subsection (a) is amended by striking the phrase “Clients served within the Continuum of Care” and inserting the phrase “All clients served within the Continuum of Care” in its place.

(3) A new subsection (b) is added to read as follows:

“(b) Families placed in shelter shall have the right to:

“(1) Be placed in apartment-style shelters or in shelters that are private rooms pursuant to section 7(d)(2);

“(2) Access to the assigned shelter unit 24 hours a day, 7 days a week;

“(3) Maintain their belongings in the assigned shelter unit; and

“(4) Continuous shelter each night without any requirement to reapply unless terminated, suspended, or transferred pursuant to sections 20 through 24.”.

(d) Section 28(a) (D.C. Official Code § 4-755.01(a) is amended by striking the phrase “as authorized by section 9(5)” and inserting the phrase “, which shall meet the requirements of this act” in its place.

**Sec. 3. Applicability.**

This act shall take apply upon the inclusion of its fiscal effect in an approved budget and financial plan, as certified by the Chief Financial Officer to the Budget Director of the Council in a certification published by the Council in the District of Columbia Register.

**Sec. 4. Fiscal impact statement.**

The Council adopts the fiscal impact statement in the committee report as the fiscal impact statement required by section 602(c)(3) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(3)).

**Sec. 5. Effective date.**

This act shall take effect following approval by the Mayor (or in the event of veto by the Mayor, action by the Council to override the veto), a 30-day period of congressional review as provided in section 602(c)(1) of the District of Columbia Home Rule Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 813; D.C. Official Code § 1-206.02(c)(1)), and publication in the District of Columbia Register.

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Chairman  
Council of the District of Columbia

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Mayor  
District of Columbia