

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to homelessness; amending s. 420.621,
3 F.S.; revising and providing definitions; amending s.
4 420.622, F.S.; increasing the number of members on the
5 Council on Homelessness; revising the duties of the
6 State Office on Homelessness; revising requirements
7 for the state's system of homeless programs; requiring
8 entities that receive state funding to provide summary
9 aggregated data to the council; revising the
10 qualifications for and amount of grant awards to
11 continuum of care lead agencies; requiring continuum
12 of care lead agencies to submit a report to the
13 Department of Children and Families; increasing the
14 minimum number of years for which projects must
15 reserve certain units for the homeless; authorizing,
16 rather than requiring, the Department of Children and
17 Families to adopt certain rules; authorizing the
18 office to administer certain money; creating s.
19 420.6225, F.S.; specifying the purpose of a continuum
20 of care; requiring each continuum of care to designate
21 a collaborative applicant; providing requirements for
22 such applicants; authorizing such applicants to be
23 referred to as continuum of care lead agencies;
24 providing requirements for continuum of care catchment
25 areas and lead agencies; requiring continuums of care

26 to create continuum of care plans; specifying
27 requirements for such plans; requiring continuums of
28 care to promote participation by all interested
29 individuals and organizations; creating s. 420.6227,
30 F.S.; providing legislative findings and program
31 purpose; establishing a grant-in-aid program to help
32 continuums of care prevent and end homelessness;
33 providing requirements for such program; repealing s.
34 420.623, F.S., relating to local coalitions for the
35 homeless; repealing s. 420.624, F.S., relating to
36 local homeless assistance continuum of care; repealing
37 s. 420.625, F.S., relating to a grant-in-aid program;
38 amending s. 420.626, F.S.; revising procedures for
39 certain facilities and institutions to implement when
40 discharging specified persons to reduce homelessness;
41 amending s. 420.6265, F.S.; revising the Rapid
42 ReHousing methodology; amending s. 420.6275, F.S.;
43 revising the Housing First methodology; amending s.
44 420.507, F.S.; conforming cross-references; providing
45 an effective date.

46
47 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

48
49 Section 1. Section 420.621, Florida Statutes, is amended
50 to read:

51 420.621 Definitions.—As used in ss. 420.621-420.628, the
 52 term:

53 (1) "Continuum of care" means a group organized to carry
 54 out the responsibilities imposed under ss. 420.621-420.628 to
 55 coordinate, plan, and pursue ending homelessness in a designated
 56 catchment area. Such a group shall be composed of
 57 representatives from certain organizations, including, but not
 58 limited to, nonprofit homeless providers, victim service
 59 providers, faith-based organizations, governments, businesses,
 60 advocates, public housing agencies, school districts, social
 61 service providers, mental health agencies, hospitals,
 62 universities, affordable housing developers, law enforcement,
 63 organizations that serve homeless and formerly homeless
 64 veterans, and organizations that serve homeless and formerly
 65 homeless persons, to the extent that these organizations are
 66 represented within the designated catchment area and are
 67 available to participate ~~the community components needed to~~
 68 ~~organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific~~
 69 ~~needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing~~
 70 ~~and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end~~
 71 ~~homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.~~

72 (2) "Continuum of care lead agency" or "continuum of care
 73 collaborative applicant" means the organization designated by a
 74 continuum of care under s. 420.6225.

75 (3) ~~(2)~~ "Council on Homelessness" means the council created

76 in s. 420.622.

77 (4)~~(3)~~ "Department" means the Department of Children and
78 Families.

79 ~~(4) "District" means a service district of the department,~~
80 ~~as set forth in s. 20.19.~~

81 (5) "Homeless," means:

82 (a) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular,
83 and adequate nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in
84 24 C.F.R. 578.3; or

85 (b) An individual or family who will imminently lose their
86 primary nighttime residence as defined under "homeless" in 24
87 C.F.R. 578.3.~~applied to an individual, or "individual~~
88 ~~experiencing homelessness" means an individual who lacks a~~
89 ~~fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes an~~
90 ~~individual who:~~

91 ~~(a) Is sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of~~
92 ~~housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;~~

93 ~~(b) Is living in a motel, hotel, travel trailer park, or~~
94 ~~camping ground due to a lack of alternative adequate~~
95 ~~accommodations;~~

96 ~~(c) Is living in an emergency or transitional shelter;~~

97 ~~(d) Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or~~
98 ~~private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular~~
99 ~~sleeping accommodation for human beings;~~

100 ~~(e) Is living in a car, park, public space, abandoned~~

101 ~~building, bus or train station, or similar setting; or~~

102 ~~(f) Is a migratory individual who qualifies as homeless~~
103 ~~because he or she is living in circumstances described in~~
104 ~~paragraphs (a) - (e).~~

105
106 ~~The terms do not refer to an individual imprisoned pursuant to~~
107 ~~state or federal law or to individuals or families who are~~
108 ~~sharing housing due to cultural preferences, voluntary~~
109 ~~arrangements, or traditional networks of support. The terms~~
110 ~~include an individual who has been released from jail, prison,~~
111 ~~the juvenile justice system, the child welfare system, a mental~~
112 ~~health and developmental disability facility, a residential~~
113 ~~addiction treatment program, or a hospital, for whom no~~
114 ~~subsequent residence has been identified, and who lacks the~~
115 ~~resources and support network to obtain housing.~~

116 ~~(6) "Local coalition for the homeless" means a coalition~~
117 ~~established pursuant to s. 420.623.~~

118 ~~(7) "New and temporary homeless" means individuals or~~
119 ~~families who are homeless due to societal factors.~~

120 (6)(8) "State Office on Homelessness" means the state
121 office created in s. 420.622.

122 Section 2. Section 420.622, Florida Statutes, is amended
123 to read:

124 420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on
125 Homelessness.—

126 (1) The State Office on Homelessness is created within the
 127 Department of Children and Families to provide interagency,
 128 council, and other related coordination on issues relating to
 129 homelessness.

130 (2) The Council on Homelessness is created to consist of
 131 19 ~~17~~ representatives of public and private agencies who shall
 132 develop policy and advise the State Office on Homelessness. The
 133 council members shall be: the Secretary of Children and
 134 Families, or his or her designee; the executive director of the
 135 Department of Economic Opportunity, or his or her designee, who
 136 shall advise the council on issues related to rural development;
 137 the State Surgeon General, or his or her designee; the Executive
 138 Director of Veterans' Affairs, or his or her designee; the
 139 Secretary of Corrections, or his or her designee; the Secretary
 140 of Health Care Administration, or his or her designee; the
 141 Commissioner of Education, or his or her designee; the Director
 142 of CareerSource Florida, Inc., or his or her designee; one
 143 representative of the Florida Association of Counties; one
 144 representative of the Florida League of Cities; one
 145 representative of the Florida Supportive Housing Coalition; one
 146 representative of the Florida Housing Coalition; the Executive
 147 Director of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, or his or
 148 her designee; one representative of the Florida Coalition for
 149 the Homeless; the Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs,
 150 or his or her designee; and four members appointed by the

151 Governor. The council members shall be nonpaid volunteers and
152 shall be reimbursed only for travel expenses. The appointed
153 members of the council shall be appointed to staggered 2-year
154 terms, and are encouraged to have experience in the
155 administration or provision of resources, services, or housing
156 that addresses the needs of persons experiencing homelessness.

157 The council shall meet at least four times per year. The
158 importance of minority, gender, and geographic representation
159 shall be considered in appointing members to the council.

160 (3) The State Office on Homelessness, pursuant to the
161 policies set by the council and subject to the availability of
162 funding, shall:

163 (a) Coordinate among state, local, and private agencies
164 and providers to produce a statewide consolidated inventory for
165 the state's entire system of homeless programs which
166 incorporates local continuum of care plans ~~regionally developed~~
167 ~~plans~~. Such programs include, but are not limited to:

168 1. Programs authorized under the McKinney-Vento Homeless
169 Assistance ~~Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance~~ Act of 1987,
170 as amended by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid
171 Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009, 42 U.S.C. ss. 11302
172 ss. 11371 et seq., and carried out under funds awarded to this
173 state; and

174 2. Programs, components thereof, or activities that assist
175 persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.

176 (b) Collect, maintain, and make available information
177 concerning persons who are homeless ~~or at risk for homelessness,~~
178 including summary demographics information drawn from the local
179 continuum of care Homeless Management Information System or the
180 annual Point-in-Time Count, and the local continuum of care
181 Housing Inventory Chart required by the United States Department
182 of Housing and Urban Development ~~current services and resources~~
183 ~~available, the cost and availability of services and programs,~~
184 ~~and the met and unmet needs of this population.~~ All entities
185 that receive state funding must provide summary aggregated
186 ~~access to all data they maintain in summary form,~~ with no
187 individual identifying information, to assist the council in
188 providing this information. The State Office on Homelessness, in
189 consultation with the designated lead agencies for a ~~local~~
190 ~~homeless~~ continuum of care and with the Council on Homelessness,
191 shall develop a process by which summary data is collected ~~the~~
192 ~~system and process of data collection~~ from all continuum of care
193 lead agencies for the purpose of analyzing trends and assessing
194 impacts in the ~~statewide homeless delivery~~ system for delivering
195 services to the homeless. ~~Any statewide homelessness survey and~~
196 ~~database system must comply with all state and federal statutory~~
197 ~~and regulatory confidentiality requirements.~~

198 (c) Annually evaluate state and continuum of care system
199 programs ~~local services and resources~~ and develop a consolidated
200 plan for addressing the needs of the homeless or those at risk

201 for homelessness.

202 (d) Explore, compile, and disseminate information
203 regarding public and private funding sources for state and local
204 programs serving the homeless and provide technical assistance
205 in applying for such funding.

206 (e) Monitor and provide recommendations for coordinating
207 the activities and programs of continuums of care ~~local~~
208 ~~coalitions for the homeless~~ and promote the effectiveness of
209 programs to prevent and end homelessness in the state ~~addressing~~
210 ~~the needs of the homeless~~.

211 (f) Provide technical assistance to facilitate efforts to
212 support and strengthen ~~establish, maintain, and expand local~~
213 ~~homeless assistance~~ continuums of care.

214 (g) Develop and assist in the coordination of policies and
215 procedures relating to the discharge or transfer from the care
216 or custody of state-supported or state-regulated entities
217 persons who are homeless or at risk for homelessness.

218 (h) Spearhead outreach efforts for maximizing access by
219 people who are homeless or at risk for homelessness to state and
220 federal programs and resources.

221 (i) Promote a federal policy agenda that is responsive to
222 the needs of those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
223 ~~the homeless population~~ in this state.

224 (j) Review reports on continuum of care system performance
225 measures and ~~Develop outcome and accountability measures and~~

226 ~~promote and~~ use such measures to evaluate program effectiveness
 227 and make recommendations for improving current practices to work
 228 toward ending homelessness in this state ~~in order to best meet~~
 229 ~~the needs of the homeless.~~

230 (k) Formulate policies and legislative proposals aimed at
 231 preventing and ending homelessness in this state ~~to address more~~
 232 ~~effectively the needs of the homeless~~ and coordinate the
 233 implementation of state and federal legislative policies.

234 (l) Convene meetings and workshops of state and local
 235 agencies, continuums of care ~~local coalitions and programs~~, and
 236 other stakeholders for the purpose of developing and reviewing
 237 policies, services, activities, coordination, and funding of
 238 efforts to end homelessness ~~meet the needs of the homeless.~~

239 (m) With the input of the continuums of care, conduct or
 240 promote research on the effectiveness of current programs and
 241 propose pilot projects aimed at ending homelessness ~~improving~~
 242 ~~services.~~

243 (n) Serve as an advocate for issues relating to
 244 homelessness.

245 (o) Investigate ways to improve access to participation in
 246 state funding and other programs for the prevention and
 247 reduction ~~alleviation~~ of homelessness to faith-based
 248 organizations and collaborate and coordinate with faith-based
 249 organizations.

250 (4) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~

251 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ shall accept and administer
252 moneys appropriated to it to provide annual "challenge grants"
253 to lead agencies of ~~homeless assistance~~ continuums of care
254 designated by the State Office on Homelessness under ~~pursuant to~~
255 s. 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~. The department shall establish varying
256 levels of grant awards up to \$750,000 ~~\$500,000~~ per continuum of
257 care lead agency. The department, in consultation with the
258 Council on Homelessness, shall specify a grant award level in
259 the notice of the solicitation of grant applications.

260 (a) To qualify for the grant, a continuum of care lead
261 agency must develop and implement a local ~~homeless assistance~~
262 continuum of care plan for its designated catchment area. The
263 services and housing funded through the grant must be
264 implemented through the continuum of care's ~~care plan must~~
265 ~~implement a~~ coordinated entry assessment or central intake
266 system as provided in s. 420.6225(5)(b) and must be designed to
267 ~~screen,~~ ~~assess,~~ and refer persons seeking assistance to the
268 appropriate housing intervention and service provider. The
269 continuum of care lead agency shall also document the commitment
270 of local government or private organizations to provide matching
271 funds or in-kind support in an amount equal to 25 percent of the
272 grant requested. Expenditures of leveraged funds or resources,
273 including third-party cash or in-kind contributions, are
274 authorized only for eligible activities carried out in
275 connection with a ~~committed on one~~ project in which such funds

276 or resources have not been used as leverage or match for any
277 other project or program. The expenditures ~~and~~ must be certified
278 through a written commitment.

279 (b) Preference must be given to those continuum of care
280 lead agencies that have demonstrated the ability of their
281 continuum of care to help households move out of homelessness
282 ~~provide quality services to homeless persons and the ability to~~
283 ~~leverage federal homeless assistance funding under the Stewart~~
284 ~~B. McKinney Act with local government funding or private funding~~
285 ~~for the provision of services to homeless persons.~~

286 ~~(c) Preference must be given to lead agencies in catchment~~
287 ~~areas with the greatest need for the provision of housing and~~
288 ~~services to the homeless, relative to the population of the~~
289 ~~catchment area.~~

290 (c)(d) The grant may be used to fund any of the housing,
291 program, or service needs included in the local ~~homeless~~
292 ~~assistance~~ continuum of care plan. The continuum of care lead
293 agency may allocate the grant to programs, services, or housing
294 providers that implement the local ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum
295 of care plan. The continuum of care lead agency may provide
296 subgrants to a local agency to implement programs or services or
297 provide housing identified for funding in the continuum of care
298 lead agency's application to the department. A continuum of care
299 lead agency may spend a maximum of 10 & percent of its funding
300 on administrative costs.

301 ~~(d)(e)~~ The continuum of care lead agency shall submit a
302 final report to the department documenting the outcomes achieved
303 by the grant-funded programs ~~grant~~ in enabling persons who are
304 homeless to return to permanent housing, thereby ending such
305 person's episode of homelessness.

306 (5) The State Office on Homelessness, ~~with the concurrence~~
307 ~~of the Council on Homelessness,~~ may administer moneys given
308 ~~appropriated~~ to it to provide homeless housing assistance grants
309 annually to continuum of care lead agencies ~~for local homeless~~
310 ~~assistance continuum of care,~~ as recognized by the State Office
311 on Homelessness, to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate
312 ~~transitional or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.
313 These moneys shall consist of any sums that the state may
314 appropriate, as well as money received from donations, gifts,
315 bequests, or ~~otherwise from~~ any other public or private source,
316 which are intended to acquire, construct, or rehabilitate
317 ~~transitional or~~ permanent housing units for homeless persons.

318 (a) Grant applicants shall be ranked competitively based
319 on criteria that include, but are not limited to, all of the
320 following:

321 1. The ability of the continuum of care to provide quality
322 services.

323 2. The ability of the continuum of care to leverage
324 federal homeless assistance and private funding.

325 3. The extent of the need for providing housing and

326 services to individuals experiencing homelessness in a continuum
327 of care's planning areas relative to the population of the
328 counties served.

329 4. The effectiveness of the continuum of care in keeping
330 families housed ~~Preference must be given to applicants who~~
331 ~~leverage additional private funds and public funds, particularly~~
332 ~~federal funds designated for the acquisition, construction, or~~
333 ~~rehabilitation of transitional or permanent housing for homeless~~
334 ~~persons; who acquire, build, or rehabilitate the greatest number~~
335 ~~of units; or who acquire, build, or rehabilitate in catchment~~
336 ~~areas having the greatest need for housing for the homeless~~
337 ~~relative to the population of the catchment area.~~

338 (b) Funding for any particular project may not exceed
339 \$750,000.

340 (c) Projects must reserve, for a minimum of 20 ~~10~~ years,
341 the number of units acquired, constructed, or rehabilitated
342 through homeless housing assistance grant funding to serve
343 persons who are homeless at the time they assume tenancy.

344 (d) No more than two grants may be awarded annually in any
345 given ~~local homeless assistance~~ continuum of care catchment
346 area.

347 (e) A project may not be funded which is not included in
348 the local ~~homeless assistance~~ continuum of care plan, as
349 recognized by the State Office on Homelessness, for the
350 catchment area in which the project is located.

351 (f) The maximum percentage of funds that the State Office
352 on Homelessness and each applicant may spend on administrative
353 costs is 10 ~~5~~ percent.

354 (6) The State Office on Homelessness, in conjunction with
355 the Council on Homelessness, shall establish performance
356 measures related to state funding provided through the State
357 Office on Homelessness and use those grant-related measures to
358 ~~and specific objectives by which it may~~ evaluate the performance
359 and outcomes of continuum of care lead agencies that receive
360 state grant funds. ~~Challenge Grants made through the State~~
361 ~~Office on Homelessness shall be distributed to lead agencies~~
362 ~~based on their overall performance and their achievement of~~
363 ~~specified objectives. Each lead agency for which grants are made~~
364 ~~under this section shall provide the State Office on~~
365 ~~Homelessness a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the~~
366 ~~program in achieving its stated purpose. In evaluating the~~
367 ~~performance of the lead agencies, the State Office on~~
368 ~~Homelessness shall base its criteria upon the program~~
369 ~~objectives, goals, and priorities that were set forth by the~~
370 ~~lead agencies in their proposals for funding. Such criteria may~~
371 ~~include, but are not limited to, the number of persons or~~
372 ~~households that are no longer homeless, the rate of recidivism~~
373 ~~to homelessness, and the number of persons who obtain gainful~~
374 ~~employment.~~

375 (7) The State Office on Homelessness must monitor the

376 challenge grants and homeless housing assistance grants to
 377 ensure proper expenditure of funds and compliance with the
 378 conditions of the applicant's contract.

379 (8) The Department of Children and Families, with input
 380 from the Council on Homelessness, may ~~must~~ adopt rules relating
 381 to the challenge grants and the homeless housing assistance
 382 grants and related issues consistent with the purposes of this
 383 section.

384 (9) The Council on Homelessness ~~council~~ shall, by June 30
 385 of each year, provide to the Governor, the Legislature, and the
 386 Secretary of Children and Families a report summarizing the
 387 extent of homelessness in the state and the council's
 388 recommendations for ending ~~reducing~~ homelessness in this state.

389 (10) The State Office on Homelessness may administer
 390 moneys appropriated to it for distribution among the continuum
 391 of care lead agencies and entities funded in the 2018-2019 state
 392 fiscal year which are designated by the office as local
 393 coalitions for the homeless ~~28 local homeless continuums of care~~
 394 ~~designated by the Department of Children and Families.~~

395 Section 3. Section 420.6225, Florida Statutes, is created
 396 to read:

397 420.6225 Continuum of care.—

398 (1) The purpose of a continuum of care, as defined in s.
 399 420.621, is to coordinate community efforts to prevent and end
 400 homelessness in its catchment area designated as provided in

401 subsection (3) and to fulfill the responsibilities set forth in
402 this chapter.

403 (2) Under the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, each continuum
404 of care is required to designate a collaborative applicant that
405 is responsible for submitting the continuum of care funding
406 application for the designated catchment area to the United
407 States Department of Housing and Urban Development. The
408 designated continuum of care collaborative applicant shall serve
409 as the point of contact for the State Office on Homelessness, is
410 accountable for representations made in the application, and, in
411 carrying out responsibilities under this chapter, may be
412 referred to as the continuum of care lead agency.

413 (3) Continuum of care catchment areas must be designated
414 and revised as necessary by the State Office on Homelessness and
415 must be consistent with the continuum of care catchment areas
416 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban
417 Development for the purposes of awarding federal homeless
418 assistance funding for continuum of care programs.

419 (4) The State Office on Homelessness shall recognize only
420 one continuum of care lead agency for each designated catchment
421 area. Such continuum of care lead agency must be consistent with
422 the designated continuum of care collaborative applicant
423 recognized by the United States Department of Housing and Urban
424 Development in the awarding of federal funds to continuums of
425 care.

426 (5) Each continuum of care shall create a continuum of
427 care plan, the purpose of which is to implement an effective and
428 efficient housing crisis response system to prevent and end
429 homelessness in the continuum of care catchment area. A
430 continuum of care plan must include all of the following
431 components:

432 (a) Outreach to unsheltered individuals and families to
433 link them with appropriate housing interventions.

434 (b) A coordinated entry system, compliant with the
435 requirements of the federal HEARTH Act of 2009, which is
436 designed to coordinate intake, utilize common assessment tools,
437 prioritize households for housing interventions, and refer
438 households to the appropriate housing intervention.

439 (c) Emergency shelter, designed to provide safe temporary
440 shelter while the household is in the process of obtaining
441 permanent housing.

442 (d) Supportive services, designed to maximize housing
443 stability once the household is in permanent housing.

444 (e) Permanent supportive housing, designed to provide
445 long-term affordable housing and support services to persons
446 with disabilities who are moving out of homelessness.

447 (f) Rapid ReHousing, as specified in s. 420.6265.

448 (g) Permanent housing, including links to affordable
449 housing, subsidized housing, long-term rental assistance,
450 housing vouchers, and mainstream private sector housing.

451 (h) An ongoing planning mechanism to end homelessness for
452 all subpopulations of persons experiencing homelessness.

453 (6) Continuums of care must promote participation by all
454 interested individuals and organizations and may not exclude
455 individuals and organizations on the basis of race, color,
456 national origin, sex, handicap, familial status, or religion.
457 Faith-based organizations, local governments, and persons who
458 have experienced homelessness are encouraged to participate. To
459 the extent possible, these individuals and organizations must be
460 coordinated and integrated with other mainstream health, social
461 services, and employment programs for which homeless populations
462 may be eligible, including, but not limited to, Medicaid, the
463 state Children's Health Insurance Program, the Temporary
464 Assistance for Needy Families Program, the Food Assistance
465 Program, and services funded through the Mental Health and
466 Substance Abuse Block Grant, the Workforce Innovation and
467 Opportunity Act, and the welfare-to-work grant program.

468 Section 4. Section 420.6227, Florida Statutes, is created
469 to read:

470 420.6227 Grant-in-aid program.—

471 (1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—The Legislature finds and
472 declares that many services for households experiencing
473 homelessness have been provided by local communities through
474 voluntary private agencies and religious organizations and that
475 those resources have not been sufficient to prevent and end

476 homelessness in the state. The Legislature recognizes that the
477 level of need and types of problems associated with homelessness
478 may vary from community to community, due to the diversity and
479 geographic distribution of the homeless population and the
480 resulting differing needs of particular communities.

481 (2) PURPOSE.—The principal purpose of the grant-in-aid
482 program is to provide needed assistance to continuums of care to
483 enable them to do all of the following:

484 (a) Assist persons in their communities who have become,
485 or may likely become, homeless.

486 (b) Help homeless households move to permanent housing as
487 quickly as possible.

488 (3) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a grant-in-aid
489 program to help continuums of care prevent and end homelessness,
490 which may include any aspect of the local continuum of care
491 plan, as described in 420.6225.

492 (4) APPLICATION PROCEDURE.—Continuums of care that intend
493 to apply for the grant-in-aid program must submit an application
494 for grant-in-aid funds to the State Office on Homelessness for
495 review.

496 (5) SPENDING PLANS.—The State Office on Homelessness shall
497 develop guidelines for the development, evaluation, and approval
498 of spending plans that are created by local continuum of care
499 lead agencies.

500 (6) ALLOCATION OF GRANT FUNDS.—The State Office on

501 Homelessness shall administer grant-in-aid funds for continuums
 502 of care, which must be awarded on a competitive basis.

503 (7) DISTRIBUTION TO LOCAL AGENCIES.—The State Office on
 504 Homelessness shall distribute funds awarded under subsection (6)
 505 to local agencies to fund programs that are required by the
 506 local continuum of care plan, as described in s. 420.6225 and
 507 provided in subsection (3), based upon the recommendations of
 508 the local continuum of care lead agencies, in accordance with
 509 spending plans that are developed by the lead agencies and
 510 approved by the office. Not more than 10 percent of the total
 511 state funds awarded under a spending plan may be used by the
 512 continuum of care lead agency for staffing and administrative
 513 expenditures.

514 (8) LOCAL MATCHING FUNDS.—If an entity contracts with
 515 local agencies to provide services and receives financial
 516 assistance obtained under this section, the entity must provide
 517 at least 25 percent of the funding necessary for the support of
 518 project operations. In-kind contributions, including, but not
 519 limited to, materials, commodities, transportation, office
 520 space, other types of facilities, or personal services may be
 521 evaluated and counted as part or all of the required local
 522 funding, at the discretion of the State Office on Homelessness.

523 Section 5. Section 420.623, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

524 Section 6. Section 420.624, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

525 Section 7. Section 420.625, Florida Statutes, is repealed.

526 Section 8. Subsection (3) of section 420.626, Florida
 527 Statutes, is amended, and subsection (2) of that section is
 528 republished, to read:

529 420.626 Homelessness; discharge guidelines.—

530 (2) The following facilities and institutions are
 531 encouraged to develop and implement procedures designed to
 532 reduce the discharge of persons into homelessness when such
 533 persons are admitted or housed for more than 24 hours at such
 534 facilities or institutions: hospitals and inpatient medical
 535 facilities; crisis stabilization units; residential treatment
 536 facilities; assisted living facilities; and detoxification
 537 centers.

538 (3) The procedures should include all of the following:

539 (a) Development and implementation of a screening process
 540 or other mechanism for identifying persons to be discharged from
 541 the facility or institution who are at considerable risk for
 542 homelessness or face some imminent threat to health and safety
 543 upon discharge.†

544 (b) Development and implementation of a discharge plan
 545 addressing how identified persons will secure housing and other
 546 needed care and support upon discharge.†

547 (c) Communication with ~~Assessment of the capabilities of~~
 548 the entities to whom identified persons may potentially be
 549 discharged to determine their capability to serve such persons
 550 and their acceptance of such persons into their programs, and

551 selection of the entity determined to be best equipped to
 552 provide or facilitate the provision of suitable care and
 553 support.~~†~~

554 (d) Coordination of effort and sharing of information with
 555 entities that are expected to bear the responsibility for
 556 providing care or support to identified persons upon discharge.~~†~~
 557 and

558 (e) Provision of sufficient medication, medical equipment
 559 and supplies, clothing, transportation, and other basic
 560 resources necessary to ensure ~~assure~~ that the health and well-
 561 being of identified persons are not jeopardized upon their
 562 discharge.

563 Section 9. Section 420.6265, Florida Statutes, is amended
 564 to read:

565 420.6265 Rapid ReHousing.—

566 ~~(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—~~

567 ~~(a) The Legislature finds that Rapid ReHousing is a~~
 568 ~~strategy of using temporary financial assistance and case~~
 569 ~~management to quickly move an individual or family out of~~
 570 ~~homelessness and into permanent housing.~~

571 ~~(b) The Legislature also finds that public and private~~
 572 ~~solutions to homelessness in the past have focused on providing~~
 573 ~~individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness with~~
 574 ~~emergency shelter, transitional housing, or a combination of~~
 575 ~~both. While emergency shelter and transitional housing programs~~

576 ~~may provide critical access to services for individuals and~~
577 ~~families in crisis, the programs often fail to address their~~
578 ~~long-term needs.~~

579 ~~(c) The Legislature further finds that most households~~
580 ~~become homeless as a result of a financial crisis that prevents~~
581 ~~individuals and families from paying rent or a domestic conflict~~
582 ~~that results in one member being ejected or leaving without~~
583 ~~resources or a plan for housing.~~

584 ~~(d) The Legislature further finds that Rapid ReHousing is~~
585 ~~an alternative approach to the current system of emergency~~
586 ~~shelter or transitional housing which tends to reduce the length~~
587 ~~of time a person is homeless and has proven to be cost~~
588 ~~effective.~~

589 ~~(e) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to~~
590 ~~encourage homeless continuums of care to adopt the Rapid~~
591 ~~ReHousing approach to preventing homelessness for individuals~~
592 ~~and families who do not require the intense level of supports~~
593 ~~provided in the permanent supportive housing model.~~

594 ~~(2) RAPID REHOUSING METHODOLOGY.—~~

595 (1)(a) The Rapid ReHousing response to homelessness
596 differs from traditional approaches to addressing homelessness
597 by focusing on each individual's or family's barriers to
598 housing. By using this approach, communities can significantly
599 reduce the amount of time that individuals and families are
600 homeless and prevent further episodes of homelessness.

601 (2)~~(b)~~ In Rapid ReHousing, when an individual or a family
602 is identified as being homeless, the individual or family is
603 assessed and prioritized for housing through the continuum of
604 care's coordinated entry system, temporary assistance is
605 provided to allow the individual or family to obtain permanent
606 housing as quickly as possible, and necessary,~~if needed,~~
607 assistance is provided to allow the individual or family to
608 retain housing.

609 (3)~~(e)~~ The objective of Rapid ReHousing is to provide
610 assistance for as short a term as possible so that the
611 individual or family receiving assistance attains stability and
612 integration into the community as quickly as possible ~~does not~~
613 ~~develop a dependency on the assistance.~~

614 Section 10. Section 420.6275, Florida Statutes, is amended
615 to read:

616 420.6275 Housing First.—

617 ~~(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND INTENT.—~~

618 ~~(a) The Legislature finds that many communities plan to~~
619 ~~manage homelessness rather than plan to end it.~~

620 ~~(b) The Legislature also finds that for most of the past~~
621 ~~two decades, public and private solutions to homelessness have~~
622 ~~focused on providing individuals and families who are~~
623 ~~experiencing homelessness with emergency shelter, transitional~~
624 ~~housing, or a combination of both. While emergency shelter~~
625 ~~programs may provide critical access to services for individuals~~

626 ~~and families in crisis, they often fail to address their long-~~
627 ~~term needs.~~

628 ~~(c) The Legislature further finds that Housing First is an~~
629 ~~alternative approach to the current system of emergency shelter~~
630 ~~or transitional housing which tends to reduce the length of time~~
631 ~~of homelessness and has proven to be cost-effective.~~

632 ~~(d) It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to~~
633 ~~encourage homeless continuums of care to adopt the Housing First~~
634 ~~approach to ending homelessness for individuals and families.~~

635 ~~(2) HOUSING FIRST METHODOLOGY.—~~

636 (1)(a) The Housing First approach to homelessness provides
637 permanent ~~differs from traditional approaches by providing~~
638 housing assistance, followed by case management, and support
639 services responsive to individual or family needs once after
640 housing is obtained. By using this approach ~~when appropriate,~~
641 communities can significantly reduce the amount of time that
642 individuals and families are homeless and prevent further
643 episodes of homelessness. Housing First emphasizes that social
644 services provided to enhance individual and family well-being
645 can be more effective when people are in their own home, and:

646 (a)1. The housing is not time-limited.

647 (b)2. The housing is not contingent on compliance with
648 services. Instead, participants must comply with a standard
649 lease agreement.

650 (c) Individuals and families ~~and~~ are provided with

651 individualized ~~the~~ services and support ~~that are~~ necessary to
652 help them maintain stable housing ~~do so~~ successfully.

653 ~~3. A background check and any rehabilitation necessary to~~
654 ~~combat an addiction related to alcoholism or substance abuse has~~
655 ~~been completed by the individual for whom assistance or support~~
656 ~~services are provided.~~

657 (2)(b) The Housing First approach addresses the societal
658 causes of homelessness and advocates for the immediate return of
659 individuals and families into housing and communities. Housing
660 First links affordable housing with community-based social
661 service and health care organizations ~~Housing First provides a~~
662 ~~critical link between the emergency and transitional housing~~
663 ~~system and community-based social service, educational, and~~
664 ~~health care organizations~~ and consists of four components:

665 (a)1. Crisis intervention and short-term stabilization.

666 (b)2. Screening, intake, and needs assessment.

667 (c)3. Provision of housing resources.

668 (d)4. Provision of case management.

669 Section 11. Paragraph (d) of subsection (22) of section
670 420.507, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

671 420.507 Powers of the corporation.—The corporation shall
672 have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out and
673 effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part, including
674 the following powers which are in addition to all other powers
675 granted by other provisions of this part:

676 (22) To develop and administer the State Apartment
677 Incentive Loan Program. In developing and administering that
678 program, the corporation may:

679 (d) In counties or rural areas of counties that do not
680 have existing units set aside for homeless persons, forgive
681 indebtedness for loans provided to create permanent rental
682 housing units for persons who are homeless, as defined in s.
683 420.621 ~~s. 420.621(5)~~, or for persons residing in time-limited
684 transitional housing or institutions as a result of a lack of
685 permanent, affordable housing. Such developments must be
686 supported by a ~~local homeless assistance~~ continuum of care
687 developed under s. 420.6225 ~~s. 420.624~~, be developed by
688 nonprofit applicants, be small properties as defined by
689 corporation rule, and be a project in the local housing
690 assistance continuum of care plan recognized by the State Office
691 on Homelessness.

692 Section 12. This act shall take effect July 1, 2020.