
HOUSE BILL 2457

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Representative Davis

1 AN ACT Relating to emergency housing for domestic violence
2 survivors; adding new sections to chapter 43.280 RCW; creating a new
3 section; and providing an expiration date.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that domestic
6 violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness for women and
7 children. Among women who are unhoused, between 22 and 57 percent
8 report that domestic violence was the immediate cause of their
9 homelessness. In Washington state, domestic violence shelters are
10 routinely full, leaving victims and children in serious danger with
11 nowhere to go. Though domestic violence survivors are often fleeing
12 life-threatening situations and face unique barriers to housing,
13 there are no state housing programs targeted towards this population.
14 Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to create a domestic
15 violence emergency housing voucher program, a domestic violence
16 emergency housing program in the capital budget for acquisition of
17 properties, and a time-limited task force to propose creative
18 solutions to address immediate housing needs for survivors who have
19 nowhere to turn.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 43.280
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
4 specific purpose, the domestic violence emergency housing voucher
5 program is created within the office of crime victims advocacy to
6 provide housing vouchers to assist in obtaining stable housing for
7 persons who are fleeing or have recently fled intimate partner
8 violence.

9 (2) Priority for the domestic violence emergency housing voucher
10 program must be provided to survivors who face the greatest risk of
11 serious violence and have the least access to housing resources.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.280
13 RCW to read as follows:

14 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for the
15 specific purposes provided in this section, the department of
16 commerce must establish a competitive grant program to award funding
17 to community-based domestic violence programs as defined in RCW
18 70.123.020 to acquire or renovate housing units for the purpose of
19 providing emergency housing to individuals who are in immediate risk
20 or imminent danger from intimate partner violence. When evaluating
21 applications for this grant program, the department, in collaboration
22 with the department of social and health services, must prioritize
23 projects that demonstrate:

24 (a) A strong readiness to proceed to operation of the emergency
25 housing;

26 (b) A commitment by the applicant to provide furnishings and
27 other support services to the tenants; and

28 (c) The program has a high demand for emergency shelter services
29 or hotel vouchers.

30 (2) In awarding funding for projects, the department of commerce
31 must strive for geographic distribution.

32 (3) In contracts for grants authorized under this section, the
33 department of commerce must include provisions that require that
34 capital improvements be held by the grantee for a specified period of
35 time appropriate to the amount of the grant and that facilities be
36 used for the express purpose of the grant. If the grantee is found to
37 be out of compliance with provisions of the contract, the grantee
38 must repay to the state general fund the principal amount of the
39 grant plus interest calculated at the rate of interest on state of

1 Washington general obligation bonds issued on the date most close in
2 time to the date of authorization of the grant.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 43.280
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) A task force on domestic violence emergency housing is
6 established, with members as provided in this subsection (1). The
7 office of crime victims advocacy shall appoint the following members:

8 (a) Four survivors who have experienced housing instability as a
9 result of fleeing an intimate partner violence situation. At least
10 two of these members must be survivors who fled with minor children;

11 (b) Four community-based domestic violence agencies;

12 (c) Two victim advocates embedded in law enforcement who work
13 with survivors of intimate partner violence;

14 (d) Two victim advocates embedded in prosecutor's offices who
15 work with survivors of intimate partner violence;

16 (e) The executive director, or the director's designee, of a
17 nonprofit law firm in Washington that seeks to improve the legal
18 response to survivors of sexual violence;

19 (f) A representative from a statewide nonprofit law firm which
20 offers publicly funded legal aid programs that work with survivors of
21 intimate partner violence;

22 (g) The director, or the director's designee, of an advocacy unit
23 within the prosecutor's office of the most populous county in
24 Washington that assists residents who are experiencing domestic
25 violence by a current or former intimate partner as they navigate the
26 protection order process; and

27 (h) The executive director, or the director's designee, of a
28 coalition based in Washington which provides culturally specific
29 technical assistance to tribes and tribal programs in the work of
30 preventing and eliminating domestic violence, sexual assault,
31 stalking, dating violence, and sex trafficking.

32 (2) The task force shall propose recommendations to increase the
33 supply of immediate, short-term, secure housing options for survivors
34 fleeing imminent danger due to intimate partner violence. In addition
35 to other ideas, the task force shall consider:

36 (a) The feasibility and practical considerations involved in the
37 following program concepts:

1 (i) Creating a network of trained volunteers who possess an
2 accessory dwelling unit, detached accessory dwelling unit, or spare
3 bedroom and are willing to take in survivors;

4 (ii) Launching a program wherein owners of short-term vacation
5 rentals could lend their properties for a fixed number of nights per
6 year for this purpose;

7 (iii) Creating a network of faith-based organizations that would
8 allow an unused parsonage or other location on the property of a
9 house of worship to be used for this purpose; and

10 (iv) Using fairgrounds for this purpose.

11 (b) Whether providing property tax incentives to the property
12 owners who participate in these programs would be an effective means
13 of encouraging their participation and, if so, how such an incentive
14 program could be structured.

15 (c) The feasibility and practical considerations involved in
16 launching a program patterned after the Los Angeles county fire safe
17 house program, wherein domestic violence victims in immediate danger
18 could seek temporary shelter at fire stations.

19 (3) Staff support for the task force must be provided by the
20 office of crime victims advocacy.

21 (4) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations
22 to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2025.

23 (5) This section expires June 1, 2026.

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