

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to homelessness; amending s. 420.606,  
3 F.S.; revising legislative findings; requiring the  
4 Department of Economic Opportunity to provide training  
5 and technical assistance to certain designated lead  
6 agencies of homeless assistance continuums of care;  
7 requiring that the provision of such training and  
8 assistance be delegated to certain nonprofit entities;  
9 conforming provisions to changes made by the act;  
10 amending s. 420.622, F.S.; requiring the department to  
11 establish award levels for "Challenge Grants";  
12 specifying criteria to determine award levels;  
13 requiring the department, after consultation with the  
14 Council on Homelessness, to specify a grant award  
15 level in the notice of solicitation of grant  
16 applications; revising qualifications for the grant;  
17 specifying authorized uses of grant funds; requiring a  
18 lead agency that receives a grant to submit a report  
19 to the department; amending s. 420.9073, F.S.;  
20 requiring the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to  
21 distribute to the department and the Department of  
22 Children and Families certain funds from the Local  
23 Government Housing Trust Fund for the purpose of  
24 providing support, training, and technical assistance  
25 to designated lead agencies of continuums of care;  
26 providing an effective date.

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CODING: Words ~~stricken~~ are deletions; words underlined are additions.

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

Section 1. Subsections (1) through (3) of section 420.606, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

420.606 Training and technical assistance program.—

(1) LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS.—In addition to the legislative findings set forth in s. 420.6015, the Legislature finds and declares that:

(a) Housing in economically declining or distressed areas is frequently substandard and is often unaffordable or unavailable to homeless persons, very-low-income persons, and low-income persons;

(b) Community-based organizations often have limited experience in development of quality housing for homeless persons, very-low-income persons, and low-income persons in economically declining or distressed areas; ~~and~~

(c) The staffs and board members of community-based organizations need additional training in housing development as well as technical support to assist them in gaining the experience they need to better serve their communities; ~~and.~~

(d) The staffs of state agencies and local governments, whether directly involved in the production of affordable or available housing or acting in a supportive role, can better serve the goals of state and local governments if their expertise in housing development is expanded.

53 (2) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to provide  
54 community-based organizations, ~~and~~ staff of state and local  
55 governments, and designated lead agencies of homeless assistance  
56 continuums of care with the necessary training and technical  
57 assistance to meet the needs of homeless persons, very-low-  
58 income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons  
59 for standard, affordable housing.

60 (3) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The  
61 Department of Economic Opportunity shall be responsible for  
62 securing the necessary expertise to provide training and  
63 technical assistance to:

64 (a) Staff of local governments, to staff of state  
65 agencies, as appropriate, ~~and~~ to community-based organizations,  
66 and to persons forming such organizations, which are formed for  
67 the purpose of developing new housing and rehabilitating  
68 existing housing that ~~which~~ is affordable for very-low-income  
69 persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.

70 1.~~(a)~~ The training component of the program shall be  
71 designed to build the housing development capacity of community-  
72 based organizations and local governments as a permanent  
73 resource for the benefit of communities in this state.

74 a.1. The scope of training must ~~shall~~ include, but need  
75 not be limited to, real estate development skills related to  
76 affordable housing, including the construction process and  
77 property management and disposition, the development of public-  
78 private partnerships to reduce housing costs, model housing

79 projects, and management and board responsibilities of  
80 community-based organizations.

81 ~~b.2.~~ Training activities may include, but are not limited  
82 to, materials for self-instruction, workshops, seminars,  
83 internships, coursework, and special programs developed in  
84 conjunction with state universities and community colleges.

85 ~~2.(b)~~ The technical assistance component of the program  
86 shall be designed to assist applicants for state-administered  
87 programs in developing applications and in expediting project  
88 implementation. Technical assistance activities for the staffs  
89 of community-based organizations and local governments who are  
90 directly involved in the production of affordable housing may  
91 include, but are not limited to, workshops for program  
92 applicants, onsite visits, guidance in achieving project  
93 completion, and a newsletter to community-based organizations  
94 and local governments.

95 (b) Designated lead agencies of homeless assistance  
96 continuums of care which receive operating or other support  
97 under s. 420.9073(7) from the Department of Children and  
98 Families to provide or secure housing, programs, and other  
99 services for homeless persons. Such training and technical  
100 assistance must be provided by a nonprofit entity that meets the  
101 requirements for providing training and technical assistance  
102 under s. 420.531.

103 Section 2. Subsection (4) of section 420.622, Florida  
104 Statutes, is amended to read:

105 420.622 State Office on Homelessness; Council on  
 106 Homelessness.—

107 ~~(4) Not less than 120 days after the effective date of~~  
 108 ~~this act,~~ The State Office on Homelessness, with the concurrence  
 109 of the Council on Homelessness, may accept and administer moneys  
 110 appropriated to it to provide annual "Challenge Grants" ~~annually~~  
 111 to lead agencies of ~~for~~ homeless assistance continuums of care  
 112 designated by the State Office on Homelessness pursuant to s.  
 113 420.624. ~~A lead agency may be a local homeless coalition,~~  
 114 ~~municipal or county government, or other public agency or~~  
 115 ~~private, not-for-profit corporation.~~ The department shall  
 116 establish varying levels of grant awards ~~Such grants may be up~~  
 117 to \$500,000 per lead agency. Award levels shall be based upon  
 118 the total population within the continuum of care catchment area  
 119 and reflect the differing degrees of homelessness in the  
 120 catchment planning areas. The department, in consultation with  
 121 the Council on Homelessness, shall specify a grant award level  
 122 in the notice of the solicitation of grant applications.

123 (a) To qualify for the grant, a lead agency must develop  
 124 and implement a local homeless assistance continuum of care plan  
 125 for its designated catchment area. The continuum of care plan  
 126 must implement a coordinated assessment or central intake system  
 127 to screen, assess, and refer persons seeking assistance to the  
 128 appropriate service provider. The lead agency shall also  
 129 document the commitment of local government and private  
 130 organizations to provide matching funds in an amount equal to

131 the grant requested.

132 (b) Preference must be given to those lead agencies that  
133 have demonstrated the ability of their continuum of care to  
134 provide quality services to homeless persons and the ability to  
135 leverage federal homeless-assistance funding under the Stewart  
136 B. McKinney Act and private funding for the provision of  
137 services to homeless persons.

138 (c) Preference must be given to lead agencies in catchment  
139 areas with the greatest need for the provision of housing and  
140 services to the homeless, relative to the population of the  
141 catchment area.

142 (d) The grant may be used to fund any of the housing,  
143 program, or service needs included in the local homeless  
144 assistance continuum of care plan. The lead agency may allocate  
145 the grant to programs, services, or housing providers that  
146 implement the local homeless assistance continuum care plan. The  
147 lead agency may provide subgrants to a local agency to implement  
148 programs or services or provide housing identified for funding  
149 in the lead agency's application to the department. A lead  
150 agency may spend a maximum of 8 percent of its funding on  
151 administrative costs.

152 (e) The lead agency shall submit a final report to the  
153 department documenting the outcomes achieved by the grant in  
154 enabling persons who are homeless to return to permanent housing  
155 thereby ending such person's episode of homelessness.

156 Section 3. Present subsection (7) of section 420.9073,

157 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (8), and a new  
 158 subsection (7) is added to that section, to read:

159 420.9073 Local housing distributions.—

160 (7) Notwithstanding subsections (1)-(4), the corporation  
 161 shall first distribute 4 percent of the total amount to be  
 162 distributed each fiscal year from the Local Government Housing  
 163 Trust Fund to the Department of Children and Families and the  
 164 Department of Economic Opportunity as follows:

165 (a) The Department of Children and Families shall receive  
 166 95 percent of such amount to provide operating and other support  
 167 to the designated lead agency in each continuum of care for the  
 168 benefit of the designated catchment area as described in s.  
 169 420.624.

170 (b) The Department of Economic Opportunity shall receive 5  
 171 percent of such amount to provide training and technical  
 172 assistance to lead agencies receiving operating and other  
 173 support under paragraph (a) in accordance with s. 420.606(3).  
 174 Training and technical assistance funded by this distribution  
 175 shall be provided by a nonprofit entity that meets the  
 176 requirements for providing training and technical assistance  
 177 under s. 420.531.

178 Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2014.