Model Legislation to Provide Housing and Services to Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY)
INTRODUCTION
Every city, town and county in the United States contains young people and families in crisis, as well as youth who experience homelessness or are at high risk of becoming homeless. A coordinated community response is essential to prevent, reduce and eventually end youth homelessness in America. Every government entity has a role to play, and partnerships with corporations and philanthropic organizations are key to ensure that all youth experiencing homelessness can access what they need when they need it. Federal resources are currently insufficient to fully meet the needs of every young person in your community, and they will likely remain insufficient for some time. This publication provides model legislation that you can use to create the types of services and housing that youth who experience homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless need in your community.

WHY DO YOUTH EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS?
There is more than one route to youth homelessness. Many young people flee home in response to conflict, abuse, neglect or – increasingly – poverty. Others are pushed out by parents who reject their behavior, sexual orientation, gender identity or news of pregnancy. Youth who exit the child welfare, juvenile justice, behavioral health or mental health systems are also likely to experience homelessness.

Youth Fall Through the Cracks
Each of these systems is designed to serve youth. In school, teachers can identify students who are facing crisis, have recently lost housing or are at-serious risk of becoming homeless. Unfortunately, many youth become disconnected from these systems.

Contributing Factors
Oftentimes, youth homelessness is the culmination of multiple circumstances – from violence to economic hardship.

Without youth-centric systems that provide prevention services, early and crisis intervention and long-term housing with support services, young people will continue to experience homelessness.
HOW ARE YOUTH UNIQUE FROM OTHER HOMELESS POPULATIONS?
The factors that affect youth homelessness are complex and differ from those impacting other homeless populations because of developmental needs and limited life experiences. Youth homelessness is unique because young people:

- Are physically, emotionally, psychologically and socially still developing — they are adults-in-progress with unique strengths and assets. They are not fully developed adults and should not be expected to function within an adult-oriented system of homelessness intervention.
- Enter into homelessness with little or no work experience.
- Are often forced into leaving their education prior to completion (i.e. junior high and high school) as a result of their homelessness. They also experience educational/academic gaps due to transiency and changing schools.
- Experience high levels of criminal victimization, including sexual exploitation and labor trafficking.
- Enter into homelessness without life skills, such as cooking, money management, housekeeping, dealing with landlords, job searching, etc.
- Often have to manage complex, ongoing relationships with parents, but may have opportunities to resolve conflicts with parents or seek housing placement with extended kin.
- Experience great difficulty accessing services they need without parental consent.

WHAT ARE THE NEEDS OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?
Safety. Youth experiencing homelessness face grave threats to their safety. On the street, they risk being subjected to human trafficking and other crimes. When they do find a temporary place to stay, they are in vulnerable situations that make it easy for adults to exploit or harm them. When youth find it necessary to seek accommodations where homeless adults are also housed, shelters are often not a safe environment.

Crisis Intervention, Shelter\(^1\) and Housing. Youth experiencing homelessness are in crisis. Often, they do not know where to turn for help. Young people tend to avoid traditional adult programs because they do not feel safe or identify with the homeless populations served by those shelters. Street based outreach and drop in centers offer immediate services to youth experiencing homelessness, such as food, clothing, showers, laundry, bus tokens and hygienic supplies. In addition, youth who work with the program can build relationships with other young people over time, and refer them to housing and services available throughout the community. Shelter is not a long-term solution, but it is an important first step for youth on the path to stability, whether that involves family reunification or access to more permanent housing. The provision of developmentally appropriate assessments to young people stay in a safe environment also facilitates more successful service referrals and housing placements.

Youth Specific Services and Case Management. In terms of both the pathways to homelessness and the necessary means to exit, young people are different from adults. Emerging adulthood – which generally occurs between the ages of 18 and 25 – is recognized as an important developmental phase. Research shows that parts of the brain responsible for certain decision-making (particularly decisions to engage in risky behaviors) are still developing at that time. Youth services and case management must therefore reflect developmentally appropriate principles.

\(^1\) Shelter in this context refers to youth-specific shelter which the model statute below designates as “Residential Youth Centers.”
HOW TO PASS A RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH LAW

1. ASSUME LEadership OR FIND A LEADER
   a. If your organization is familiar with the creation, promotion or analysis of similar policies, offer to lead the initiative for state runaway and homeless youth funding.
   b. If your organization is motivated but lacks relevant expertise, identify and contact the most qualified group in the area.
      i. Be prepared to discuss your idea for an RHY legislative campaign, as well as any meaningful progress to date.
   c. Contact the ABA Commission on Homelessness and Poverty, who may be able to offer your region training and technical assistance in developing the policy framework and legislative advocacy skills to complete your campaign (www.americanbar.org/groups/public_services/homelessness_poverty.html).

2. DISCUSS AND IMPLEMENT APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE
   a. Refer to our model RHY bill in the next section and to other state’s statutes in Appendix A to help state legislators craft their own statute.
   b. To craft a more expansive bill, examine these state model statutes (http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/division_for_public_services/ABA_Runaway_eBook.authcheckdam.pdf) published by the American Bar Association (ABA) and National Network for Youth. They address legal issues relevant to runaway and homeless youth, including education, identification and consent to medical care.

3. STUDY SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF FUNDED RHY STATUTES
   a. California
      i. Homeless Youth Projects (HYP)
      ii. Homeless Youth and Exploitation Program (HYEP)
      iii. California Youth Crisis Line (CYCL)
   b. Colorado
      i. Colorado Homeless Youth Services Act
   c. Florida
      i. Runaway Youth Shelters
   d. Maine
      i. Homeless Youth Program
   e. Massachusetts
      i. Homeless Youth Act
      ii. Statewide Homeless Youth Count
   f. Minnesota
      i. Homeless Youth Act
   g. New York
      i. Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of Nineteen Hundred Seventy-Eight
   h. Washington

2 See Appendix A for more detailed information on existing statutes.
i. **Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Act (HYPP)**

i. **District of Columbia**
   i. **End Youth Homelessness Act**
   ii. **LGBTQ Homeless Youth Training Grant Fund**

4. **BUILD SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY**
   a. Assess organizing capacity.
      i. Evaluate your readiness to engage and empower constituents using this online **Community Organizing Capacity Tool** (bolderadvocacy.org/tools-for-effective-advocacy/overview-of-evaluating-community-organizing/powercheck) from Bolder Advocacy.
   b. Assess advocacy capacity.
      i. Identify the skills, gaps and opportunities that define your advocacy agenda.
      ii. From there, utilize this **Advocacy Capacity Tool** (bolderadvocacy.org/tools-for-effective-advocacy/evaluating-advocacy/advocacy-capacity-tool) to focus resources and achieve more efficient results.
   c. Recruit advocates.
      i. If possible, reach out to nonprofit board members throughout the community.
      ii. For advice on how to enlist these valuable allies, review this **board advocacy recruitment project** (www.wliha.org/board-advocacy-project) from the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance (WLIHA).

5. **PREPARE FOR THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**
   a. Train advocates on the specific channels, policies and procedures that define your state legislature.
      i. To explore the legislative process in New York, refer to this **documentary** (www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9A7VN6nRGG) from Sienna College. The video depicts how Professor Donna McIntosh and her students meet with policymakers to secure funding for runaway and homeless youth.
   b. Review lobbying regulations.
      i. Ensure that your organization **complies** (bolderadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/State_Lobbying_Registration_Thresholds.pdf) with all state and federal lobbying laws.
   c. Research and review current state laws, regulations, and appropriation levels that may be available to unaccompanied homeless youth. (Legislators like to be given credit for past accomplishments, and your campaign should be framed as an ‘add on’ to existing public policy.)

6. **COLLABORATE WITH POLICYMAKERS**
   a. Visit state lawmaker websites to identify senators and representatives who are attentive to issues of youth homelessness. Pay particular attention to Chairs of specific committees that may have oversight of homelessness, housing, and health and human services (including child welfare matters). Committee chairs often sent agenda’s for legislative hearings and policy review and should be courted early on in your process.
b. After researching his or her legislative record, set up a meeting with the legislator or an appropriate member of staff to discuss your proposal.
   i. If possible, consider scheduling a group meeting.
   ii. Be prepared to deliver a detailed fact sheet. This document should clearly and effectively prove why your issue belongs on the lawmaker’s agenda.

d. Identify a few key champion Legislators and try to make them bi-partisan (both Republicans and Democrats).

e. Follow up after the meeting to express your appreciation and review next steps.

f. Stay in contact. Periodically check what you can do to help and share any new information as it arises.

7. SPEAK TO MEMBERS OF THE RELEVANT COMMITTEE OR SUBCOMMITTEE IF THE BILL PROGRESSES THAT FAR

a. As soon as the bill is introduced to committee, seize the opportunity to express support.

i. Please note that qualified experts – including executive directors and other experienced staff – are permitted to testify during committee hearings.

8. IF THE BILL REACHES THE HOUSE OR SENATE FLOOR, CAMPAIGN ON MULTIPLE FRONTS

a. Call, email or write legislators to support the bill.

i. Encourage colleagues, members, followers and other organizations to do the same.

b. Coordinate a public campaign.

i. Identify common themes, data/information, and policy priorities that can be adopted by multiple stakeholders in your campaign. This helps to craft a consistent message. Campaign themes should include following aspects: (a) need and vulnerability of the population, (b) equitable treatment for youth and children in responding to homelessness, and (c) the importance of investments in youth and a return on investment in helping to reclaim and stabilize young lives into productive citizens.

ii. Publish letters to the editor and other persuasive content for public consumption.

iii. Encourage colleagues, members, followers and other organizations to do the same.

iv. Post frequently but purposefully on all social media platforms.

1. Create a memorable hashtag to be used on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. For example, you can adapt strategies used by the DC Alliance of Youth Advocates (DCAYA) campaign (www.dca
   aya.org/sites/default/files/Youth%20Homelessness%20Awareness%20Month%2
   0Communications%20Strategy%20MASTER_0.pdf) to raise awareness for homeless youth.

2. Consult this guide (www.afj.org/digitalage) to digital policy advocacy from the Alliance for Justice (AFJ).

9. EITHER BEFORE OR WHILE THE BILL CLEARS BOTH HOUSES, REACH OUT TO YOUR GOVERNOR

a. Follow the same steps outlined in Section 8.
10. IF THE BILL IS SIGNED INTO LAW, FOLLOW ITS IMPLEMENTATION
   a. Establish a respectful working relationship with the agency or agencies responsible for administering the law.
      i. Make sure to explain your role in drafting the original bill.
   b. Request periodic updates and pass along comments, critiques and recommendations when appropriate.
   c. Assign a staffer to track news and other developments pertaining to the law.
   d. Publicize any successful outcomes associated with the legislation.
   e. Research reauthorization protocols and prepare a follow-up campaign if necessary.

11. TRACK YOUR STATE BUDGET
   a. Call, email or write your governor to support or oppose specific amendments.
      i. State budgets usually adhere to a standard process:
         1. Upon analyzing their needs, agencies submit requests to the executive.
         2. The governor reviews these submissions, and passes along a budget proposal to the legislature.
         3. The legislature amends, approves and returns the finalized budget to the governor.
MODEL LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE HOUSING AND SERVICES TO YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

INTRODUCTION
This statute authorizes the establishment of the Office for Homeless Youth Services (OHYS) to administer and oversee the following grants:

- Street and Community Outreach and Drop-In Centers (three year grants);
- Residential Youth Centers (three year grants); and
- Supportive Housing and Transitional Living Programs (five year grants).

Further, this statute:
- Establishes policies for serving minor youth in these programs; and
- Requires states or local government entities to create a needs assessment and strategic plan.

MODEL STATUTE

§100 Purpose
To prevent, reduce, and end youth homelessness in [State].

§101 Definitions
(a) “Unaccompanied homeless youth” means a person 24 years of age or younger who is unaccompanied by a parent or guardian and is without shelter where appropriate care and supervision are available, whose parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling to provide shelter and care, or who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The following are not fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residences:

1. a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
2. an institution or a publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
3. transitional housing;
4. living in hotels;
5. temporarily living with other people who have not offered permanent residence, or a residential lease; or
6. a public or private place not designed for, nor ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

“Homeless youth” does not include persons incarcerated or otherwise detained under federal or state law.

(b) “Youth at risk of homelessness” means a person 24 years of age or younger whose status or circumstances indicate a significant danger of experiencing homelessness in the near future. Status or circumstances that indicate a significant danger may include:

1. youth exiting out-of-home placements;
2. youth who previously were homeless;
3. youth whose parents or primary caregivers are or were previously homeless;
4. youth who are exposed to abuse and neglect in their homes;
(5) youth who experience conflict with parents; and
(6) runaways.

(c) “Runaway” means an unmarried child under the age of 18 years who is absent from the home of a parent or guardian or other lawful placement without the consent of the parent, guardian, or lawful custodian.

§102 State Agency Responsible for Administration of Services and Funding.
(a) There is hereby created the Office of Homeless Youth Services and led by a director which shall establish and support a comprehensive program for homeless youth in the State by contracting with organizations and agencies, licensed by the office, that provide services for homeless youth. The office shall establish licensure requirements and shall contract for programs that ensure that services, as specified by this act, are provided to homeless youth in the State in an appropriate and responsible manner. The director may establish such other requirements for the homeless youth programs as he deems necessary.

(b) The Office of Homeless Youth Services shall report to the Commissioner [or Secretary] of State [Agency Name ____] and shall receive appropriations from the State and contributions from private donors to fund a spectrum of shelter, housing, and services to meet the needs of unaccompanied, homeless youth in the state. The monies shall be distributed to a spectrum of programs, as outlined in Sections 105 through 107, including, but not limited to: shelter, youth housing, drop-in centers, case management, outreach, health care, after-care services employment services, transportation and prevention services to youth in crisis and their families when safe and appropriate.

(c) At a minimum, the Office of Homeless Youth Services shall have the following duties:
(1) Identify existing programs dealing with runaway and homeless youth and develop a directory of service providers;
(2) Develop resources and offer technical assistance to increase state-wide capacity and coordination of services to unaccompanied homeless youth;
(3) Study the feasibility of the establishment of a web-based referral system for runaway and homeless youth including a listing of all rights and organizations that may be relevant to the homeless youth population in [Name of State], including but not limited to: listing of legal, educational, and victims’ rights and organizations related thereto;
(4) Compile statistics on runaway and homeless youth;
(5) Identify existing and potential funding sources for services to runaway and homeless youth, and provide information to the public;
(6) Provide advice and technical assistance, as requested, to administrators of programs relating to runaway and homeless youth on issues relating to collaborative models of services to homeless youth to improve service coordination, decrease duplicative efforts, increase specialization and effectiveness, and create common outcome measures and data collection protocols to measure success in ending youth homelessness in the State;
(7) Design models for service delivery by local communities;
(8) Develop standards necessary to achieve and maintain, on a statewide basis, more comprehensive and integrated community-based youth services;
(9) Assist local organizations in developing programs, which address the problems of youths and their families through direct services, advocacy with institutions, and improvement of local conditions;
(10) To provide information, coordination, and technical assistance as may be necessary to reduce needless expenditures associated with the provision of overlapping services and to improve the quality of services provided to homeless youth;
(11) To identify both procedural and substantive obstacles to the provision of services and to make recommendations to the entities specified in this section concerning procedural, regulatory, or statutory changes necessary to remove such obstacles, including obstacles related to child protective services reporting;
(12) To work with entities to identify issues concerning sharing of information in providing services to homeless youth and to facilitate resolution of such information-sharing issues.
(13) To identify and remove obstacles to the provision of services including requirements for parental consent for runaways and unaccompanied homeless youth to receive services;
(14) To improve the quality of services provided to homeless youth;
(15) To establish a competitive application and written application process to disburse state monies directly to community-based nonprofit corporations, including faith-based nonprofit corporations, to serve unaccompanied homeless youth;
(16) Design and support implementation of models for collaboration among service providers, early education programs, public schools, and institutions of higher education;
(17) Administer funds so housing and services are provided to both minors and young adults under this Act such that 3 year grants are distributed for Street and Community Outreach and Drop-in Programs, and Residential Youth Centers, and 5 year grants are distributed for Supportive Housing and Transitional Living Programs. Further, existing grantees must be notified at least 6 months prior to the end of their grant cycle as to whether they will receive another multi-year grant; and
(18) In consultation with professional youth workers, supervisors, and researchers, complete a statewide code of ethics for any funded agency or program including personnel and volunteers.

§103 Priority in fund distribution
Public or private nonprofit organizations and faith-based organizations holding a nonprofit corporation status shall be eligible to apply for funds under this Act and these organizations shall be required to annually contribute a local match of at least 15 percent in cash or in-kind contribution to the project during the term of the grant award agreement. Preference shall be given to organizations that:
(a) demonstrate a community need for funds and services,
(b) demonstrate significant need in a community lacking any resources dedicated to housing youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness,
(c) demonstrate a record of providing effective services to runaway youth or families in crisis,
(d) successfully operating a youth shelter or a transitional living facility for runaway and homeless youth,
(e) demonstrate a history of collaborating with other agencies and individuals in providing such services,
(f) show ability to progressively decrease their reliance on resources provided under this section and to operate this project beyond the period that the organization receives funds under this section, and
(g) fill existing priority service deficits or gaps as identified by the Office of Homeless Youth Services.

§ 104. Homeless Youth Shelters—Authority—Duties
(a) Licensed homeless youth shelters may provide both crisis intervention services and alternative residential services to homeless youth.

(b) If a homeless youth under the age of 18 is admitted to a Residential Youth Center without the consent of the youth’s parent or guardian, the shelter shall:
   (1) Within 72 hours of admission to the shelter, notify the youth’s parent or guardian, or make reasonable efforts to notify the youth’s parent or guardians, concerning the youth’s whereabouts, physical and emotional condition, and the circumstances surrounding the youth’s placement, unless there are compelling reasons not to provide the parent or legal guardian with this information. Compelling reasons include, but are not limited to, circumstances in which the youth is or has been a victim of child abuse or neglect;
   (2) Notify the youth’s parent that where it is safe and appropriate, it is the paramount concern of the facility or shelter to achieve reconciliation between the parent and the youth, to reunify the family, and to inform the parent about the alternatives that are available;
   (3) Offer homeless youth admitted to a licensed homeless youth shelter program, 72 hours of safe harbor, with or without parental consent, unless otherwise designated by order of a court exercising jurisdiction in juvenile court regarding custody of the minor children or unless the youth participant is currently under the custody of the [State Child Welfare Agency Name];
   (4) Arrange transportation for the youth to the residence of the youth’s parent when the youth and the parent agree that the youth shall return to the home of the youth’s parent. The parent shall reimburse the party who paid for the transportation costs to the extent of the parents’ ability;
   (6) Upon request by the youth, the youth will be allowed to return to the home environment at any time; and
   (7) Offer youth participants safe, dignified shelter, including private shower facilities, beds, clean linen, and at least one hot meal each day.

(c) Any homeless youth under the age of 18 admitted to a licensed homeless youth shelter pursuant to this article and who is not, with the parent’s or guardian’s consent, returned to the home of the youth’s parent or is not placed in a voluntary alternative residential placement pursuant to [State Statute Section _____] within 72 hours, shall reside at a facility or shelter described in section 106 of this Act for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days from the time of intake except as otherwise provided in this section. A licensed homeless youth shelter shall make a concerted effort to achieve a reconciliation between the youth and the parent or guardian. If a reconciliation and voluntary return of the youth have not been achieved within 72 hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays, from the time of intake, then the
director of the facility or shelter, or other person in charge, shall provide the youth and the youth’s parent or guardian with a statement identifying:

1. The availability of counseling services;
2. The availability of longer term residential arrangements; and
3. The possibility of referral to the county department.

(d) The licensed homeless youth shelter may arrange for the establishment of a supervised independent living arrangement or may arrange a voluntary residential agreement between the youth and a relative or other responsible adult, a licensed child care facility, or a public or private landlord if the youth is under the age of 18 and has been admitted to a licensed homeless youth shelter and:

1. Two weeks have passed since admission;
2. The youth’s parent or guardian cannot be found after diligent effort by the facility or shelter to locate such parent or guardian, the youth’s parent or guardian has failed to respond to a notice sent by the facility or shelter, or the youth’s parent or guardian has renounced responsibility for the youth; and
3. The youth has no other suitable place to live.

(e) A supervised independent living arrangement can only be established if:

1. The youth has not been deemed to be dependent on controlled substances or alcohol and is in need of treatment;
2. The youth is not currently demonstrating behavior that poses a danger to the youth or others;
3. The youth is not engaging in persistent high-risk behavior that renders the youth inappropriate for an independent living arrangement without reasonable accommodations; and
4. The youth has the ability and capacity to manage his or her own affairs, demonstrates emotional independence, and has the opportunity and ability to achieve financial independence through legitimate activities and life skills, including the following:
   A. Educational accomplishments or a plan for achieving educational goals;
   B. A vocational plan or goal; and
   C. An opportunity or ability to achieve adequate housing and living arrangements apart from the youth’s parent, guardian, or custodian.

(f) For the purposes of this article,

1. A voluntary residential agreement shall not require the county department to assume custody of the youth or to exercise any parental power or control over the youth.
2. A person assuming responsibility for the youth shall have the authority to:
   A. Enroll the youth in the school district in which the youth resides or maintain enrollment in the youth’s school district of origin when in the youth’s best interest, pursuant to the voluntary residential agreement and consent to extra-curricular and out-of-school time activities; and
   B. Authorize and obtain preventive medical and dental care, counseling, and treatment for the youth.

(g) If the homeless youth is in the legal care or custody of the [State’s child welfare and county child protective services agency], the [County child protective service agency] in consultation
with the Residential Youth Center, shall determine what services shall be provided to the youth. The services may include, but are not limited to: crisis intervention services, continued temporary placement in the Residential Youth Center for up to 30 days, placement in an alternative living arrangement or referral to a youth housing program or to other appropriate organizations and agencies.

(h) When the licensed homeless youth shelter has reason to believe that the youth is an abused or neglected child as defined in [State Statute], the Residential Youth Center shall report the allegation to the [State or local child protective services] pursuant to [State Statute Section ____]. A homeless youth may remain at a Residential Youth Center for up to 30 days pending the [State or local child protective service’s] disposition of any case originated pursuant to this subsection.

(i) If reunification with the parent or legal guardian is not in the youth’s best interest or not possible because the youth’s parent or legal guardian cannot be located, the local child protective services unit, in consultation with the Residential Youth Center, shall determine what services shall be provided to the youth. The services may include, but are not limited to, crisis intervention services and continued temporary placement in the Residential Youth Center for up to an additional 30 days, or an alternative longer term placement, including a potential independent living arrangement as defined above.

(j) In the case of a homeless youth from another state who is under the age of 18, a Residential Youth Center shall notify the office of homeless youth services, as soon as practicable, but within 72 hours of the youth’s admission to the Residential Youth Center. The office of homeless youth services shall facilitate the youth’s return home to his parent or legal guardian or make other suitable care arrangements for the youth.

§105 Street and Community Outreach and Drop-in Program. Youth drop-in centers must provide walk-in access to crisis intervention and ongoing supportive services including one-to-one case management services on a self-referral basis. Street and community outreach programs must locate, contact, and provide information, referrals, and services to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness, and runaways. Information, referrals, and services provided may include, but are not limited to:

(a) family reunification services;
(b) conflict resolution or mediation counseling;
(c) assistance in obtaining temporary emergency shelter;
(d) assistance in obtaining food, clothing, medical care, or mental health counseling;
(e) counseling regarding violence, sexual exploitation, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy;
(f) referrals to other agencies that provide support services to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness, and runaways;
(g) assistance with education, employment, and independent living skills;
(h) aftercare services;
(i) specialized services for highly vulnerable runaways and homeless youth, including teen parents, emotionally disturbed and mentally ill youth, and sexually exploited youth; and
(j) homelessness prevention.
§ 106 Residential Youth Centers. Residential Youth Centers must provide homeless youth and runaways with referral and walk-in access to emergency, short-term residential care. The program shall provide homeless youth and runaways with safe, dignified shelter, including private shower facilities, beds, and at least one meal each day; and shall assist a runaway and homeless youth with reunification with the family or legal guardian when required or appropriate. The services provided at Residential Youth Centers may include, but are not limited to:

(a) family reunification services;
(b) individual, family, and group counseling;
(c) assistance obtaining clothing;
(d) access to medical and dental care and mental health counseling;
(e) educational assessment and referrals to educational programs, and supplemental educational and employment services;
(f) recreational activities;
(g) advocacy and referral services;
(h) independent living skills training;
(i) aftercare and follow-up services;
(j) transportation; and
(k) homelessness prevention.

§ 107 Supportive Housing and Transitional Living Programs. Transitional living programs must help homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness to find and maintain safe, dignified housing. The program may also provide rental assistance and related supportive services, or refer youth to other organizations or agencies that provide such services. Services provided may include, but are not limited to:

(a) educational assessment and referrals to educational programs;
(b) career planning, employment, work skill training, and independent living skills training;
(c) job placement;
(d) budgeting and money management;
(e) assistance in securing housing appropriate to needs and income;
(f) counseling regarding violence, sexual exploitation, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy;
(g) referral for medical services or chemical dependency treatment;
(h) parenting skills;
(i) self-sufficiency support services or life skill training;
(j) aftercare and follow-up services; and
(k) homelessness prevention.

§ 108 Statewide Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan
(a) The Office of Homeless Youth Services shall develop a state-wide needs assessment and strategic plan, at least every five years, which shall be completed and sent to the Legislature by [Date], with preliminary information provided to the Legislature by [Date], regarding the need for youth shelters for runaway youths. The needs assessment and strategic plan shall identify all of the following:

(1) The capability of existing centers and shelters presently to address the needs of
[State] youths, including an incidence study of the number of unaccompanied, homeless youth in the State;
(2) The nature and extent of youth needs that are presently unmet or unaddressed by existing shelter and housing facilities;
(3) The number of youth who access shelter, are reunified with their parents or guardians, and subsequently reapply for shelter services on an annual basis.
(4) The nature and extent of future need for youth shelters and housing with appropriate support services;
(5) Cost estimates for addressing shelter, housing, and appropriate support service needs for minor and transitional aged youth; and
(6) Other information, issues, and trends relevant to understanding and serving the youths under study.

§ 109 Confidentiality of records
(a) Records of a runaway youth, homeless youth, or youth at risk of homelessness that identify the youth who has been admitted to, or has sought assistance from, the program are confidential and are not subject to inspection or copying unless
(1) After being informed of his or her right to privacy, the youth consents in writing to the disclosure of the records for a particular purpose and for a particular period of time;
(2) The records are relevant to an investigation or proceeding involving child abuse or neglect that was reported by the program and only with respect to that report of abuse or neglect; or
(3) Disclosure of the records is necessary to protect the life of the youth.

§ 110 Liability
(a) The officers, directors, and employees of a licensed program for runaway youth, homeless youth, and youth at risk of homelessness are not liable for civil damages as a result of an act or omission in admitting a youth to the program.

(b) This section does not preclude liability for civil damages as a result of recklessness or intentional misconduct.

(c) The officers, directors, and employees of a licensed program for runaway youth, homeless youth, or youth at risk of homelessness are not criminally liable under state statutes related to Harboring a Runaway, Interference with Custodial Rights, Concealing a Minor or Contributing to the Delinquency or Dependency of a Minor for assisting a minor in the program in accordance with the requirements of this Act.
APPENDIX A

The following appendix includes samples of currently enacted state Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) legislation. This list is non-exhaustive. It demonstrates the differences in state-by-state approaches to RHY legislation. Differences may include: definitions of homeless or runaway youth, eligibility requirements for RHY programs (specifically age limits), length of stay in shelters, liability for shelters, notice to or consent from parents and funding. Minnesota, Maine, and Washington take different approaches to addressing youth homelessness, but have all enacted comprehensive and fully funded RHY legislation.

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<td>Services Provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>Each homeless youth project established under this chapter shall provide services which shall include, but are not limited to, all of the following:</td>
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<td>(a) Food and access to an overnight shelter.</td>
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<td>(b) Counseling to address immediate emotional crises or problems.</td>
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<td>(c) Outreach services to locate homeless youth and link them with services, and drop-in facilities to make the services accessible to the street population.</td>
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<td>(d) Screening for basic health needs and referral to public and private agencies for health care.</td>
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<td>(e) Linkage to other services offered by public and private agencies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(f) Long-term stabilization planning so that the youth may be returned to the parental home under circumstances favoring long-term reunification with the family, or so that the youth can be suitably placed in a situation outside the family when family reunification is not possible.</td>
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<td>(g) Follow up services to ensure that the return to the family or the placement outside the family is stable.</td>
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</table>

Project Locations, Grant Award Agreements, and Distribution of Funds
(a) One homeless youth emergency service project shall be established in the County of Los Angeles and one shall be established in the City and County of San Francisco. One homeless youth emergency service project shall also be established in the County of San Diego and one shall be established in the County of Santa Clara. Each project may have one central location or may have more than one location in the service area in order to serve effectively the area population of homeless youth. Each project shall be operated by an agency in accordance with the grant award agreement with the office.

(b) The office [of Criminal Justice Planning] shall prepare and disseminate a request for proposals for grantees under this chapter by February 15, 1986. The office shall enter into grant award agreements, and the operation of pilot projects shall begin, not later than June 1, 1986. With respect to projects to be established in the County of San Diego and the County of Santa Clara, the office shall prepare and disseminate a request for proposals for grantees under this chapter by March 31, 1992. The office shall enter into grant award agreements and the operation of these projects shall begin not later than July 1, 1992.

(c) An agency eligible to apply for funds under this chapter and to operate a homeless youth emergency service project shall be a private, nonprofit agency with a demonstrated record of success in the delivery of services to homeless youth. The agency selected for each project shall demonstrate the ability to provide each of the services described in Section 13701, either directly or under subcontract with a competent provider. Preference shall be given to agencies that demonstrate a history of coordination with other public and private agencies in the service region that provide services to homeless youth. Preference shall also be given to agencies that will involve a network of youth-serving agencies in the delivery of services to homeless youth under this chapter.

Evaluation of Homeless Youth Projects and Homeless Youth in California

(a) The office shall monitor the projects established under this chapter. In monitoring and evaluating the projects, the office shall coordinate its efforts with the activities relating to homeless youth of the state advisory group on juvenile justice, as described in Sections 1785 and 1786.

(b) Based upon data collected from the California Runaway Hotline and other reliable sources, the office shall include in its reports an evaluation of the status of runaway homeless youth in the state. The evaluation shall include information on the extent of the homeless youth problem in major urban areas of 500,000 or more and the need for services for homeless youth. The evaluation shall also include data on other urban, suburban, and rural areas in California.

Housing for Homeless Youth is Lawful

(a) It is the policy of this state and the purpose of this section to facilitate and support the development and operation of housing for homeless youth.

(b) The provision of housing for homeless youth is hereby authorized and shall not be considered unlawful age discrimination, notwithstanding any other provision of law, including, but not limited to, Sections 51, 51.2, and 51.10 of the Civil Code, Sections 11135, 12920, and 12955 of this code, Chapter 11.5 (commencing with Section 50800) of Part 2 of Division 31 of the Health and Safety Code, and local housing or age discrimination ordinances.

(c) This section shall not be construed to permit discrimination against families with children.
(d) This section shall occupy the field of regulation of housing for homeless youth by any local public entity, including, but not limited to, a city, county, and city and county.

### Funding

California has two homeless youth programs pursuant to Cal. Welf. & Inst. Code § 13700, 13701, 13703, 13704: Homeless Youth and Exploitation Program (HYEP) and California Youth Crisis Line (CYCL). For FY 2015-2016, HYEP and CYCL are funded at $1,641,500.

### Organizational Support

- **California Coalition for Youth (CCY)**
  - [www.calyouth.org](http://www.calyouth.org)
- **California Homeless Youth Project**
  - [cahomelessyouth.library.ca.gov](http://cahomelessyouth.library.ca.gov)
- **Housing California**
  - [www.housingca.org](http://www.housingca.org)

## Colorado

### RHY Statute

Colo. Rev. Stat. § 24-32-723

### Statute Language

**Definitions**

(a) “Entity” means any state agency, any state-operated program, or any private nonprofit or not-for-profit community-based organization.

(b) “Homeless youth” means a child or youth who is at least eleven years of age but is less than twenty-one years of age who:

(I) Lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; or

(II) Has a primary nighttime residence that is:

(A) A supervised, publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; or

(B) A public or private place not designed for, nor ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

(III) “Homeless youth” shall not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained pursuant to an act of congress or a state law.

**Creation of the Office of Homeless Youth Services and Goals**

There is hereby created the office of homeless youth services in the department of local affairs for the purpose of providing information, coordination, and support services to public and private entities serving the homeless youth of Colorado. The office of homeless youth services shall seek to:

(a) Identify and remove obstacles to the provision of services;

(b) Improve the quality of services provided to homeless youth;

(c) Reduce needless expenditures caused by the provision of overlapping services; and

(d) Identify housing and supportive services funding resources available to entities serving homeless youth.

**Office of Homeless Youth Services Duties**

(a) In providing the services described in this section, the office of homeless youth services is strongly encouraged to work with the executive directors, or their designees, of the Colorado department of public health and environment, the judicial department, private
nonprofit and not-for-profit organizations, appropriate federal departments, and other key stakeholders in the community.

(b) At a minimum, the office of homeless youth services shall have the following duties:

(I) To provide information, coordination, and technical assistance as may be necessary to reduce needless expenditures associated with the provision of overlapping services and to improve the quality of services provided to homeless youth;

(II) To identify both procedural and substantive obstacles to the provision of services and to make recommendations to the entities specified in this section concerning procedural, regulatory, or statutory changes necessary to remove such obstacles;

(III) To obtain information from service providers concerning known services available for the homeless youth population in the state of Colorado and to post such information on a web site on the internet;

(IV) To develop, maintain, and make available a listing of all rights and organizations that may be relevant to the homeless youth population in the state of Colorado, including but not limited to a listing of legal, educational, and victims' rights and organizations related thereto;

(V) To obtain information concerning known funding sources available for the homeless youth population in the state of Colorado; and

(VI) To work with entities to identify issues concerning sharing of information in providing services to homeless youth and to facilitate resolution of such information-sharing issues.

Annual Report on Homeless Youth and Services

On or before January 15, 2012, and on or before each January 15 thereafter, the office of homeless youth services, in conjunction with the prevention services division in the department of public health and environment and the department of education, shall submit a consolidated report to the general assembly of existing reports relating to prevention, intervention, and treatment services provided to homeless youth eighteen years of age to twenty-one years of age by the department of human services, county departments of social services, and other state departments that operate prevention, intervention, and treatment programs serving youth eighteen years of age to twenty-one years of age. The report shall also include the data that the department of education annually compiles on the number of homeless youth enrolled in public schools in the state, the type of homelessness, and the list of services that are provided to such homeless youth. The consolidated report shall include the number of youth served, the types of services provided, and the outcomes derived from such services.

Funding

Colorado’s Homeless Youth Act is currently an unfunded mandate.

Organizational Support

Urban Peak
www.urbanpeak.org

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<th>Florida</th>
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<td>RHY Statute</td>
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| Statute Language | **Definitions**  
(a) “Department” means the Department of Children and Families.  
(b) “Runaway youth centers” means those community-based programs providing a range of services to troubled youths and runaway youth and their families, including prevention, |
community outreach, early intervention and crisis intervention, temporary residential shelter, counseling services, and aftercare followup.

**Services Provided**
The department shall establish standard services for runaway youth centers which can be monitored and evaluated, and the establishment of these services shall be a prerequisite to receiving state funds. Such services shall include, but are not limited to:

(a) Programs for outreach and prevention for troubled youths and runaway youths and their families.
(b) Early intervention counseling services for troubled youths and runaway youths and their families, with 24-hour access geared toward crisis or time-of-need intervention.
(c) Temporary or short-term shelter, food, and clothing.
(d) Uniform and confidential intake and records systems.
(e) Provision for aftercare including individual and family counseling services.
(f) Programs for advocacy for client population and community support.
(g) Provisions for case management and referral from service to service.

**Confidentiality**
All information about clients which is part of a center’s intake and client records system is confidential and exempt from the provisions of s. 119.07(1).

**Funding**
Sheltering youth and families in crisis and Juvenile Justice Respite programs were funded at $31,627,774 funds in 2014.

**Organizational Support**
The Florida Network
www.floridanetwork.org

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### Maine

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<tr>
<td><strong>Statute Language</strong></td>
<td><strong>Definitions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Homeless youth. “Homeless youth” means a person 21 years of age or younger who is unaccompanied by a parent or guardian and is without shelter where appropriate care and supervision are available, whose parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling to provide shelter and care or who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. “Homeless youth” does not include a person incarcerated or otherwise detained under federal or state law.</td>
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<td>2. Fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. “Fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence” means a dwelling at which a person resides on a regular basis that adequately provides safe shelter. “Fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence” does not include a publicly or privately operated institutional shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; transitional housing; a temporary placement with a peer, friend or family member who has not offered a permanent residence, residential lease or temporary lodging for more than 30 days; or a public or private place not designed for, nor ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.</td>
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<td>3. Runaway. “Runaway” means an unmarried child under 18 years of age who is absent from the home of a parent or guardian or other lawful placement without the consent of the parent, guardian or lawful custodian.</td>
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### Services Provided

The department [of Health and Human Services] shall establish and support a comprehensive program for homeless youth in the State by contracting with organizations and agencies licensed by the department that provide street outreach, shelter and transitional living services for homeless youth. The department shall by rule establish licensure requirements and shall establish performance-based contracts with organizations and agencies to provide the following programs and services:

1. **Street and community outreach and drop-in programs.** Youth drop-in centers to provide walk-in access to crisis intervention and ongoing supportive services, including one-to-one case management services on a self-referral basis and street and community outreach programs to locate, contact and provide information, referrals and services to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness and runaways. Information, referrals and services provided may include, but are not limited to family reunification services; conflict resolution or mediation counseling; assistance in obtaining temporary emergency shelter; case management aimed at obtaining food, clothing, medical care or mental health counseling; counseling regarding violence, prostitution, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and pregnancy; referrals to other agencies that provide support services to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness and runaways; assistance with education, employment and independent living skills; aftercare services; and specialized services for highly vulnerable runaways and homeless youth, including teen parents, sexually exploited youth and youth with mental illness or developmental disabilities;

2. **Emergency shelter program.** Emergency shelter programs to provide homeless youth and runaways with referrals and walk-in access to short-term residential care on an emergency basis. The program must provide homeless youth and runaways with safe, dignified, voluntary housing, including private shower facilities, beds and at least one meal each day, and assist a runaway with reunification with family or a legal guardian when required or appropriate. The services provided at emergency shelters may include, but are not limited to, family reunification services or referral to safe, dignified housing; individual, family and group counseling; assistance obtaining clothing; access to medical and dental care and mental health counseling; education and employment services; recreational activities; case management, advocacy and referral services; independent living skills training; and aftercare, follow-up services and transportation; and

3. **Transitional living programs.** Transitional living programs to help homeless youth find and maintain safe, dignified housing. The program may also provide rental assistance and related supportive services or may refer youth to other organizations or agencies that provide such services. Services provided may include, but are not limited to, provision of safe, dignified housing; educational assessment and referrals to educational programs; career planning, employment, job skills training and independent living skills training; job placement; budgeting and money management; assistance in securing housing appropriate to needs and income; counseling regarding violence, prostitution, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy; referral for medical services or chemical dependency treatment; parenting skills; self-sufficiency support services or life skills training; and aftercare and follow-up services.

### Data Collection

The department [of Health and Human Services] shall collect data from its licensed organizations and agencies to ensure that appropriate and high-quality services are being
delivered to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness and runaways and shall use the data to monitor the success of the contracts and programs as well as changes in the rates of homelessness among youth in the State.

**Rules**
The department [of Health and Human Services] shall adopt rules as may be necessary for the effective administration of the comprehensive program under section 4099-E. Rules adopted pursuant to this section are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

**Emergency Shelter Family Homes for Youth**
This section applies to emergency shelter family homes for youths in order to provide the youths with voluntary, safe, emergency housing with individuals or families in locations as close as reasonably possible to the home communities of the youths.

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.
   (A) “Emergency shelter family home” means a home that provides community-based emergency shelter with an individual or a family that is operated 24 hours a day under the auspices of an emergency shelter licensed by the department in accordance with rules adopted by the department under sections 7801 and 8102.
   (B) “Youth” means a child 12 to 20 years of age.

2. Placement. A licensed emergency shelter may place in an emergency shelter family home operated by the shelter a youth who was referred to the shelter by the Department of Corrections if the shelter has obtained the agreement of the parent or legal guardian of the youth.

3. Requirements. A licensed emergency shelter that operates an emergency shelter family home must be licensed as a child placing agency by the department under rules adopted pursuant to sections 7801 and 8202 and must operate the home under a contract with the Department of Corrections and in accordance with an agreement between the department and the Department of Corrections. An emergency shelter family home may be, but is not required to be, licensed as a children's home by the department under rules adopted pursuant to sections 7801 and 8202.

**Funding**
Maine’s Homeless Youth Program is funded at $397,807 for FY 2016 and $397,807 FY 2017.

**Organizational Support**
- **New Beginnings**
  [www.newbeginmaine.org](http://www.newbeginmaine.org)
- **Preble Street**
  [www.preblestreet.org](http://www.preblestreet.org)
- **Shaw House Bangor**
  [www.theshawhouse.org](http://www.theshawhouse.org)
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<tr>
<th>Massachusetts</th>
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<td><strong>RHYA Statute</strong></td>
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| **Mass. Gen. Laws ch.450, §16W (2015)** | *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same as follows:*

**SECTION 1.** Chapter 6A of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 16V the following 2 sections:-

Section 16W. (a) As used in this section and section 16X, the following words shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

“Fixed, regular nighttime residence”, a dwelling at which a person resides on a regular basis that provides safe shelter, sufficient for meeting both the physical and psychological needs typically met in home environments; provided, however, that “fixed, regular nighttime residence” shall not include: (i) a publicly or privately-operated institutional shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations; (ii) transitional housing; (iii) temporary placement with a peer, friend or family member who has not offered a permanent residence, residential lease or temporary lodging for more than 30 days; or (iv) a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

“Unaccompanied homeless youth”, a person 24 years of age or younger who is not in the physical custody or care of a parent or legal guardian and who lacks a fixed, regular nighttime residence; provided, however, that “unaccompanied homeless youth” shall not include a person incarcerated or otherwise detained under federal or state law.

(b) There shall be a commission within the executive office of health and human services for the purpose of studying and making recommendations relative to services for unaccompanied homeless youth, with the goal of providing a comprehensive and effective response to the unique needs of this population. The focus of the commission’s work shall include, but not be limited to: (i) an analysis of the barriers to serving unaccompanied homeless youth who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender; (ii) an analysis of the barriers to serving unaccompanied youth under 18 years of age; (iii) an assessment of the impact of mandated reporting requirements on unaccompanied homeless youths’ access to services; (iv) the commonwealth’s ability to identify and connect with unaccompanied homeless youth; and (v) recommendations to reduce identified barriers to serving this population. The commission, in formulating its recommendations, shall take into account the best practices and policies in other states and jurisdictions.

The commission shall include: the secretary of health and human services or a designee, who shall serve as chair; the commissioner of children and families or a designee; the commissioner of elementary and secondary education or a designee; the commissioner of public health or a designee; the commissioner of mental health or a designee; the director of Medicaid or a designee; the commissioner of transitional assistance or a designee; the undersecretary for housing and community development or a designee; the commissioner of youth services or a designee; the senate and house chairs of the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities; 1 member of the senate; 1 member of the house of representatives; 1 member who shall be appointed by the house minority leader; 1 member who shall be appointed by the senate minority leader; 3 youths who have experienced homelessness who shall be appointed by the office of the child advocate; 3 direct service providers who work with unaccompanied homeless youths who shall be appointed by the governor; and 1 representative from each of the following organizations: the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Inc.; the Massachusetts Task...
Force on Youth Aging Out of DCF Care; the Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, Inc.; MassEquality Org, the Campaign for Equality, Inc.; the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, Inc.; the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition, Inc. and the Boston Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth. Nongovernmental members shall serve for 2-year terms and may be reappointed.

The commission shall submit an annual report by December 31 to the governor, the clerks of the house of representatives and the senate, the joint committee on children, families and persons with disabilities and the office of the child advocate. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the commission’s findings and any recommendations for regulatory or legislative action, with a timeline for implementation, cost estimates and finance mechanisms, and shall detail the extent of homelessness among unaccompanied homeless youth in the commonwealth and the progress made toward implementing the commission’s recommendations and any other efforts to address the needs of this population.

Section 16X. (a) Subject to appropriation or third party reimbursement, the executive office of health and human services shall enter into performance-based contracts with organizations and agencies to provide housing and support services to address the needs of unaccompanied homeless youths in urban, suburban and rural areas. In entering into such contracts, the executive office of health and human services shall take into consideration the recommendations of the commission on unaccompanied homeless youth established in section 16W on identifying, connecting and serving unaccompanied homeless youth, in general, and unaccompanied homeless youth under the age of 18 and youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, in particular. Contracts authorized in this section shall include housing services for unaccompanied homeless youth which may include, but shall not be limited to: emergency shelter; kinship home placements; short-term housing; and transition to independent living programs. Programs shall provide any such unaccompanied homeless youth with stable out-of-home placement, help to reunite any such youth with the youth’s parent or legal guardian if family reunification is in the youth’s best interest and help to create educational and residential stability. Additional support services may include, but shall not be limited to: individual, family and group counseling; access to medical, dental and mental health care; education and employment services; case management, advocacy and referral services; independent living skills training; and provision of basic needs.

(b) The executive office of health and human services shall monitor organizations awarded contracts under this section to ensure that appropriate and high-quality services are being delivered to unaccompanied homeless youth and shall collect common data and outcome measures from these organizations and agencies. Data collected from the organizations and agencies, the incidence of unaccompanied youth homelessness in the commonwealth and the status of and any change in housing, residential stability, educational stability and outcomes and well-being of unaccompanied homeless youth shall be included in the annual report of the special commission on unaccompanied homeless youth pursuant to section 16W.

SECTION 2. The appointed members of the commission established in section 16W of chapter 6A of the General Laws shall be appointed within 90 days after the effective date of this act.

SECTION 3. Section 208 of chapter 139 of the acts of 2012 is hereby repealed.
Organizational Support

Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, Inc.  
www.mahomeless.org

Massachusetts Task Force on Youth Aging Out of DCF Care
www.thehome.org/site/PageServer?pagename=about_advocacy_about#taskforce

Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, Inc.
www.massappleseed.org

MassEquality Org, the Campaign for Equality, Inc.
www.massequality.org

Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, Inc.
www.mhsa.net

Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition, Inc.
www.masstpc.org

Boston Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth
www.bagly.org

Minnesota

RHY Statute

Minn. Stat. § 256K.45.

Statute Language

Grant Program Established
Grant program established. The commissioner of human services shall establish a Homeless Youth Act fund and award grants to providers who are committed to serving homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness, to provide street and community outreach and drop-in programs, emergency shelter programs, and integrated supportive housing and transitional living programs, consistent with the program descriptions in this section to reduce the incidence of homelessness among youth.

Definitions
(a) The definitions in this subdivision apply to this section.
(b) “Commissioner” means the commissioner of human services.
(c) “Homeless youth” means a person 24 years of age or younger who is unaccompanied by a parent or guardian and is without shelter where appropriate care and supervision are available, whose parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling to provide shelter and care, or who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The following are not fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residences:
(1) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
(2) an institution or a publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;
(3) transitional housing;
(4) a temporary placement with a peer, friend, or family member that has not offered permanent residence, a residential lease, or temporary lodging for more than 30 days; or

(5) a public or private place not designed for, nor ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

Homeless youth does not include persons incarcerated or otherwise detained under federal or state law.

(d) “Youth at risk of homelessness” means a person 24 years of age or younger whose status or circumstances indicate a significant danger of experiencing homelessness in the near future. Status or circumstances that indicate a significant danger may include: (1) youth exiting out-of-home placements; (2) youth who previously were homeless; (3) youth whose parents or primary caregivers are or were previously homeless; (4) youth who are exposed to abuse and neglect in their homes; (5) youth who experience conflict with parents due to chemical or alcohol dependency, mental health disabilities, or other disabilities; and (6) runaways.

(e) “Runaway” means an unmarried child under the age of 18 years who is absent from the home of a parent or guardian or other lawful placement without the consent of the parent, guardian, or lawful custodian.

**Homeless Youth Report**

The commissioner shall prepare a biennial report, beginning in February 2015, which provides meaningful information to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over the issue of homeless youth, that includes, but is not limited to: (1) a list of the areas of the state with the greatest need for services and housing for homeless youth, and the level and nature of the needs identified; (2) details about grants made; (3) the distribution of funds throughout the state based on population need; (4) follow-up information, if available, on the status of homeless youth and whether they have stable housing two years after services are provided; and (5) any other outcomes for populations served to determine the effectiveness of the programs and use of funding.

**Services Provided - Street and Community Outreach and Drop-In Programs**

Youth drop-in centers must provide walk-in access to crisis intervention and ongoing supportive services including one-to-one case management services on a self-referral basis. Street and community outreach programs must locate, contact, and provide information, referrals, and services to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness, and runaways. Information, referrals, and services provided may include, but are not limited to:

(1) family reunification services;
(2) conflict resolution or mediation counseling;
(3) assistance in obtaining temporary emergency shelter;
(4) assistance in obtaining food, clothing, medical care, or mental health counseling;
(5) counseling regarding violence, sexual exploitation, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy;
(6) referrals to other agencies that provide support services to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness, and runaways;
(7) assistance with education, employment, and independent living skills;
(8) aftercare services;
(9) specialized services for highly vulnerable runaways and homeless youth, including teen parents, emotionally disturbed and mentally ill youth, and sexually exploited youth; and
(10) homelessness prevention.
Services Provided - Emergency Shelter Program
(a) Emergency shelter programs must provide homeless youth and runaways with referral and walk-in access to emergency, short-term residential care. The program shall provide homeless youth and runaways with safe, dignified shelter, including private shower facilities, beds, and at least one meal each day; and shall assist a runaway and homeless youth with reunification with the family or legal guardian when required or appropriate.
(b) The services provided at emergency shelters may include, but are not limited to:
(1) family reunification services;
(2) individual, family, and group counseling;
(3) assistance obtaining clothing;
(4) access to medical and dental care and mental health counseling;
(5) education and employment services;
(6) recreational activities;
(7) advocacy and referral services;
(8) independent living skills training;
(9) aftercare and follow-up services;
(10) transportation; and
(11) homelessness prevention.

Services Provided - Supportive Housing and Transitional Living Programs
Transitional living programs must help homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness to find and maintain safe, dignified housing. The program may also provide rental assistance and related supportive services, or refer youth to other organizations or agencies that provide such services. Services provided may include, but are not limited to:
(1) educational assessment and referrals to educational programs;
(2) career planning, employment, work skill training, and independent living skills training;
(3) job placement;
(4) budgeting and money management;
(5) assistance in securing housing appropriate to needs and income;
(6) counseling regarding violence, sexual exploitation, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy;
(7) referral for medical services or chemical dependency treatment;
(8) parenting skills;
(9) self-sufficiency support services or life skill training;
(10) aftercare and follow-up services; and
(11) homelessness prevention.

Funding
Funds appropriated for this section may be expended on programs described under subdivisions 3 to 5 [services provided], technical assistance, and capacity building to meet the greatest need on a statewide basis. The commissioner will provide outreach, technical assistance, and program development support to increase capacity to new and existing service providers to better meet needs statewide, particularly in areas where services for homeless youth have not been established, especially in greater Minnesota.

Funding
Minnesota’s Homeless Youth Act is funded at $8.3 million per biennium for FY 2016-FY 2017.

Organizational Support
Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless
www.mnhomelesscoalition.org/
New York

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<tr>
<th>RHY Statute</th>
<th>N.Y. Exec. Law §§ 532-a – 532-e</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statute</td>
<td>Definitions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. “Runaway youth” shall mean a person under the age of eighteen years who is absent from his legal residence without the consent of his parent, legal guardian or custodian.</td>
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<td>2. “Homeless youth” shall mean a person under the age of twenty-one who is in need of services and is without a place of shelter where supervision and care are available.</td>
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<td>3. “Youth in need of crisis intervention or respite services” shall mean a person under the age of eighteen years who is a potential respondent under article seven of the family court act, who, with the consent of his or her parent or other person legally responsible for the youth, is determined by the local juvenile probation department or social services official to be in need of crisis intervention or respite services.</td>
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<td>4. [Eff. until Dec. 31, 2018, pursuant to L.2013, c. 57, pt. G, § 9. See, also, subd. 4 below.] “Approved runaway program” shall mean any non-residential program approved by the office of children and family services after submission by the municipality, as part of its comprehensive plan, or any residential facility which is operated by an authorized agency as defined in subdivision ten of section three hundred seventy-one of the social services law, and approved by the office of children and family services after submission by the municipality as part of its comprehensive plan, established and operated to provide services to runaway and homeless youth in accordance with the regulations of the office of temporary and disability assistance and the office of children and family services. Such programs may also provide non-residential crisis intervention and residential respite services to youth in need of crisis intervention or respite services, as defined in this section. Residential respite services in an approved runaway program may be provided for no more than twenty-one days in accordance with the regulations of the office of children and family services.</td>
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<td>5. [Eff until Dec. 31, 2018, pursuant to L.2013, c. 57, pt. G, § 9. See, also, subd. 5 below.] “Runaway and homeless youth service coordinator” shall mean any person so designated by a municipality whose duties shall include but not be limited to answering inquiries at any time concerning transportation, shelter and other services available to a runaway or homeless youth or a youth in need of crisis intervention or respite services.</td>
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<td>6. [Eff. Dec. 31, 2018, pursuant to L.2013, c. 57, pt. G, § 9. See, also, subd. 5 above.] “Runaway and homeless youth service coordinator” shall mean any person designated by a county whose duties shall include but not be limited to answering inquiries at any time...</td>
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concerning transportation, shelter and other services available to a runaway or homeless youth or a youth in need of crisis intervention or respite services.


“Transitional independent living support program” shall mean any non-residential program approved by the office of children and family services after submission by the municipality as part of its comprehensive plan, or any residential facility approved by the office of children and family services after submission by the municipality as part of its comprehensive plan to offer youth development programs, established and operated to provide supportive services, for a period of up to eighteen months in accordance with the regulations of the office of children and family services, to enable homeless youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one to progress from crisis care and transitional care to independent living. Such transitional independent living support program may also provide services to youth in need of crisis intervention or respite services. Notwithstanding the time limitation in paragraph (i) of subdivision (d) of section seven hundred thirty-five of the family court act, residential respite services may be provided in a transitional independent living support program for a period of more than twenty-one days.


“Transitional independent living support program” shall mean any non-residential program approved by the office of children and family services after submission by the county youth bureau as part of its comprehensive plan, or any residential facility approved by the office of children and family services after submission by the county youth bureau as part of its comprehensive plan, established and operated to provide supportive services, for a period of up to eighteen months in accordance with the regulations of the office of children and family services, to enable homeless youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one to progress from crisis care and transitional care to independent living. Such transitional independent living support program may also provide services to youth in need of crisis intervention or respite services. Notwithstanding the time limitation in paragraph (i) of subdivision (d) of section seven hundred thirty-five of the family court act, residential respite services may be provided in a transitional independent living support program for a period of more than twenty-one days.

7. “Safe house” shall mean a residential program for sexually exploited children as defined in subdivision one of section four hundred forty-seven-a of the social services law. An approved runaway program may operate a short-term safe house, as defined in subdivision two of section four hundred forty-seven-a of the social services law, for sexually exploited children. A transitional independent living support program may operate a long-term safe house for sexually exploited children.

Powers and Duties of Approved Runaway Programs

1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, pursuant to regulations of the office of children and family services an approved runaway program is authorized to and shall:

(a) provide assistance to any runaway or homeless youth or youth in need of crisis intervention or respite services as defined in this article;

(b) attempt to determine the cause for the youth's runaway or homeless status;

(c) explain to the runaway and homeless youth his legal rights and options of service or other assistance available to the youth;

(d) work towards reuniting such youth with his parent or guardian as soon as practicable in accordance with section five hundred thirty-two-c of this article;
(e) assist in arranging for necessary services for runaway or homeless youth, and where appropriate, their families, including but not limited to food, shelter, clothing, medical care, education and individual and family counseling. Where the approved runaway program concludes that such runaway or homeless youth would be eligible for assistance, care or services from a local social services district, it shall assist the youth in securing such assistance, care or services as the youth is entitled to; and
(f) immediately report to the local child protective service where it has reasonable cause to suspect that the runaway or homeless youth has been abused or neglected or when such youth maintains such to be the case.

2. [Eff. until Dec. 31, 2018, pursuant to L.2013, c. 57, pt. G, § 9. See, also, subd. 2, below.] The runaway youth may remain in the program on a voluntary basis for a period not to exceed thirty days from the date of admission where the filing of a petition pursuant to article ten of the family court act is not contemplated, in order that arrangements can be made for the runaway youth’s return home, alternative residential placement pursuant to section three hundred ninety-eight of the social services law, or any other suitable plan. If the runaway youth and the parent, guardian or custodian agree, in writing, the runaway youth may remain in the runaway program up to sixty days without the filing of a petition pursuant to article ten of the family court act, provided that in any such case the facility shall first have obtained the approval of the applicable municipal runaway coordinator, who shall notify the municipality’s youth bureau of his or her approval together with a statement as to the reason why such additional residential stay is necessary and a description of the efforts being made to find suitable alternative living arrangements for such youth.

2. [Eff. Dec. 31, 2018, pursuant to L.2013, c. 57, pt. G, § 9. See, also, subd. 2, above.] The runaway youth may remain in the program on a voluntary basis for a period not to exceed thirty days from the date of admission where the filing of a petition pursuant to article ten of the family court act is not contemplated, in order that arrangements can be made for the runaway youth’s return home, alternative residential placement pursuant to section three hundred ninety-eight of the social services law, or any other suitable plan. If the runaway youth and the parent, guardian or custodian agree, in writing, the runaway youth may remain in the runaway program up to sixty days without the filing of a petition pursuant to article ten of the family court act, provided that in any such case the facility shall first have obtained the approval of the county runaway coordinator, who shall notify the county youth bureau of his approval together with a statement as to the reason why such additional residential stay is necessary and a description of the efforts being made to find suitable alternative living arrangements for such youth.

Notice to Parents and Release of Youth

1. The staff of the program shall, to the maximum extent possible, preferably within twenty-four hours but within no more than seventy-two hours following the youth’s admission into the program, notify such runaway youth’s parent, guardian or custodian of his or her physical and emotional condition, and the circumstances surrounding the runaway youth’s presence at the program, unless there are compelling circumstances why the parent, guardian or custodian should not be so notified. Where such circumstances exist, the runaway program director or his designee shall either file an appropriate petition in the family court, refer the youth to the local social services district, or in instances where abuse or neglect is suspected, report such case pursuant to title six of article six of the social services law.

2. Where custody of the youth upon leaving the approved program is assumed by a relative or other person, other than the parent or guardian, the staff of the program shall so notify
the parent or guardian as soon as practicable after the release of the youth. The officers, directors or employees of an approved runaway program shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability for or arising out of the release of a runaway or homeless youth to a relative or other responsible person other than a parent or guardian.

Services Provided: Residential Facilities as Transitional Independent Living Program
Notwithstanding any inconsistent provision of law, pursuant to regulations of the office of children and family services, residential facilities operating as transitional independent living support programs are authorized to and shall:
(a) provide shelter to homeless youth between the ages of sixteen and twenty-one as defined in this article;
(b) work toward reuniting such homeless youth with his parent, guardian or custodian, where possible;
(c) provide or assist in securing necessary services for such homeless youth, and where appropriate, his family, including but not limited to housing, educational, medical care, legal, mental health, and substance and alcohol abuse services. Where such program concludes that such homeless youth would be eligible for assistance, care or services from a local social services district, it shall assist such youth in securing such assistance, care or services;
(d) for a homeless youth whose service plan involves independent living, provide practical assistance in achieving independence, either through direct provision of services or through written agreements with other community and public agencies for the provision of services in the following areas; high school education or high school equivalency education; higher education assessment; job training and job placement; counseling; assistance in the development of socialization skills; guidance and assistance in securing housing appropriate to needs and income; and training in the development of skills necessary for responsible independent living, including but not limited to money and home management, personal care, and health maintenance; and
(e) provide residential services to a youth in need of crisis intervention or respite services, as defined in this article; and
(f) continue to provide services to a homeless youth who is not yet eighteen years of age but who has reached the eighteen month maximum provided by subdivision six of section five hundred thirty-two-a of this article, until he or she is eighteen years of age or for an additional six months if he or she is still under the age of eighteen; and
(g) provide such reports and data as specified by the office of children and family services.

Evaluations, Reports, and Regulations
The office of children and family services shall: (a) visit, inspect and make periodic reports on the operation and adequacy of approved runaway programs and transitional independent living support programs;
(b) certify residential facilities providing care to runaway and/or homeless youth, provided, however, that no certification shall be issued or renewed until it can be demonstrated that a program operated pursuant to this article has consistent with appropriate collective bargaining agreements and applicable provisions of the civil service law, developed and implemented a procedure for reviewing and evaluating the backgrounds of and the information supplied by any person applying to be an employee, volunteer or consultant, which shall include but not be limited to the following requirements: that the applicants set forth his or her employment history, provide personal and employment references and sign a
sworn statement indicating whether the applicant, to the best of his or her knowledge, has ever been convicted of a crime in this state or any other jurisdiction;
(c) maintain a register of approved runaway programs, transitional independent living support programs and runaway and homeless youth service coordinators;
(d) submit to the governor and legislature an annual report detailing the numbers and characteristics of runaway and otherwise homeless youth throughout the state and their problems and service needs;
(e) develop and promulgate in consultation with county youth bureaus and organizations or programs which have had past experience dealing with runaway and homeless youth, regulations concerning the coordination and integration of services available for runaway and otherwise homeless youth and prohibiting the disclosure or transferal of any records containing the identity of individual youth receiving services pursuant to this section, without the written consent of the youth; and
(f) develop and promulgate regulations in consultation with the office of temporary and disability assistance concerning the provision of services by transitional independent living support programs consistent with the provisions of this article.
(g) in conjunction with the commissioner of education, develop and annually review a plan to ensure coordination and access to education for homeless children, in accordance with the provisions of section thirty-two hundred nine of the education law, and monitor compliance of residential programs for runaway and homeless youth with such plan.

| Funding | New York’s Runaway and Homeless Youth Act of Nineteen Hundred Seventy-Eight is funded at $4.48 million for FY 2015. |
| Organizational Support | Coalition for Homeless Youth  [www.nychy.org](http://www.nychy.org)  
Covenant House  [ny.covenanthouse.org](http://ny.covenanthouse.org)  
Oswego County Opportunities  [www.oco.org](http://www.oco.org)  
The Center for Youth  [www.centerforyouth.net](http://www.centerforyouth.net)  
Good Sheppard Services  [www.goodshepherds.org](http://www.goodshepherds.org)  
GEMS  [www.gems-girls.org](http://www.gems-girls.org)  
Safe Horizons  [www.safehorizon.org](http://www.safehorizon.org)  
Ali Forney Center  [www.aliforneycenter.org](http://www.aliforneycenter.org)  
The Door  [www.door.org](http://www.door.org) |
**Washington**

| RHY Statute | 2015 Washington Senate Bill No. 5404  
|---|---|
| Statute Language | **Definitions**  
(1) "Child," "juvenile," "youth," and "minor" means any unemancipated individual who is under the chronological age of eighteen years.  
(3) "Runaway" means an unmarried and unemancipated minor who is absent from the home of a parent or guardian or other lawful placement without the consent of the parent, guardian, or lawful custodian.  
(4) "Street youth" means a person under the age of eighteen who lives outdoors or in another unsafe location not intended for occupancy by the minor and who is not residing with his or her parent or at his or her legally authorized residence.  
(5) "Unaccompanied" means a youth or young adult experiencing homelessness while not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.  
(6) "Young adult" means a person between eighteen and twenty-four years of age.  

**Legislative Findings.**  
(1) The legislature finds that every night thousands of homeless youth in Washington go to sleep without the safety, stability, and support of a family or a home. This population is exposed to an increased level of violence, human trafficking, and exploitation resulting in a higher incidence of substance abuse, illness, and death. The prevention and reduction of youth and young adult homelessness and protection of homeless youth is of key concern to the state. Nothing in chapter ..., Laws of 2015 (this act) is meant to diminish the work accomplished by the implementation of Becca legislation but rather, the intent of the legislature is to further enhance the state's efforts in working with unaccompanied homeless youth and runaways to encourage family reconciliation or permanent housing and support through dependency when family reconciliation is not a viable alternative.  
(2) Successfully addressing youth and young adult homelessness ensures that homeless youth and young adults in our state have the support they need to thrive and avoid involvement in the justice system, human trafficking, long-term, avoidable use of public benefits, and extended adult homelessness.  
(3) Providing appropriate, relevant, and readily accessible services is critical for addressing one-time, episodic, or longer-term homelessness among youth and young adults, and keeping homeless youth and young adults safe, housed, and connected to family.  
(4) The coordination of statewide programs to combat youth and young adult homelessness should include programs addressing both youth and young adults. However, the legislature acknowledges that current law and best practices mandate that youth programs and young adult programs be segregated in their implementation. The legislature further finds that the differing needs of these populations should be considered when assessing which programs are relevant and appropriate.  
(5) To successfully reduce and prevent youth and young adult homelessness, it is the goal of the legislature to have the following key components available and accessible:
(a) Stable housing: It is the goal of the legislature to provide a safe and healthy place for homeless youth to sleep each night until permanency can be reached. Every homeless young adult in our state deserves access to housing that gives them a safe, healthy, and supported launching pad to adulthood. Every family in crisis should have appropriate support as they work to keep their children housed and safe. It is the goal of the legislature that every homeless youth discharged from a public system of care in our state will not be discharged into homelessness.

(b) Family reconciliation: All homeless youth should have access to services that support reunification with immediate family. When reunification is not possible for homeless youth, youth should be placed in the custody of the department of social and health services.

(c) Permanent connections: Every homeless young adult should have opportunities to establish positive, healthy relationships with adults, including family members, employers, landlords, teachers, and community members, with whom they can maintain connections and from whom they can receive ongoing, long-term support to help them develop the skills and experiences necessary to achieve a successful transition to adulthood.

(d) Education and employment: Every homeless young adult in our state deserves the opportunity and support they need to complete their high school education and pursue additional education and training. It is the goal of the legislature that every homeless young adult in our state will have the opportunity to engage in employment training and be able to access employment. With both education and employment support and opportunities, young adults will have the skills they need to become self-sufficient, self-reliant, and independent.

(e) Social and emotional well-being: Every homeless youth and young adult in our state should have access to both behavioral health care and physical health care. Every state-funded program for homeless youth and young adults must endeavor to identify, encourage, and nurture each youth’s strengths and abilities and demonstrate a commitment to youth-centered programming.

Creation of Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs

(1) There is created the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs within the department.

(2) Activities of the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs must be carried out by a director of the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs, supervised by the director of the department or his or her designee.

(3) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs is responsible for leading efforts under this subchapter to coordinate a spectrum of ongoing and future funding, policy, and practice efforts related to homeless youth and improving the safety, health, and welfare of homeless youth in this state.

(4) The measurable goals of the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs are to: (a) Measurably decrease the number of homeless youth and young adults by identifying programs that address the initial causes of homelessness, and (b) measurably increase permanency rates among homeless youth by decreasing the length and occurrences of youth homelessness caused by a youth’s separation from family or a legal guardian.

(5) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall (a) gather data and outcome measures, (b) initiate data sharing agreements, (c) develop specific recommendations and timelines to address funding, policy, and practice gaps within the state system for addressing the five priority service areas identified in section 4 of this act, (d) make reports, (e) increase system integration and coordinate efforts to prevent state systems from discharging youth and young adults into homelessness, (f) develop measures to include
by county and statewide the number of homeless youth, dependency status, family reunification status, housing status, program participation, and runaway status, and (g) develop a comprehensive plan to encourage identification of youth experiencing homelessness, promote family stability, and eliminate youth and young adult homelessness.

(6)(a) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall regularly consult with an advisory committee, comprised of advocates, at least two legislators, at least two parent advocates, at least one representative from law enforcement, service providers, and other stakeholders knowledgeable in the provision of services to homeless youth and young adults, including the prevention of youth and young adult homelessness, the dependency system, and family reunification, for a total of twelve members. The advisory committee shall provide guidance and recommendations to the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs regarding funding, policy, and practice gaps within and among state programs.

(b) The advisory committee must be staffed by the department.

(c) The members of the advisory committee must be appointed by the governor, except for the legislators who must be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate.

(d) The advisory committee must have its initial meeting no later than March 1, 2016.

(7) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs must be operational no later than January 1, 2016. Transfer of powers, duties, and functions of the department of social and health services to the department of commerce pertaining to youth homeless services and programs identified in section 7(2) of this act may occur before this date.

**Reporting and Gathering Data**

(1) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall identify data and outcomes measures from which to evaluate future public investment in homeless youth services.

(2) By December 1, 2016, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs must submit a report to the governor and the legislature to inform recommendations for funding, policy, and best practices in the five priority service areas identified in section 4 of this act and present recommendations to address funding, policy, and practice gaps in the state system.

(3) Recommendations must include, but are not limited to: Strategies to enhance coordination between providers of youth homelessness programs and the child welfare system, and strategies for communities to identify homeless youth and ensure their protection and referral to appropriate services, including family reconciliation and transition to dependent status for minors.

**Authorization for Administration Services and Funding through Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs**

(1)(a) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall report to the director or the director’s designee.

(b)(i) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs may distribute grants to providers who serve homeless youth and young adults throughout the state.

(ii) The grants must fund services in the five priority service areas identified in section 4 [Legislative Findings] of this act.

(iii) The grants must be expended on a statewide basis and may be used to support direct services, as well as technical assistance, evaluation, and capacity building.
(2) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall provide management and oversight guidance and direction to the following programs:
(a) HOPE centers as described in RCW 74.15.220 (as recodified by this act);
(b) Crisis residential centers as described in RCW 74.13.032 (as recodified by this act);
(c) Street youth services;
(d) Independent youth housing programs as described in RCW 43.63A.305.

Statewide Training for Criminal Justice Personnel
(1) The office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs shall establish a statewide training program on homeless youth for criminal justice personnel. The training must include identifying homeless youth, existing laws governing the intersection of law enforcement and homeless youth, and best practices for approaching and engaging homeless youth in appropriate services.
(2) The training must be provided where possible by an entity that has experience in developing coalitions, training, programs, and policy on homeless youth in Washington.

Evaluation and Review of Programs
The joint legislative audit and review committee shall conduct a review of state-funded programs that serve unaccompanied homeless youth under the age of eighteen, including dependent youth, to determine what performance measures exist, what statutory reporting requirements exist, and whether there is reliable data on ages of youth served, length of stay, and effectiveness of program exit and reentry. Where statutory reporting requirements do exist, the joint legislative audit and review committee shall review the programs’ compliance with relevant statutory reporting requirements. The committee shall report on what services are provided to unaccompanied homeless youth including, but not limited to: Outreach and other nonshelter services, shelter services, and family reconciliation. The committee is also to report on the number of unaccompanied homeless youth statewide and by county and city and how this number is determined. The programs reviewed may include, but are not limited to, HOPE centers as described in RCW 74.15.220 (as recodified by this act) and crisis residential centers as described in RCW 74.13.032 (as recodified by this act).

Additional Definitions
...
(4) “Crisis residential center” means a secure or semi-secure facility established pursuant to chapter 74.13 RCW.
...
(13) “HOPE center” means an agency licensed by the secretary to provide temporary residential placement and other services to street youth. A street youth may remain in a HOPE center for thirty days while services are arranged and permanent placement is coordinated. No street youth may stay longer than thirty days unless approved by the department and any additional days approved by the department must be based on the unavailability of a long-term placement option. A street youth whose parent wants him or her returned to home may remain in a HOPE center until his or her parent arranges return of the youth, not longer. All other street youth must have court approval under chapter 13.34 or 13.32A RCW to remain in a HOPE center up to thirty days.
...
(21) "Secure facility" means a crisis residential center, or portion thereof, that has locking doors, locking windows, or a secured perimeter, designed and operated to prevent a child from leaving without permission of the facility staff.

(22) "Semi-secure facility" means any facility including, but not limited to, crisis residential centers or specialized foster family homes, operated in a manner to reasonably assure that youth placed there will not run away. Pursuant to rules established by the department, the facility administrator shall establish reasonable hours for residents to come and go from the facility such that no residents are free to come and go at all hours of the day and night. To prevent residents from taking unreasonable actions, the facility administrator, where appropriate, may condition a resident's leaving the facility upon the resident being accompanied by the administrator or the administrator's designee and the resident may be required to notify the administrator or the administrator's designee of any intent to leave, his or her intended destination, and the probable time of his or her return to the center.

(23) "Staff secure facility" means a structured group care facility licensed under rules adopted by the department of social and health services with a ratio of at least one adult staff member to every two children.

Crisis Residential Centers- Establishment and Duties

(1) The department shall establish, through performance-based contracts with private or public vendors, regional crisis residential centers with semi-secure facilities. These facilities shall be structured group care facilities licensed under rules adopted by the department and shall have an average of at least four adult staff members and in no event less than three adult staff members to every eight children.

(2) Crisis residential centers must record client information into a homeless management information system specified by the department.

(3) Within available funds appropriated for this purpose, the department shall establish, through performance-based contracts with private or public vendors, regional crisis residential centers with secure facilities. These facilities shall be facilities licensed under rules adopted by the department. These centers may also include semi-secure facilities and to such extent shall be subject to subsection (1) of this section.

(4) The department shall, in addition to the facilities established under subsections (1) and (2) of this section, establish additional crisis residential centers pursuant to performance-based contracts with licensed private group care facilities.

(5) The department is authorized to allow contracting entities to include a combination of secure or semi-secure crisis residential centers as defined in RCW 13.32A.030 and/or HOPE centers pursuant to RCW 74.15.220 (as recodified by this act) in the same building or structure. The department shall permit the colocation of these centers only if the entity operating the facility agrees to designate a particular number of beds to each type of center that is located within the building or structure.

(6) The staff at the facilities established under this section shall be trained so that they may effectively counsel juveniles admitted to the centers, provide treatment, supervision, and structure to the juveniles that recognize the need for support and the varying circumstances that cause children to leave their families, and carry out the responsibilities stated in RCW 13.32A.090 (as recodified by this act).

(7) The secure facilities located within crisis residential centers shall be operated to conform with the definition in RCW 13.32A.030. The facilities shall have an average of no less than one adult staff member to every ten children. The staffing ratio shall continue to ensure the safety of the children.
(8) If a secure crisis residential center is located in or adjacent to a secure juvenile detention facility, the center shall be operated in a manner that prevents in-person contact between the residents of the center and the persons held in such facility.

**Crisis Residential Center- Duty to Inform Parents/Transporting Child/Notice to Department**

(1) The administrator of a designated crisis residential center shall perform the duties under subsection (3) of this section:

(a) Upon admitting a child who has been brought to the center by a law enforcement officer under [RCW 13.32A.060](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/index.jsp?ag=rcw&d=13&hash=60745991_d279a8e8) (as recodified by this act);

(b) Upon admitting a child who has run away from home or has requested admittance to the center;

(c) Upon learning from a person under [RCW 13.32A.082](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/index.jsp?ag=rcw&d=13&hash=60745991_d279a8e8) that the person is providing shelter to a child absent from home; or

(d) Upon learning that a child has been placed with a responsible adult pursuant to [RCW 13.32A.060](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/index.jsp?ag=rcw&d=13&hash=60745991_d279a8e8) (as recodified by this act).

(2) Transportation expenses of the child shall be at the parent’s expense to the extent of his or her ability to pay, with any unmet transportation expenses assumed by the crisis residential center.

(3) When any of the circumstances under subsection (1) of this section are present, the administrator of a center shall perform the following duties:

(a) Immediately notify the child's parent of the child's whereabouts, physical and emotional condition, and the circumstances surrounding his or her placement;

(b) Initially notify the parent that it is the paramount concern of the family reconciliation service personnel to achieve a reconciliation between the parent and child to reunify the family and inform the parent as to the procedures to be followed under this chapter;

(c) Inform the parent whether a referral to children's protective services has been made and, if so, inform the parent of the standard pursuant to [RCW 26.44.020 (1)](https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/index.jsp?ag=rcw&d=26&hash=60745991_d279a8e8) governing child abuse and neglect in this state; and either

(i) Arrange transportation for the child to the residence of the parent, as soon as practicable, when the child and his or her parent agrees to the child's return home or when the parent produces a copy of a court order entered under this chapter requiring the child to reside in the parent's home; or

(ii) Arrange transportation for the child to: (A) An out-of-home placement which may include a licensed group care facility or foster family when agreed to by the child and parent; or (B) a certified or licensed mental health or chemical dependency program of the parent's choice.

(4) If the administrator of the crisis residential center performs the duties listed in subsection (3) of this section, he or she shall also notify the department of social and health services that a child has been admitted to the crisis residential center.

**Crisis Residential Centers- Multidisciplinary Teams**

(1) The administrator of a crisis residential center may convene a multidisciplinary team, which is to be locally based and administered, at the request of a child placed at the center or the child's parent.

(b) If the administrator has reasonable cause to believe that a child is a child in need of services and the parent is unavailable or unwilling to continue efforts to maintain the family structure, the administrator shall immediately convene a multidisciplinary team.

(c) A parent may disband a team twenty-four hours, excluding weekends and holidays, after receiving notice of formation of the team under (b) of this subsection unless a petition has
been filed under [RCW 13.32A.140](#). If a petition has been filed the parent may not disband the team until the hearing is held under [RCW 13.32A.179](#). The court may allow the team to continue if an out-of-home placement is ordered under [RCW 13.32A.179(3)](#). Upon the filing of an at-risk youth or dependency petition the team shall cease to exist, unless the parent requests continuation of the team or unless the out-of-home placement was ordered under [RCW 13.32A.179(3)](#).

(2) The administrator shall request participation of appropriate state agencies to assist in the coordination and delivery of services through the multidisciplinary teams. Those agencies that agree to participate shall provide the secretary all information necessary to facilitate forming a multidisciplinary team and the administrator shall provide this information to the administrator of each crisis residential center.

(3) The administrator shall also seek participation from representatives of mental health and drug and alcohol treatment providers as appropriate.

(4) A parent shall be advised of the request to form a multidisciplinary team and may select additional members of the multidisciplinary team. The parent or child may request any person or persons to participate including, but not limited to, educators, law enforcement personnel, court personnel, family therapists, licensed health care practitioners, social service providers, youth residential placement providers, other family members, church representatives, and members of their own community. The administrator shall assist in obtaining the prompt participation of persons requested by the parent or child.

(5) When an administrator of a crisis residential center requests the formation of a team, the state agencies must respond as soon as possible.

### Crisis Residential Centers- Purpose and Authority of Multidisciplinary Teams

(1) The purpose of the multidisciplinary team is to assist in a coordinated referral of the family to available social and health-related services.

(2) The team shall have the authority to evaluate the juvenile, and family members, if appropriate and agreed to by the parent, and shall:

(a) With parental input, develop a plan of appropriate available services and assist the family in obtaining those services;

(b) Make a referral to the designated chemical dependency specialist or the county designated mental health professional, if appropriate;

(c) Recommend no further intervention because the juvenile and his or her family have resolved the problem causing the family conflict; or

(d) With the parent's consent, work with them to achieve reconciliation of the child and family.

(3) At the first meeting of the multidisciplinary team, it shall choose a member to coordinate the team's efforts. The parent member of the multidisciplinary team must agree with the choice of coordinator. The team shall meet or communicate as often as necessary to assist the family.

(4) The coordinator of the multidisciplinary team may assist in filing a child in need of services petition when requested by the parent or child or an at-risk youth petition when requested by the parent. The multidisciplinary team shall have no standing as a party in any action under this title.

(5) If the administrator is unable to contact the child's parent, the multidisciplinary team may be used for assistance. If the parent has not been contacted within five days the administrator shall contact the department of social and health services and request the case be reviewed for a dependency filing under chapter 13.34 RCW.
For more on Crisis Residential Centers see 74.13.033 and 74.13.034

Hope Centers- Establishment and Requirements
The department shall establish HOPE centers that provide no more than seventy-five beds across the state and may establish HOPE centers by contract, within funds appropriated by the legislature specifically for this purpose. HOPE centers shall be operated in a manner to reasonably assure that street youth placed there will not run away. Street youth may leave a HOPE center during the course of the day to attend school or other necessary appointments, but the street youth must be accompanied by an administrator or an administrator’s designee. The street youth must provide the administration with specific information regarding his or her destination and expected time of return to the HOPE center. Any street youth who runs away from a HOPE center shall not be readmitted unless specifically authorized by the street youth’s placement and liaison specialist, and the placement and liaison specialist shall document with specific factual findings an appropriate basis for readmitting any street youth to a HOPE center. HOPE centers are required to have the following:
(1) A license issued by the department of social and health services;
(2) A professional with a master’s degree in counseling, social work, or related field and at least one year of experience working with street youth or a bachelor of arts degree in social work or a related field and five years of experience working with street youth. This professional staff person may be contractual or a part-time employee, but must be available to work with street youth in a HOPE center at a ratio of one to every fifteen youth staying in a HOPE center. This professional shall be known as a placement and liaison specialist. Preference shall be given to those professionals cross-credentialed in mental health and chemical dependency. The placement and liaison specialist shall:
(a) Conduct an assessment of the street youth that includes a determination of the street youth's legal status regarding residential placement;
(b) Facilitate the street youth’s return to his or her legally authorized residence at the earliest possible date or initiate processes to arrange legally authorized appropriate placement. Any street youth who may meet the definition of dependent child under RCW 13.34.030 must be referred to the department of social and health services. The department of social and health services shall determine whether a dependency petition should be filed under chapter 13.34 RCW. A shelter care hearing must be held within seventy-two hours to authorize out-of-home placement for any youth the department of social and health services determines is appropriate for out-of-home placement under chapter 13.34 RCW. All of the provisions of chapter 13.32A RCW must be followed for children in need of services or at-risk youth;
(c) Interface with other relevant resources and system representatives to secure long-term residential placement and other needed services for the street youth;
(d) Be assigned immediately to each youth and meet with the youth within eight hours of the youth receiving HOPE center services;
(e) Facilitate a physical examination of any street youth who has not seen a physician within one year prior to residence at a HOPE center and facilitate evaluation by a county-designated mental health professional, a chemical dependency specialist, or both if appropriate; and
(f) Arrange an educational assessment to measure the street youth’s competency level in reading, writing, and basic mathematics, and that will measure learning disabilities or special needs;
(3) Staff trained in development needs of street youth as determined by the department, including an administrator who is a professional with a master’s degree in counseling, social
work, or a related field and at least one year of experience working with street youth, or a bachelor of arts degree in social work or a related field and five years of experience working with street youth, who must work with the placement and liaison specialist to provide appropriate services on site;

(4) A data collection system that measures outcomes for the population served, and enables research and evaluation that can be used for future program development and service delivery. Data collection systems must have confidentiality rules and protocols developed by the department;

(5) Notification requirements that meet the notification requirements of chapter 13.32A RCW. The youth’s arrival date and time must be logged at intake by HOPE center staff. The staff must immediately notify law enforcement and dependency caseworkers if a street youth runs away from a HOPE center. A child may be transferred to a secure facility as defined in RCW 13.32A.030 whenever the staff reasonably believes that a street youth is likely to leave the HOPE center and not return after full consideration of the factors set forth in RCW 13.32A.130(2)(a), (i) and (ii) (as recodified by this act). The street youth’s temporary placement in the HOPE center must be authorized by the court or the secretary of the department of social and health services if the youth is a dependent of the state under chapter 13.34 RCW or the department of social and health services is responsible for the youth under chapter 13.32A RCW, or by the youth’s parent or legal custodian, until such time as the parent can retrieve the youth who is returning to home;

(6) HOPE centers must identify to the department of social and health services any street youth it serves who is not returning promptly to home. The department of social and health services then must contact the missing children’s clearinghouse identified in chapter 13.60 RCW and either report the youth’s location or report that the youth is the subject of a dependency action and the parent should receive notice from the department of social and health services;

(7) Services that provide counseling and education to the street youth; and

(8) The department shall award contracts for the operation of HOPE center beds with the goal of facilitating the coordination of services provided for youth by such programs and those services provided by secure and semi-secure crisis residential centers.

Hope Centers- Eligibility

To be eligible for placement in a HOPE center, a minor must be either a street youth, as that term is defined in this chapter, or a youth who, without placement in a HOPE center, will continue to participate in increasingly risky behavior. Youth may also self-refer to a HOPE center. Payment for a HOPE center bed is not contingent upon prior approval by the department; however, approval from the department of social and health services is needed if the youth is dependent under chapter 13.34 RCW.

Washington Youth and Families Fund

(1)(a) There is created in the custody of the state treasurer an account to be known as the Washington youth and families fund. Revenues to the fund consist of appropriations by the legislature, private contributions, and all other sources deposited in the fund.

(b) Expenditures from the fund may only be used for the purposes of the program established in this section, including administrative expenses. Only the director of the department of commerce, or the director’s designee, may authorize expenditures.

(c) Expenditures from the fund are exempt from appropriations and the allotment provisions of chapter 43.88 RCW. However, money used for program administration by the department
is subject to the allotment and budgetary controls of chapter 43.88 RCW, and an appropriation is required for these expenditures.

(2) The department may expend moneys from the fund to provide state matching funds for housing-based supportive services for homeless youth and families.

(3) Activities eligible for funding through the fund include, but are not limited to, the following:
   (a) Case management;
   (b) Counseling;
   (c) Referrals to employment support and job training services and direct employment support and job training services;
   (d) Domestic violence services and programs;
   (e) Mental health treatment, services, and programs;
   (f) Substance abuse treatment, services, and programs;
   (g) Parenting skills education and training;
   (h) Transportation assistance;
   (i) Child care; and
   (j) Other supportive services identified by the department to be an important link for housing stability.

(4) Organizations that may receive funds from the fund include local housing authorities, nonprofit community or neighborhood-based organizations, public development authorities, federally recognized Indian tribes in the state, and regional or statewide nonprofit housing assistance organizations.

| Funding | Washington’s Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Act (HYPP) is funded per biennium. $12,541,000 of home-security fund appropriations, is existing funding (prior to enacting HYPP) and supports existing programs over two years: $10,741,000 for contracting with service providers of outreach, crisis residential centers, and HOPE centers and $1,800,000 for transitional housings assistance or partial payments for rent assistance under independent youth housing program.
In FY 2016, $512,000 is solely for street youth services and $433,000 is solely for administration of the office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs.
In FY 2017, $511,000 is solely for street youth services and $434,000 is solely for the administration of the office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs.
Memo of Understanding signed by Governor adds youth and young adults to the Washington Youth & Families Fund. The fund is a partnership among funders, government, and service providers to streamline resources for homeless youth and families.
$2,000,000 over two years is appropriated to the Washington Youth & Families Fund. |

| Organizational Support | Mockingbird Society
www.mockingbirdsociety.org

Washington Coalition for Homeless Youth Advocacy (WACHYA)
www.mockingbirdsociety.org/index.php/what-we-do/advocacy/390-wachya |
**District of Columbia**

| RHY Statute | D.C. Code Ann. § 4-752.02a  
D.C. Code Ann. § 4-753.01  
D.C. Code Ann. § 2-1384 |
|-------------|--------------------------|

**Statute Language**

**Mandating a Plan to End Youth Homelessness**

(a) No later than 300 days after February 26, 2015, the Interagency Council, working jointly with organizations providing service to homeless youth within the Continuum of Care as well as homeless or formerly homeless youth and their advocates, shall prepare, publish, and submit to the Council a comprehensive Plan to End Youth Homelessness in the District by 2020.

(b) The plan required by this section shall:

(1) Include a community-wide needs assessment that takes into account existing data, including the results of the extended youth count required in § 4-753.01(h);

(2) Include an analysis of strategies that have been successful in reducing youth homelessness;

(3) Be developed pursuant to a process that includes public hearings and that will identify, prioritize, and target needs for services for homeless youth within the Continuum of Care;

(4) Include specific recommendations for eradicating youth homelessness in the District by 2020, including recommendations for:

(A) A grant-based family reunification program, a host-home program, and additional cultural competency training for youth homeless service workers, including intake and drop-in center workers, designed to inform such workers adequately concerning the developmental needs of homeless youth; and

(B) Other specific culturally-competent and language-accessible programs designed to prevent youth from becoming homeless, identify youth that are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, and provide counseling, shelter, and appropriate services to the youth so identified (including minor heads of households and minors temporarily without parental supervision); and

(5) Include estimates of the costs of carrying out various components of the plan.

(c) The plan required by this section shall identify any new legislation that is necessary to implement its recommendations, and provide recommendations concerning how to fund the provisions of the plan without reducing funding for other social programs.

(d) The Interagency Council shall revise and submit to the Council the strategic plan required by § 4-752.02(b)(2) no later than 390 days after February 26, 2015, incorporating the provisions of the plan required by this section.

**Homeless Youth Census**

(i) No later than 180 days after February 26, 2015, and annually thereafter, the Department of Human Services, in coordination with the Interagency Council, shall conduct a youth census, separate from the annual Point-in-Time survey, to determine the needed scale and scope of a comprehensive program to end youth homelessness in the District. The youth census shall:

(1) Count all children and youth under 18 years of age who are living apart from a parent or guardian, excluding those who are in the physical custody of the District, and all youth between the ages of 18 and 24 years of age who are economically or emotionally detached from their families and lack an adequate or fixed residence, including children and youth who are unstably housed, living in doubled up circumstances, in transitional housing, in shelter, or on the street;
(2) For each child or youth counted, record basic demographic information including age, race, and gender identification, the location where the child or youth stayed the night before the count, the child or youth's education and employment status, and membership in pertinent subgroups based on sexual orientation, gender orientation, pregnancy or parenting status, or involvement in the foster care or juvenile or adult criminal justice systems; (3) Identify patterns in responses describing factors leading to homelessness; (4) Identify patterns in responses describing services used and gaps in service; (5) Be conducted over a period of at least one week, controlling for duplication by assigning each child or youth a unique identifier; and (6) Include multiple strategies and entry points to identify homeless children and youth.

**LGBTQ Homeless Youth Training Grant Fund**

(a) There is established as a special fund the LGBTQ Homeless Youth Training Grant Fund ("Fund") which shall be administered by the Office of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Affairs in accordance with subsection (c) of this section.

(b) The Fund shall consist of the revenue from the following sources:

1. Appropriated funds; and
2. Funds transferred to the Department of Human Services from other District agencies for the purpose of providing services to homeless LGBTQ youth.

(c) The Fund shall be used for the following purposes:

1. The Fund shall be continually available to the Office for the purpose of providing grants to fund trainings on cultural competency for providing services to LGBTQ homeless youth for providers throughout the District. Each grant shall be a 2-year grant.

2. The Office shall establish criteria for eligibility to receive a grant; provided, that the cultural competency training conducted through this grant:

   A. Is conducted by community organizations based in the District with demonstrated ability and expertise in this field;
   B. Follows best practices in this field regarding content and delivery;
   C. Includes best practices for data collection pertaining to LGBTQ homeless youth;
   D. Includes evidence-based family acceptance interventions that shall be youth and family driven, culturally diverse, and tailored to meet the different needs of families from different cultural backgrounds and religions;
   E. Includes suicide awareness and prevention training; and
   F. Is subject to a biannual evaluation.

(d)(1) The money deposited into the Fund, and any interest earned, shall not revert to the unrestricted fund balance of the General Fund of the District of Columbia at the end of a fiscal year, or at any other time.

(2) Subject to authorization in an approved budget and financial plan, any funds appropriated into the Fund shall be continually available without regard to fiscal year limitation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>The District’s End Youth Homelessness Act is funded at $1.3 million for FY 2016. The District’s LGBTQ Homeless Youth Training Grant Fund is funded at $486,000</th>
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| Organizational Support | DC Alliance of Youth Advocates (DCAYA) www.dc-aya.org
Sasha Bruce Youthwork sashabruce.org
SMYAL www.smyal.org |