
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anthony Portantino, Chair
2021 - 2022 Regular Session

SB 1353 (Wilk) - Homeless population census information: collection and reporting

Version: April 18, 2022

Policy Vote: GOV. & F. 5 - 0, HUMAN S.
4 - 0

Urgency: No

Mandate: Yes

Hearing Date: May 2, 2022

Consultant: Mark McKenzie

Bill Summary: SB 1353 would require cities and counties to provide specified homelessness information to the California Interagency Council on Homelessness Council (Cal-ICH) by January 1, 2025. The bill would also require Cal-ICH to develop and maintain a publicly available homelessness dashboard, post local government data and specified information on state programs to reduce homelessness on its dashboard, and provide an assessment on the success of state and local homelessness programs by January 1, 2027, as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- Cal-ICH estimates one-time costs in the range of \$6-\$8 million to work with an IT contractor and program researcher to create a public web-based dashboard and conduct a data-driven assessment of state and local homelessness programs. In addition, Cal-ICH estimates state operations costs of approximately \$948,000 annually and 6.0 PY through the 2026-27 fiscal year to implement the provisions of the bill. (General Fund)
- Unknown, likely major state-reimbursable costs, at least in the tens of millions, for all cities and counties to provide detailed data to Cal-ICH by January 1, 2025 on each jurisdictions homeless populations, as well as expenditures on programs and other local efforts to address homelessness, as specified. To the extent the information is not provided, each entity must, at a minimum, provide justification for the unavailability of required data, and an estimate of the resources necessary to provide the information. The magnitude of state-reimbursable costs would be subject to a determination by the Commission on State Mandates, should a local agency file a claim. (General Fund)
- The Department of Social Services (CDSS) estimates that it would require 4.0 PY of new staff, at a cost likely in the mid-hundreds of thousands annually for two-years (General Fund), to support the data collection activities in the bill, including the execution of data use agreements with Cal-ICH. Staff notes that requirement for CDSS to provide descriptions of its homelessness programs, including goals and expenditures, and data on each program's results in results in reducing homelessness, would not appear to justify these projected staffing needs and costs, as this information should be readily available.
- Staff estimates costs for other state entities to report data on the homelessness programs they administer to Cal-ICH would likely be minor and absorbable.

Background: Existing law establishes Cal-ICH (formerly the Housing Coordinating and Financing Council) within the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency to oversee the implementation of “Housing First” policies, guidelines, and regulations to reduce the prevalence and duration of homelessness in California. Housing First is an evidence-based model that focuses on the idea that homeless individuals should be provided shelter and stability before underlying issues can be successfully addressed. Existing law establishes the goals for Cal-ICH, including: identification of resources and services to prevent and end homelessness; creating partnerships among local, state, and federal entities to arrive at strategies to end homelessness, coordinating existing homelessness funding; making policy and procedural recommendations to the Legislature; and creating a Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS). As the state’s homelessness crisis has persisted, the role of Cal-ICH has significantly expanded to include the administration of administers programs dedicated to addressing homelessness.

The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers the Continuum of Care Program as part of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This competitive grant program is designed to encourage cities and counties to address the problems of housing and homelessness in a coordinated and strategic fashion. The fundamental components of a continuum of care include prevention, outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent housing, permanent supportive housing, and supportive services. Among other requirements, the state’s 44 continuums of care (CoCs) must track, coordinate services for, and collect anonymous data on the homeless clients served within the continuum and maintain the data in a homeless management information system (HMIS). Additionally, CoCs must conduct the Housing Inventory Count (HIC), which is a point-in-time inventory of programs that provide beds and units dedicated to serving individuals experiencing homelessness.

Cal-ICH recently launched a state HDIS system that captures the data from local HMIS, and all 44 CoCs have entered into contracts to provide their HMIS data to Cal-ICH. HDIS is intended to give the state a more accurate picture of the local homelessness response system and inform the state’s response to homelessness.

To help address the persistent homelessness crisis, the state has increased funding for various homelessness programs in recent years, allocating \$2.65 billion to Cal-ICH homelessness programs from 2018-19 to 2021-22. The largest of these programs is the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (HHAPP), which provides block grants to large cities, counties, CoCs, and tribal governments, for a variety of solutions for those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, such as rapid rehousing, operating subsidies, street outreach, services coordination, delivery of permanent and innovative housing solutions, and homelessness prevention. The state has also invested billions more for other housing and homelessness programs in other state agencies. This includes Homekey, a program the California Department of Housing and Community Development administers to purchase and rehabilitate housing, including hotels, motels, vacant apartment buildings, and other types of housing, and convert them into permanent, long-term housing for people experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. The state allocated \$2.25 billion to Homekey between 2018-19 and 2021-22.

To close the gaps in statutorily required data reporting to HMIS, and to enable Cal-ICH to more precisely analyze the state's investment into fighting homelessness and the outcomes of those investments, the Legislature enacted AB 977 (Gabriel, 2021), which requires recipients of state homeless programs to enter data on the individuals and families it serves into its local HMIS system beginning on January 1, 2023. It also requires all CoCs to provide collected data elements, including specified health information, to HDIS in a manner consistent with federal law.

Proposed Law: SB 1353 would require cities and counties to report specified information on homelessness information to Cal-ICH, and require Cal-ICH to develop and maintain a homelessness dashboard, post local government data and information on state homelessness program on the dashboard, and provide an assessment of state and local homelessness programs. Specifically, this bill would:

- Require cities and counties to provide the following homelessness information to Cal-ICH by January 1, 2025:
 - A year-over-year comparison of the homeless population for 2023 and 2024.
 - Demographics and geographic locations of the homelessness population, including the following:
 - Age and gender.
 - Criminal justice history, as specified.
 - Medical information, including chronic conditions and diagnoses, and the number of people with mental health or substance abuse problems.
 - Homeless populations' use of health care and emergency services, mental health inpatient and outpatient visits, and use of public assistance services and food stamps, as specified.
 - Number of homeless persons who are no longer unsheltered and their current housing status, as specified.
 - Number of homeless persons who died while homeless, and information on cause of death.
 - Number of children born to homeless mothers.
 - Background information on newly homeless persons, including reasons for becoming homeless and prior residence.
 - Number of homeless persons who are veterans, and whether they suffer from specified conditions and are connected to specified federal services.
 - Number of homeless persons who are victims of domestic violence.
 - Number of homeless persons who are current or former foster youth.
 - The duration of homelessness status, as specified.
 - All expenditures on homelessness programs and efforts, including street cleaning, law enforcement, shelters, medical treatment, mental health treatment, and substance abuse treatment provided to homeless persons. Local agencies must report and list the sources of the fund amounts used for these expenditures, separated by federal, state, and local sources.
- Specify that a local government meets the above reporting requirements if it provides any of the following to Cal-ICH:
 - The homeless information specified above.
 - An explanation of why it does not have access to the requested information.

- A statement indicating that providing the information would impose an undue burden on the local entity without additional resources, and an estimate of the additional resources necessary to provide the information.
- Require Cal-ICH to develop and maintain a publicly available and accessible website homelessness dashboard, as specified, and post the following information on the dashboard by January 1, 2026:
 - The homelessness information provided by cities and counties.
 - Information on state homelessness programs, including federal funding for state and local programs. State entities responsible for homelessness programs must report program data to Cal-ICH by January 1, 2025.
- Require Cal-ICH to report to the Legislature and post on the dashboard an assessment of the success or failure of state and local homelessness programs that includes the following information by January 1, 2026:
 - Descriptions and goals of each program targeting homelessness.
 - Descriptions of expenditures on each homelessness program.
 - Data on each homeless program's results in reducing homelessness.
 - An overall assessment of how the homelessness program, taken together, reduce homelessness in local jurisdictions.
- State legislative intent that CoCs collaborate with local entities, state agencies, and Cal-ICH to help collect the information required by the bill.
- Sunset the provisions of the bill on January 1, 2027.

Related Legislation: AB 977 (Gabriel), Chap. 397/2021, required a grantee or entity operating specified state homelessness programs to enter any collected data elements on individuals and families it serves into its local HMIS by January 1, 2023. The bill also required all CoCs in California to provide collected data elements, including health information, to the state HDIS in a manner consistent with federal law.

AB 3269 (Chiu), which was held on this Committee's Suspense File in 2020, would have established the Housing and Homelessness Inspector General, required the HCFC to conduct a specified needs and gaps analysis, require local governments to develop actionable plans to address homelessness, and create a public right of action for the Inspector General to compel compliance with those new plans, as specified.

AB 2746 (Gabriel), which was vetoed in 2020, would have required recipients of state funding for the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Program, the Housing and Disability Income Advocacy Program, and the Whole Person Care pilot programs to submit annual data reports regarding the use of program funds to DSS and the Department of Health Care Services. Governor Newsom's veto message included the following:

Unfortunately, the requirements of this measure are duplicative of existing requirements and would create additional, unnecessary data collection costs. For these reasons, I am unable to sign this bill.

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