

Introduced by Senator Liu

(Principal coauthor: Assembly Member Weber)

(Coauthors: Senators Hancock and Wolk)

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An act to add Chapter 6.1 (commencing with Section 13710) to Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 636, as introduced, Liu. Homeless youth: basic material needs assistance.

Existing law establishes various public social services programs to provide protection, care, and assistance to the people of the state in need of those services, by providing appropriate aid and services to the needy and distressed. Existing law establishes homeless youth emergency service pilot projects in the Counties of Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Clara, and San Francisco.

This bill would create the Homeless Youth Basic Material Needs Assistance Program. This bill would require that moneys appropriated by the Legislature for the purposes of the program be allocated proportionally by the State Department of Social Services to each county program based on the number of homeless youth in the county. The bill would authorize a county to establish the program or request the department to administer the program, in which case the department would be required to retain the county's proportional share of funds and directly administer a program in that county. The bill would authorize a county to join with one or more other counties for the

purpose of pooling their respective allocations and establishing a program for those counties. The bill would require each program to solicit proposals from, and contract with, nonprofit organizations for the purpose of providing basic material needs assistance to homeless youth in the county or counties as directed by the entity administering the program. The bill would require contracted nonprofit organizations to, among other things, provide a minimum of 25% matching funds, as specified.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) During the 2013–14 academic year, 297,617 children and
4 youth enrolled in local educational agencies in California were
5 identified as homeless, as defined by the federal McKinney-Vento
6 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et sec.). This
7 population is several times more than that of any other state in the
8 nation and equates to one homeless student in every classroom.

9 (b) The federal definition of homelessness is used by all public
10 schools in the United States, the Head Start program, and special
11 education, child nutrition, and other federal family and youth
12 programs. It includes children and youth who lack a fixed, regular,
13 and adequate nighttime residence, including those who live in
14 shelters, transitional housing, cars, campgrounds, motels, or who
15 share the housing of others temporarily due to loss of housing,
16 economic hardship, or similar reasons.

17 (c) A significant barrier to success faced by homeless children
18 and youth is access to basic materials including school supplies,
19 shoes, hygienic and dental products, and other basic necessities.
20 This and the accompanying low self-esteem lead to absenteeism
21 and truancy, which prevents homeless youth from obtaining the
22 education that is both their legal right and their best opportunity
23 to escape poverty.

24 (d) According to numerous homeless liaisons throughout
25 California that represent more than 70 percent of California's
26 homeless children and youth, the overwhelming majority of this
27 population does not have their basic material needs met.

(e) The local control funding formula does not specifically address the unmet basic material needs of homeless children and youth.

(f) This act addresses this barrier to success by articulating a state policy framework to provide the most basic unmet material needs of homeless children and youth, while also utilizing matching resources and leveraging federal funds to ensure program stability and longevity. This act is designed to ensure that all homeless public school students have their basic material needs met so they can attend school on a more equal playing field with their peers.

SEC. 2. Chapter 6.1 (commencing with Section 13710) is added to Part 3 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

CHAPTER 6.1. HOMELESS YOUTH BASIC MATERIAL NEEDS
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

13710. This chapter shall be known, and may be cited, as the Homeless Youth Basic Material Needs Assistance Program.

13712. For purposes of this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(a) “Additional material needs assistance” means clothes, blankets, and access to shelter.

(b) “Administering entity” means one of the following:

(1) A county that elects to establish a program and does not join with another county as described in subdivision (c) of Section 13714.

(2) A county designated as the lead county, if two or more counties elect to establish a program jointly under subdivision (c) of Section 13714.

(3) The department, if a county declines to establish a program or requests the department to administer the program.

(c) “Basic material needs assistance” means school supplies, dental supplies and other hygienic products, shoes, and socks.

(d) “Department” means the State Department of Social Services.

(e) “Homeless youth” has the same meaning as that term is defined in Section 11434a of Title 42 of the United States Code.

1 (f) “Nonprofit organization” means a nonprofit corporation
2 qualified to do business in California and qualified under Section
3 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code.

4 (g) “Program” means the Homeless Youth Basic Material Needs
5 Assistance Program.

6 13714. (a) From moneys appropriated by the Legislature for
7 the purpose of this chapter, the department shall allocate a
8 proportional amount to each county program pursuant to this
9 chapter based on that county’s respective number of homeless
10 youth. The moneys allocated to the county shall be used to establish
11 and operate a Homeless Youth Basic Material Needs Assistance
12 Program for homeless youth in that county.

13 (b) A county may join with one or more other counties for the
14 purpose of pooling the allocations made to the counties under this
15 section and establishing a program for those counties.

16 (c) If a county declines to establish a program or requests the
17 department to administer the program, the department shall retain
18 the county’s proportional share of funds and shall directly
19 administer a program for homeless youth in that county, including
20 the performance of all duties set forth in this chapter.

21 13716. Each administering entity shall do all of the following:

22 (a) Solicit proposals from nonprofit organizations for the purpose
23 of providing basic material needs assistance to homeless youth in
24 the manner directed by the administering entity, subject to the
25 requirements imposed by this chapter.

26 (b) Select and contract with one or more nonprofit organizations
27 to participate in the program based on the proposals solicited under
28 subdivision (a). Selection of a nonprofit organization shall be based
29 on the following criteria:

30 (1) Demonstrated ability to form partnerships with local
31 educational agencies (LEAs).

32 (2) Demonstrated ability to provide basic material needs
33 assistance to homeless or low-income youth by working with
34 LEAs.

35 (3) Ability to work with the homeless liaison of each LEA
36 pursuant to Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) of Title 42 of the United
37 States Code, or his or her LEA-employed designee.

38 (4) Demonstrated ability to generate additional matching funds
39 or in-kind resources for similar programs.

1 (c) Require each nonprofit organization contracted under
2 subdivision (b) to do all of the following:

3 (1) Notify the homeless liaison of a county office of education
4 of the organization's intent to enter into new partnership
5 agreements with the LEAs in that county.

6 (2) Form or maintain partnerships with LEAs for the purpose
7 of providing basic material needs assistance to homeless youth.

8 (3) Notify the homeless liaison of a county office of education
9 each time a basic material needs assistance program commences
10 or is renewed.

11 (4) Provide basic material needs assistance to homeless youth,
12 giving first priority to hygiene, dental, and school supply needs.
13 A nonprofit organization may use other resources or demonstrated
14 savings to provide additional material needs assistance.

15 (5) Provide at least a 25-percent match for all moneys received
16 from the administering entity under this chapter. If the nonprofit
17 organization provides in-kind materials toward the 25-percent
18 match, the value of the in-kind materials contributing to a
19 25-percent match shall be verified by the donor of the materials
20 and shall not exceed the market value of the materials if sold at
21 retail. Any amounts provided by the nonprofit organization that
22 exceed the 25-percent match constitute demonstrated savings that
23 may be used in accordance with paragraph (4).

24 (6) Consult with the children and families commission of the
25 county or counties served by the program to determine how to best
26 provide basic material needs assistance to homeless youth from
27 birth to 5 years of age, inclusive, if the administering entity elects
28 to include homeless youth of that age in its program.