

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 15, 2015

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 689**

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**Introduced by Senator Huff**

February 27, 2015

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An act to amend Section 987.005 of the Military and Veterans Code, relating to veterans housing.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 689, as amended, Huff. Veterans: housing.

Existing law requires the California Housing Finance Agency, the Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish and implement housing programs that focus on veterans at risk for homelessness or experiencing temporary or chronic homelessness. Existing law requires the departments, to the extent feasible, to prioritize projects that combine housing and supportive services, including, but not limited to, job training, mental health and drug treatment, case management, care coordination, or physical rehabilitation.

~~This bill would instruct the departments to also prioritize projects that keep a mental health professional on staff or contract for the services of a mental health professional.~~ *require a project, in order to qualify for prioritization due to mental health and drug treatment services, to either accept only residents who are prequalified to receive mental health care and drug treatment services from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, or, if the project accepts residents who receive mental health care and drug treatment services from agencies or providers other than the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, the project to ensure it augments those services by either maintaining a qualified mental health professional on staff or by contracting for the*

*services of a qualified mental health professional.* This bill would include psychologists, professional clinical counselors, social workers, marriage and family therapists, and psychiatrists as mental health professionals for its purposes.

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

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

1 SECTION 1. Section 987.005 of the Military and Veterans  
2 Code is amended to read:

3 987.005. (a) The departments shall establish and implement  
4 programs pursuant to the purposes of this article that focus on  
5 veterans at risk for homelessness or experiencing temporary or  
6 chronic homelessness. To the extent feasible, the departments shall  
7 establish and implement programs that, among other things, do  
8 the following:

9 (1) Leverage public (federal, state, and local), private, and  
10 nonprofit program and fiscal resources.

11 (2) Prioritize projects that combine housing and supportive  
12 services, including, but not limited to, job training, mental health  
13 and drug treatment, case management, care coordination, or  
14 physical rehabilitation. *Notwithstanding any other program*  
15 *requirements, to qualify for prioritization under this paragraph*  
16 *for mental health and drug treatment services, a project's mental*  
17 *health and drug treatment component shall meet either of the*  
18 *following standards:*

19 (A) *The project accepts only residents who are prequalified to*  
20 *receive mental health care and drug treatment services from the*  
21 *federal Department of Veterans Affairs and the project's housing*  
22 *location and transportation plan ensure that the federal*  
23 *department's services are available and accessible to the residents.*

24 (B) *If the project accepts residents who receive mental health*  
25 *care and drug treatment services from agencies or providers other*  
26 *than the federal Department of Veterans Affairs, the project shall*  
27 *ensure that it augments those services either by maintaining a*  
28 *qualified mental health professional on staff or by contracting for*  
29 *the services of a qualified mental health professional. For the*  
30 *purposes of this paragraph, a qualified mental health professional*  
31 *shall have the equivalent of at least two years of full-time relevant*

1 *experience providing services to veterans and is any of the*  
2 *following:*

3 ~~(3) Prioritize projects that keep a mental health professional on~~  
4 ~~staff or contract for the services of a mental health professional.~~  
5 ~~For the purposes of this paragraph a mental health professional~~  
6 ~~shall mean any of the following:~~

7 ~~(A)~~

8 (i) A licensed psychologist as defined in Chapter 6.6  
9 (commencing with Section 2900) of Division 2 of the Business  
10 and Professions Code.

11 ~~(B)~~

12 (ii) A licensed professional clinical counselor as defined in  
13 Chapter 16 (commencing with Section 4999.10) of Division 2 of  
14 the Business and Professions Code.

15 ~~(C)~~

16 (iii) A licensed social worker as defined in Chapter 14  
17 (commencing with Section 4991) of Division 2 of the Business  
18 and Professions Code.

19 ~~(D)~~

20 (iv) A licensed marriage and family therapist as defined in  
21 Chapter 13 (commencing with Section 4980) of Division 2 of the  
22 Business and Professions Code.

23 ~~(E)~~

24 (v) A licensed physician and surgeon who is board certified in  
25 psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

26 ~~(4)~~

27 (3) Promote public and private partnerships.

28 ~~(5)~~

29 (4) Foster innovative financing opportunities.

30 ~~(6)~~

31 (5) Ensure program guidelines and terms provide threshold  
32 requirements or scoring criteria, or both, to advance applicants  
33 with experience in combining permanent or transitional housing,  
34 or both, with supportive services for veterans, or for partnering  
35 with housing developers or service providers with experience  
36 offering housing or services to veterans.

37 (b) The departments shall ensure at least 50 percent of funds  
38 awarded for capital development under this article provide housing  
39 to veteran households with extremely low incomes, as defined in  
40 Section 50106 of the Health and Safety Code.

1 (1) In determining whether a potential tenant is eligible for  
2 supportive, affordable, or transitional housing targeted to extremely  
3 low income households under this provision, eligibility shall take  
4 into consideration all of a household's income sources upon initial  
5 tenancy.

6 (2) At least 60 percent of units funded targeting extremely low  
7 income households shall be supportive housing.

8 (3) This section shall not deter the departments from funding  
9 projects serving mixed-income populations.

10 (c) The departments may review, adopt, amend, and repeal  
11 guidelines or terms, or both, to implement this article. Any  
12 guidelines or terms adopted to implement this article shall not be  
13 subject to Chapter 3.5 (commencing with Section 11340) of Part  
14 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

15 (d) Nothing in this article permits the departments or the board  
16 to purchase, operate, or manage properties except in the event of  
17 a foreclosure on a borrower or grantee.