

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 1, 2012

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2547

Introduced by Assembly Member Blumenfield
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Hall)

February 24, 2012

An act to add Chapter 7.3 (commencing with Section 18420) to Part 6 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to public social services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2547, as amended, Blumenfield. Homeless youth: Statewide Office of the Homeless Youth Advocate.

Under existing law, several state agencies have prescribed responsibilities relating to homeless youth. Existing law requires the California Emergency Management Agency to administer a program to provide shelter and other services to runaway and nonrunaway youth and their families.

This bill would establish the Statewide Office of the Homeless Youth Advocate in the California Health and Human Services Agency. This bill would require the office, among other things, to provide information and assistance to reduce the provision of overlapping services to, identify obstacles to the provision of services to, make recommendations to remove those obstacles and improve the quality of services provided to, and obtain and disseminate information from service providers relating to services available for, homeless youth. This bill would require these provisions to be implemented only after the Director of Finance determines that federal, state, or private funds in an amount sufficient to support the activities of the office have been deposited with the state,

and would provide that it is the intent of the Legislature that these provisions become inoperative if the Director of Finance determines there are insufficient funds to support the activities of the office.

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

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 7.3 (commencing with Section 18420) is added to Part 6 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

CHAPTER 7.3. STATEWIDE OFFICE OF THE HOMELESS YOUTH
ADVOCATE

18420. (a) The Statewide Office of the Homeless Youth Advocate is established within the California Health and Human Services Agency, *and shall report directly to the Secretary of California Health and Human Services*. The Statewide Office of the Homeless Youth Advocate shall seek to do all of the following:

(1) Coordinate current services, and facilitate interagency collaboration to identify gaps in, remove barriers and improve access to, and share, information related to homeless youth.

(2) Identify and remove obstacles to the provision of services to homeless youth.

(3) Improve the quality of services that are provided to homeless youth.

(4) Reduce needless expenditures that are caused by the provision of overlapping services.

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

(b) The Statewide Office of the Homeless Youth Advocate is strongly encouraged to work with other departments within the California Health and Human Services Agency, the State Department of Education, the Administrative Office of the Courts, nonprofit organizations, appropriate departments of the federal government, and other key stakeholders when performing the functions described in subdivision (a).

(c) The Statewide Office of the Homeless Youth Advocate shall have all of, but not be limited to, the following responsibilities:

1 (1) Provide information, coordination assistance, and technical
2 assistance as necessary to reduce needless expenditures that are
3 associated with the provision of overlapping services, and to
4 improve the quality of services provided to homeless youth.

5 (2) Identify both procedural and substantive obstacles to the
6 provision of services to homeless youth, and make
7 recommendations to the entities specified in this section relating
8 to the procedural, regulatory, or statutory changes that are necessary
9 to remove obstacles to the provision of services to homeless youth.

10 (3) Obtain information from service providers relating to
11 services that are known to be available to the homeless youth
12 population in the state, and post the information on its Internet
13 Web site.

14 (4) Develop, maintain, and disseminate information that is
15 relevant to the homeless youth population, including, but not
16 limited to, information relating to the legal, educational, and other
17 rights of homeless youth, and a list of legal, educational, and
18 victim's rights organizations that serve the homeless youth
19 population.

20 (5) Obtain information relating to funding sources that are
21 known to be available to assist the homeless youth population in
22 the state.

23 (6) Work with entities to identify issues relating to the sharing
24 of information when providing services to homeless youth, and to
25 facilitate resolution of information-sharing issues.

26 (7) Prepare and submit an annual report, beginning on the date
27 that is one year after this section is implemented pursuant to
28 subdivision (e), to the Governor and the Legislature regarding the
29 activities and performance of the Statewide Office of the Homeless
30 Youth Advocate. The report shall also include the following
31 information:

32 (A) The data that the State Department of Education annually
33 compiles on the number of homeless youth who are enrolled in
34 public schools in the state, the types of homelessness experienced
35 by the youth, and a list of services that are provided to the homeless
36 youth.

37 (B) The data that the United States Department of Housing and
38 Urban Development annually publishes on the federally mandated
39 point-in-time count of the homeless population, which includes
40 homeless youth.

1 (d) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires:

2 (1) “Entity” means a state agency, a state-operated program, or
3 a nonprofit community-based organization.

4 (2) “Homeless youth” means a homeless youth as defined in
5 paragraph (2) of subdivision (e) of Section 11139.3 of the
6 Government Code.

7 (e) This section shall be implemented only if the Director of
8 Finance makes a determination that federal, state, or private funds
9 in an amount sufficient to fully support the activities of this section,
10 including staffing the Statewide Office of the Homeless Youth
11 Advocate, have been deposited with the state for the purposes of
12 this section. If the Director of Finance makes a determination that
13 sufficient funds have or have not been deposited with the state for
14 the purposes of this section, the director shall execute a declaration
15 stating that the determination has been made. The declaration
16 executed pursuant to this subdivision shall be retained by the
17 director, and, within five working days of the execution of the
18 declaration, a copy shall be provided to the fiscal and appropriate
19 policy committees of the Legislature, the Secretary of State, the
20 Secretary of the Senate, the Chief Clerk of the Assembly, and the
21 Legislative Counsel, and posted on the Internet Web site of the
22 Department of Finance.

23 (f) Pursuant to subdivision (e), if the Director of Finance
24 determines that insufficient funds have been deposited with the
25 state to support the activities of this section, this section shall
26 become inoperative.

27 (g) (1) The requirement for submitting a report imposed under
28 paragraph (7) of subdivision (c) is inoperative on the date that is
29 four years after the date the first report is submitted, pursuant to
30 Section 10231.5 of the Government Code.

31 (2) A report to be submitted pursuant to paragraph (7) of
32 subdivision (c) shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795
33 of the Government Code.