A bill for an act

relating to homeless programs; allowing providers to impose requirements on clients and requiring consistency in program guidelines; amending Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 462A.29.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2006, section 462A.29, is amended to read:

462A.29 INTERAGENCY COORDINATION ON HOMELESSNESS.

Subdivision 1. **Coordination.** The agency shall coordinate services and activities of all state agencies relating to homelessness. The agency shall coordinate an investigation and review of the current system of service delivery to the homeless. The agency may request assistance from other agencies of state government as needed for the execution of the responsibilities under this section and the other agencies shall furnish the assistance upon request.

Subd. 2. **Consistent homeless program standards.** (a) In order to end homelessness in Minnesota, state-funded programs must work towards the goal of increasing stability in the community. All homeless programs funded under this section must work with participants to increase residential stability, increase skills or income, promote self-determination, and increase or maintain employment as able. Further, state-funded programs shall be treated equitably and consistently between all state agencies. The provider options under paragraph (b), and the implementation of consistent standards under paragraph (c), apply to the programs in the following chapters and sections of law:

(1) chapter 256E;

(2) chapter 256I;

(3) chapter 256K;

(4) section 299A.296;

(5) sections 462A.201, 462A.202, 462A.204, and 462A.205; and

(6) Laws 2003, chapter 128, article 15, section 9.

(b) Providers or organizations that receive funding for any program listed under paragraph (a) may require clients to:

(1) pay rent in order to develop a rental history;

(2) abide by landlord tenant law;

(3) apply for other assistance programs, including, but not limited to, subsidized housing, employment, Social Security, medical assistance, child care assistance, or other appropriate programs or income supplements; and

(4) address personal issues that may be a barrier to stabilizing housing, such as domestic violence or chemical, mental, or physical issues.

(c) The Interagency Task Force on Homelessness, in consultation with the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless; homeless advocates; homeless people or formerly homeless people; representatives of public and private providers of emergency shelter, transitional housing, supportive housing, and permanent affordable housing; representatives of homeless youth-serving agencies and youth outreach programs; and other interested members of the public, must establish consistent standards for the following:

(1) standard procedures for providing start-up costs and standard start-up cost amounts;

(2) standard procedures for funding advances and standard advance amounts;

(3) standard procedures for administrative charges and standard procedures for administrative charge amounts;

(4) allowing providers the flexibility to move clients between programs, in order to provide the most appropriate and beneficial services for the client;

(5) allowing providers to discontinue services if requirements under paragraph (b) are not met by the client; and

(6) requiring unused obligated funds to be returned to the state.

The agency and departments must implement the consistent standards by October 1, 2008.