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State of Minnesota

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-SECOND SESSION

H. F. No. 900

02/08/2021 Authored by Keeler; Gomez; Xiong, J.; Frazier; Hollins and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Human Services Finance and Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to homelessness; establishing a task force on shelter resident rights and
1.3 shelter provider practices; requiring a report; appropriating money.

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

1.5 Section 1. TASK FORCE ON SHELTER RESIDENT RIGHTS AND SHELTER
1.6 PROVIDER PRACTICES.

1.7 Subdivision 1. Definitions. (a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have
1.8 the meanings given.

1.9 (b) "Director" means the state director of the Minnesota Interagency Council on
1.10 Homelessness.

1.11 (c) "Homeless" or "homelessness" means lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime
1.12 residence.

1.13 (d) "Resident" means a person residing in a shelter, including all members of a family
1.14 unit.

1.15 (e) "Shelter" means an indoor sleeping and sanitary dwelling, whether in a fixed or
1.16 rotating location, intended for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, provided
1.17 by a unit of government, a nonprofit organization, or a place of worship. Shelter includes
1.18 rooms in hotels or motels paid for by a unit of government or nonprofit organization and
1.19 daytime accommodations for individuals or families for whom shelter is provided only
1.20 overnight.

1.21 Subd. 2. Establishment. A task force on shelter resident rights and shelter provider
1.22 practices is established to:

- 2.1 (1) examine experiences of, and issues facing, shelter residents;
- 2.2 (2) examine issues facing, and practices of, shelter providers;
- 2.3 (3) develop a bill of rights for, and standards of treatment of, individuals and families
- 2.4 residing in shelters;
- 2.5 (4) develop shelter provider standards of practice; and
- 2.6 (5) examine the establishment of government oversight and registration of the provision
- 2.7 of shelter in Minnesota.
- 2.8 Subd. 3. **Membership.** (a) The task force consists of the following members appointed
- 2.9 by the director:
- 2.10 (1) the commissioner of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, or a designee;
- 2.11 (2) the commissioner of human rights, or a designee;
- 2.12 (3) the commissioner of human services, or a designee;
- 2.13 (4) the commissioner of public safety, or a designee;
- 2.14 (5) the commissioner of transportation, or a designee;
- 2.15 (6) the commissioner of veterans affairs, or a designee;
- 2.16 (7) five individuals who have experienced homelessness and resided in a shelter in the
- 2.17 seven-county metropolitan area;
- 2.18 (8) five individuals who have experienced homelessness and resided in a shelter in
- 2.19 greater Minnesota;
- 2.20 (9) at least one individual who has experienced homelessness and has chosen to remain
- 2.21 unsheltered;
- 2.22 (10) one representative from Street Voices of Change;
- 2.23 (11) one representative from Freedom from the Streets;
- 2.24 (12) one representative from the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing;
- 2.25 (13) one representative from the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless;
- 2.26 (14) one representative from the National Association of Mental Illness Minnesota;
- 2.27 (15) one representative from the Autism Society of Minnesota;
- 2.28 (16) one representative from Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis;
- 2.29 (17) one representative from the Minnesota Community Action Partnership;

3.1 (18) two representatives from organizations that advocate on behalf of persons with
3.2 disabilities, one of whom must be from an organization that advocates on behalf of persons
3.3 with traumatic brain injury;

3.4 (19) one representative from an organization that represents homeless veterans;

3.5 (20) one representative from an organization that represents persons who reside or have
3.6 resided in a shelter who are survivors of domestic or sexual violence;

3.7 (21) one representative from an organization that provides health care for the homeless;

3.8 (22) one representative from an organization that provides homeless outreach services;

3.9 (23) one representative from a civil legal services organization that provides legal
3.10 representation and advice to persons experiencing homelessness and residing in a shelter;

3.11 (24) 11 representatives of shelter providers, including:

3.12 (i) a shelter provider located in the seven-county metropolitan area;

3.13 (ii) a shelter provider located in greater Minnesota;

3.14 (iii) a winter shelter provider;

3.15 (iv) a cold weather shelter provider;

3.16 (v) a shelter provider serving single adults;

3.17 (vi) a shelter provider serving families;

3.18 (vii) a shelter provider serving survivors of domestic abuse or sexual violence;

3.19 (viii) a shelter provider serving youth;

3.20 (ix) a shelter provider that utilizes apartments, hotels, or motels;

3.21 (x) a shelter provider that uses rotating spaces; and

3.22 (xi) a congregate shelter provider;

3.23 (25) two representatives from the League of Cities, one of whom represents cities in the
3.24 seven-county metropolitan area and one of whom represents cities in greater Minnesota;

3.25 (26) two representatives from the Association of Minnesota Counties, one of whom
3.26 represents counties in the seven-county metropolitan area and one of whom represents
3.27 counties in greater Minnesota;

3.28 (27) one representative from the Heading Home Minnesota Funders Collaborative; and

3.29 (28) one representative from Hospitality Minnesota.

4.1 (b) Appointments must be made no later than July 1, 2021.

4.2 (c) Task force members shall serve without compensation, except for members who are
4.3 individuals who have experienced homelessness and resided in a shelter or who are
4.4 individuals representing shelter providers. Members eligible for compensation shall receive
4.5 expenses as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section 15.059, subdivision 6.

4.6 (d) Vacancies shall be filled by the director consistent with the qualifications of the
4.7 vacating member required by this subdivision.

4.8 Subd. 4. Meetings; officers. (a) The director shall convene the first meeting of the task
4.9 force no later than August 15, 2021, and shall provide physical or virtual meeting space as
4.10 necessary for the task force to conduct its work.

4.11 (b) At its first meeting, the task force shall elect a chair and vice-chair from among the
4.12 task force members and may elect other officers as necessary.

4.13 (c) The task force shall meet according to a schedule determined by the members or
4.14 upon the call of its chair. The task force shall meet as often as necessary to accomplish the
4.15 duties under subdivision 5.

4.16 (d) Meetings of the task force are subject to Minnesota Statutes, chapter 13D.

4.17 Subd. 5. Duties. (a) The task force must seek input from:

4.18 (1) individuals who are experiencing or who have experienced homelessness and reside
4.19 or have resided in a shelter;

4.20 (2) providers of shelter, including winter shelter, cold weather shelter, family shelter,
4.21 youth shelter, and shelter for survivors of domestic abuse or sexual violence; providers who
4.22 are funded by state, city, or local governments; providers who operate with nonpublic funds;
4.23 providers who provide shelter in urban and suburban areas; providers who provide shelter
4.24 in greater Minnesota; and providers of shelter in apartments, hotels, and motels; and

4.25 (3) any other persons or organizations with experience or expertise in homelessness,
4.26 homeless outreach, or homeless prevention.

4.27 (b) The task force must:

4.28 (1) conduct research into and analyze establishing government oversight and registration
4.29 of homeless shelters in Minnesota; and

4.30 (2) identify and analyze policies, rights, and responsibilities of shelter residents and
4.31 shelter providers regarding, at a minimum:

- 5.1 (i) the treatment of shelter residents with dignity and respect, including but not limited
5.2 to addressing conflict resolution, ensuring cultural sensitivity, engaging people with a mental
5.3 illness, implementing crisis response, and providing trauma-informed services;
- 5.4 (ii) shelter terminations and appeals;
- 5.5 (iii) remedies for and enforcement of shelter resident rights violations and illegal
5.6 terminations;
- 5.7 (iv) time limits on residency and policies on temporary absences;
- 5.8 (v) security and personal safety of shelter residents;
- 5.9 (vi) staffing ratios;
- 5.10 (vii) appropriate, adequate, and safe storage and protection of resident property and
5.11 personal information during a resident's stay and following a resident's exit from shelter;
- 5.12 (viii) maintaining family units intact while in shelter;
- 5.13 (ix) preventing discrimination based on race, color, creed, ethnicity, national origin,
5.14 citizenship, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, familial status, marital status, veteran
5.15 status, immigration status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, religion, or
5.16 age;
- 5.17 (x) seizure of persons and property;
- 5.18 (xi) the expectation of the resident's personal property privacy;
- 5.19 (xii) access to emergency and nonemergency medical and dental care;
- 5.20 (xiii) access to hygiene and sanitary products;
- 5.21 (xiv) maintenance of cleanliness of the facilities;
- 5.22 (xv) accommodations for a resident's nontraditional work hours and schedules,
5.23 circumstances involving members of the resident's immediate family who do not reside in
5.24 the shelter, and other extenuating life circumstances;
- 5.25 (xvi) reasonable accommodations for residents with disabilities, including residents with
5.26 physical, developmental, and communication challenges, persons whose primary language
5.27 is not English, and persons with food and other allergies or dietary restrictions;
- 5.28 (xvii) the provision of information regarding shelter policies, procedures, rules,
5.29 restrictions, and notices of eviction;
- 5.30 (xviii) the filing of grievances; and

6.1 (xix) the provision of case management, referral, and other supports regarding housing,
6.2 supportive housing, mental health, physical health, substance abuse, government assistance,
6.3 and employment services and resources.

6.4 (c) The task force must review the application of housing support payments under
6.5 Minnesota Statutes, section 256I.06, for shelter purposes and personal allowance policies
6.6 to determine how residents can retain a maximum amount of their income.

6.7 (d) The task force shall develop recommendations for the establishment of a statewide
6.8 shelter call line to ensure that all residents are receiving adequate service in a shelter. The
6.9 task force shall evaluate the appropriate state agency, nonprofit organization, or other entity
6.10 to house and operate the call line and the funding necessary to establish and maintain the
6.11 ongoing operation of the call line.

6.12 (e) The task force may examine any other related issues consistent with this section.

6.13 Subd. 6. **Administrative support.** The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency must provide
6.14 administrative support and meeting space for the task force.

6.15 Subd. 7. **Report.** No later than March 15, 2022, the task force shall submit a report to
6.16 the chairs and ranking minority members of the house of representatives and senate
6.17 committees and divisions with jurisdiction over housing and preventing homelessness on
6.18 the findings and recommendations for:

6.19 (1) legislation establishing:

6.20 (i) a bill of rights for, and uniform standards of treatment of, individuals and families
6.21 residing in a shelter;

6.22 (ii) shelter provider standards of practice; and

6.23 (iii) a statewide shelter call line; and

6.24 (2) the establishment of government oversight and registration of the provision of shelter
6.25 in Minnesota.

6.26 Subd. 8. **Expiration.** The task force expires the day following submission of the report
6.27 under subdivision 7.

6.28 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective July 1, 2021.

7.1 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATION; TASK FORCE ON SHELTER RESIDENT RIGHTS**
7.2 **AND SHELTER PROVIDER PRACTICES.**

7.3 \$..... in fiscal year 2022 is appropriated from the general fund to the commissioner of
7.4 the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency to implement the task force on shelter resident
7.5 rights and shelter provider practices.