A BILL FOR AN ACT

CONCERNING THE "COLORADO HOMELESS YOUTH SERVICES ACT".

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill updates language in the "Colorado Homeless Youth Services Act" and establishes the services for youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness grant program (grant program) in the department of local affairs (department). The age requirement for such youth is increased to 24 years of age or younger from more than 11 years of age to less than 21 years of age. The department shall promulgate rules concerning the grant program, and the office of homeless youth services shall administer and monitor the grant program.
The grant program consists of up to 5 awards of up to $250,000 each awarded on or before January 1, 2021. Grant awards may only be awarded to existing providers of services to youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness, with priority given to those service providers that can expand services to underserved areas of the state, including street and community outreach, drop-in centers, emergency shelters, and supportive housing and transitional living programs.

The bill requires the department to prepare and submit a report to the appropriate committees of the general assembly on the outcomes of the grant program.

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*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

**SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, *repeal and reenact, with amendments,* 24-32-723 as follows:

24-32-723. Office of homeless youth services - creation - function - duties - grant program - report - rules - short title - definitions - repeal. (1) The short title of this section is the "COLORADO HOMELESS YOUTH SERVICES ACT".

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

(a) "DEPARTMENT" means the department of local affairs.

(b) "ENTITY" means any state agency, state-operated program, nonprofit community-based organization, or private nonprofit.

(c) "OFFICE" means the office of homeless youth services established in subsection (3) of this section.

(d) "SERVICE PROVIDER" means an entity that provides direct services to youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Services may include community outreach, drop-in centers and programs, emergency shelter programs, and integrated supportive housing and transitional living programs,
AS THOSE SERVICES ARE DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (4)(d) OF THIS SECTION.

(e) "YOUTH AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS" MEANS A PERSON TWENTY-FOUR YEARS OF AGE OR YOUNGER WHOSE STATUS OR CIRCUMSTANCES INDICATE A SIGNIFICANT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. STATUS OR CIRCUMSTANCES THAT INDICATE SUCH A SIGNIFICANT RISK INCLUDE:

(I) TRANSITIONING FROM OUT-OF-HOME PLACEMENT;

(II) EXPERIENCING PREVIOUS HOMELESSNESS;

(III) HAVING PARENTS, LEGAL GUARDIANS, OR PRIMARY CAREGIVERS WHO ARE CURRENTLY OR WERE PREVIOUSLY EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS;

(IV) EXPOSURE TO ABUSE AND NEGLECT IN THE HOME; OR

(V) EXPERIENCING CONFLICT WITH THE YOUTH'S PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN AS A RESULT OF A SUBSTANCE OR ALCOHOL DEPENDENCY, A MENTAL HEALTH DISORDER, OR OTHER DISABILITY.

(f) "YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS" MEANS A PERSON TWENTY-FOUR YEARS OF AGE OR YOUNGER WHO:

(I) IS UNACCOMPANIED BY A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN, AND SHELTER, APPROPRIATE CARE, OR SUPERVISION IS UNAVAILABLE;

(II) HAS A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN WHO IS UNABLE OR UNWILLING TO PROVIDE SHELTER, CARE, OR SUPERVISION;

(III) HAS A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN WHO LACKS A FIXED, REGULAR, AND ADEQUATE NIGHTTIME RESIDENCE. A FIXED, REGULAR, AND ADEQUATE NIGHTTIME RESIDENCE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

(A) AN INSTITUTION OR PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY OPERATED SHELTER DESIGNED TO PROVIDE TEMPORARY LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS;
(B) TRANSITIONAL HOUSING;

(C) A TEMPORARY PLACEMENT WITH A PEER, FRIEND, OR FAMILY MEMBER WHO HAS NOT OFFERED PERMANENT RESIDENCE, A RESIDENTIAL LEASE, OR TEMPORARY LODGING FOR MORE THAN THIRTY DAYS; OR

(D) A PUBLIC OR PRIVATE PLACE NOT DESIGNED FOR, NOR ORDINARILY USED AS, A REGULAR SLEEPING ACCOMMODATION FOR HUMAN BEINGS.

(3)(a) The Office of Homeless Youth Services is established in the Department of Local Affairs for the purpose of providing information, coordination, and support services to entities serving the youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

(b) The goals of the office are to:

(I) Identify and remove obstacles to the provision of services;

(II) Improve the quality of services provided to youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness;

(III) Reduce needless expenditures caused by the provision of overlapping services; and

(IV) Identify housing and supportive services funding resources available to entities serving youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.

(c) To achieve the goals set forth in subsection (3)(b) of this section, the office shall, at a minimum:

(I) Provide information, coordination, and technical assistance as necessary to reduce needless expenditures associated with the provision of overlapping services and to
IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED TO YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS;

(II) IDENTIFY PROCEDURAL AND SUBSTANTIVE OBSTACLES TO THE PROVISION OF SERVICES AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ENTITIES SPECIFIED IN THIS SECTION CONCERNING PROCEDURAL, REGULATORY, OR STATUTORY CHANGES NECESSARY TO REMOVE SUCH OBSTACLES;

(III) OBTAIN INFORMATION FROM SERVICE PROVIDERS CONCERNING KNOWN SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND TO POST SUCH INFORMATION ON THE OFFICE'S WEBSITE;

(IV) DEVELOP, MAINTAIN, AND MAKE AVAILABLE A LISTING OF ALL RIGHTS AND ORGANIZATIONS RELEVANT TO YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, INCLUDING A LISTING OF LEGAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS;

(V) OBTAIN INFORMATION CONCERNING KNOWN FUNDING SOURCES AVAILABLE FOR YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS; AND

(VI) WORK WITH ENTITIES TO IDENTIFY ISSUES CONCERNING SHARING OF INFORMATION IN PROVIDING SERVICES TO YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND TO FACILITATE RESOLUTION OF SUCH INFORMATION-SHARING ISSUES.

(d) IN PERFORMING ITS DUTIES, THE OFFICE IS STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO WORK WITH THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT, OR HIS OR HER DESIGNEE; THE CHIEF JUSTICE OR COURT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT; PRIVATE NONPROFIT AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS;
APPROPRIATE FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS; AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN THE COMMUNITY.

(4) (a) The Services for Youth Experiencing or at Risk of Experiencing Homelessness Grant Program, referred to in this subsection (4) and subsection (5) of this section as the "Grant Program", is established in the Department. The purpose of the Grant Program is to provide assistance to youth who are experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness and to reduce the incidence of homelessness for that population. The Grant Program shall award up to five grants on or before January 1, 2021, of no more than two hundred fifty thousand dollars each to existing service providers that demonstrate a commitment to providing direct services to youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. The Department shall award grants only to existing programs that provide the services described in this subsection (4). Grant awards may be used for technical assistance, capacity building, and direct provision of services.

(b) On or before September 1, 2020, the Department shall promulgate rules concerning the application process, timeline, and eligibility and award criteria. The Department shall award all grants on or before January 1, 2021. In awarding the grants, the Department shall give priority to those applicants that can better meet statewide needs, especially in areas where services for youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness have not previously been established.

(c) The Office shall administer the Grant Program,
INCLUDING REVIEWING APPLICATIONS AND MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS
TO THE DEPARTMENT REGARDING WHICH SERVICE PROVIDERS SHOULD
RECEIVE A GRANT. THE OFFICE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING THE
SERVICE PROVIDERS THAT RECEIVE GRANT AWARDS AND FOR COLLECTING
DATA CONCERNING SERVICES PROVIDED THROUGH THE GRANT AWARDS.
(d) SERVICE PROVIDERS THAT PROVIDE ONE OR MORE OF THE
FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A GRANT AWARD:
(I) STREET AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND DROP-IN CENTERS. A
DROP-IN CENTER SHALL PROVIDE WALK-IN ACCESS TO CRISIS
INTERVENTION AND ONGOING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES, INCLUDING
ONE-TO-ONE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES ON A SELF-REFERRAL BASIS.
STREET AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMS SHALL LOCATE,
CONTACT, AND PROVIDE INFORMATION, REFERRALS, AND SERVICES TO
YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.
INFORMATION, REFERRALS, AND SERVICES MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT
LIMITED TO:
(A) FAMILY REUNIFICATION SERVICES;
(B) CONFLICT RESOLUTION OR MEDIATION COUNSELING;
(C) ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING TEMPORARY EMERGENCY SHELTER;
(D) ASSISTANCE WITH EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND
INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS;
(E) ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING FOOD, CLOTHING, MEDICAL CARE,
OR MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING;
(F) COUNSELING REGARDING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION,
AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE;
(G) REFERRALS TO OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS;
(H) AFTERCARE SERVICES;
SPECIALIZED SERVICES FOR HIGHLY VULNERABLE YOUTH WHO ARE EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, INCLUDING TEEN PARENTS; YOUTH WITH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ISSUES; SEXUALLY EXPLOITED YOUTH; LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, OR TRANSGENDER YOUTH; YOUTH OF COLOR; OR YOUTH WHO ARE VICTIMS OF OR EXPERIENCING HUMAN TRAFFICKING; AND

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICES;

EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAMS. AN EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS WITH REFERRAL AND WALK-IN ACCESS TO EMERGENCY SHORT-TERM RESIDENTIAL CARE. AN EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAM SHALL PROVIDE YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS WITH SAFE, DIGNIFIED SHELTER, INCLUDING PRIVATE SHOWER FACILITIES, BEDS, AND AT LEAST ONE MEAL EACH DAY. SUCH PROGRAMS SHALL ASSIST A YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS WITH REUNIFICATION WITH FAMILY OR LEGAL GUARDIAN WHEN REQUIRED OR APPROPRIATE. SERVICES AT EMERGENCY SHELTER PROGRAMS MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

(A) FAMILY REUNIFICATION SERVICES;
(B) INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, AND GROUP COUNSELING;
(C) ASSISTANCE OBTAINING CLOTHING;
(D) ACCESS TO MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES;
(E) EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES;
(F) RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES;
(G) ADVOCACY AND REFERRAL SERVICES;
(H) INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS TRAINING;
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING AND TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAMS SHALL HELP YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS FIND AND MAINTAIN SAFE, DIGNIFIED HOUSING. A SUPPORTIVE HOUSING AND TRANSITIONAL LIVING PROGRAM MAY ALSO PROVIDE RENTAL ASSISTANCE AND RELATED SUPPORTIVE SERVICES OR REFER YOUTH TO OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS. SERVICES PROVIDED MAY INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

(A) EDUCATION ASSISTANCE AND REFERRALS TO EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS;

(B) CAREER PLANNING, EMPLOYMENT, WORK, AND INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS TRAINING;

(C) JOB PLACEMENT SERVICES;

(D) BUDGETING AND MONEY MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE;

(E) ASSISTANCE IN SECURING PERMANENT HOUSING THAT IS APPROPRIATE TO THE YOUTH'S NEEDS AND INCOME;

(F) COUNSELING REGARDING VIOLENCE, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE;

(G) REFERRALS FOR HEALTH CARE OR ALCOHOL OR SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCY SERVICES;

(H) PARENTING SKILLS EDUCATION;

(I) AFTERCARE AND FOLLOW-UP SERVICES; AND

(J) HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICES.

(e) THIS SUBSECTION (4) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023.

(5) (a) ON OR BEFORE MARCH 1, 2023, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL
PREPARE AND SUBMIT TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH CARE AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AND THE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES, A REPORT TO SUMMARIZE THE STATUS OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING OR AT RISK OF EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND THE IMPACT OF THE GRANT PROGRAM ON SUCH YOUTH. THE REPORT MUST INCLUDE:

(I) A LIST OF THE AREAS OF THE STATE, PRE- AND POST-GRANT PROGRAM, WITH THE GREATEST NEED FOR SERVICES, INCLUDING HOUSING, AND THE LEVEL AND NATURE OF SUCH NEEDS;

(II) A LIST OF GRANT RECIPIENTS AND THE AMOUNT OF EACH GRANT;

(III) THE DISTRIBUTION OF GRANT MONEY THROUGHOUT THE STATE BASED ON POPULATION NEEDS;

(IV) ANY AVAILABLE FOLLOW-UP INFORMATION, EXCLUDING ANY PERSONAL IDENTIFYING INFORMATION, ON ANY YOUTH WHO RECEIVED SERVICES THROUGH THE GRANT PROGRAM; AND

(V) ANY OTHER PERTINENT OUTCOMES FOR THE POPULATIONS SERVED TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE GRANT PROGRAM.

(b) THIS SUBSECTION (5) IS REPEALED, EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2023.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 24-1-120, amend (5) introductory portion; and repeal (5)(i) as follows:

24-1-120. Department of human services - creation. (5) The department of human services shall include the following:

(i) The office of homeless youth services, created by article 5.9 of title 26, C.R.S. Said office and its powers, duties, and functions are transferred by a type 2 transfer to the department of human services.
SECTION 3. Act subject to petition - effective date. This act takes effect at 12:01 a.m. on the day following the expiration of the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general assembly (August 5, 2020, if adjournment sine die is on May 6, 2020); except that, if a referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act within such period, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless approved by the people at the general election to be held in November 2020 and, in such case, will take effect on the date of the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor.