



101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2019 and 2020

SB2548

Introduced 1/29/2020, by Sen. Suzy Glowiak Hilton - Celina Villanueva

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act. Requires an institution of higher education (including a business, technical, or vocational school) to designate at least one employee who works within the financial aid department, campus housing services, or any other appropriate office or department, as may be determined by the institution, to serve as a liaison between the institution and a homeless student or student in care who is enrolled at the institution. Sets forth the responsibilities of the liaison, the Board of Higher Education, and the institution. Effective August 1, 2021.

LRB101 17163 CMG 66564 b

FISCAL NOTE ACT
MAY APPLY

STATE MANDATES
ACT MAY REQUIRE
REIMBURSEMENT

1 AN ACT concerning higher education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Higher
5 Education Housing and Opportunities Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. As used in this Act:

7 "Institution of higher education" or "institution" means
8 any publicly or privately operated university, college,
9 community college, business, technical, or vocational school,
10 or other educational institution offering degrees and
11 instruction beyond the secondary school level.

12 "Student experiencing homelessness" or "homeless student"
13 means an individual enrolled in an institution who lacks or is
14 at imminent risk of lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate
15 nighttime residence or whose parent or legal guardian is unable
16 or unwilling to provide shelter and care and includes a
17 homeless individual as defined under the federal
18 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. For the purposes of
19 this definition, the term "fixed, regular, and adequate
20 nighttime residence" does not include residence in an
21 institution of higher education's on-campus housing.

22 "Student in care" means any person, regardless of age, who
23 is or was under the care and legal custody of the Department of

1 Children and Family Services, including youth for whom the
2 Department has court-ordered legal responsibility, youth who
3 aged out of care at age 18 or older, or youth formerly under
4 care who have been adopted and were the subject of an adoption
5 assistance agreement or who have been placed in private
6 guardianship and were the subject of a subsidized guardianship
7 agreement.

8 Section 10. Housing and Opportunities that are Useful for
9 Students' Excellence (HOUSE) liaison.

10 (a) In an effort to provide assistance to students
11 experiencing homelessness, each institution of higher
12 education shall designate at least one staff member to serve as
13 a liaison to assist homeless students enrolled at the
14 institution. The designated staff member may be employed in the
15 office of financial aid, in campus housing services, or in any
16 other appropriate office or department as determined by the
17 institution.

18 (b) The liaison designated under subsection (a) shall offer
19 assistance and resources to any homeless student or student in
20 care enrolled at the institution. The liaison shall have all of
21 the following responsibilities:

22 (1) To understand provisions pertaining to the
23 financial aid eligibility of homeless students, including
24 eligibility as an independent student under the federal
25 Higher Education Act of 1965.

1 (2) To identify services and resources that are
2 available to and appropriate for a homeless student.

3 (3) To assist a homeless student or student in care in
4 applying for and receiving federal and State financial aid
5 and available services.

6 (4) To track and monitor the graduation rate and
7 retention rate of homeless students and students in care
8 enrolled at the institution.

9 (5) To report annually to the Board of Higher Education
10 the number of homeless students and students in care
11 enrolled at the institution. The report must include the
12 number of students who received assistance or services
13 through the liaison and the type of service or assistance
14 received by the student. If the information is available,
15 the report may describe the outcome for the student as a
16 result of the services or assistance he or she received
17 through the liaison.

18 (6) To act as an intermediary between a homeless
19 student or student in care and the office of financial aid,
20 student support services, and campus housing services.

21 (7) To connect a homeless student or student in care to
22 a local continuum of care program.

23 (8) To publish on the institution's website
24 information about the services and resources available
25 through the institution's liaison, as well as contact
26 information for local, State, and federal services.

1 (9) To develop a plan to provide access to on-campus
2 housing or to suitable off-campus housing between academic
3 breaks to homeless students or students in care enrolled at
4 the institution.

5 (10) To train the institution's employees to identify
6 students experiencing homelessness and to refer those
7 students to the liaison.

8 At his or her discretion, the liaison may provide any
9 additional service he or she reasonably believes is within the
10 purview of the role of liaison.

11 (c) The Board of Higher Education shall adopt rules,
12 policies, and procedures to implement and administer this Act.
13 The Board must:

14 (1) require a liaison to participate in a professional
15 development program developed under Section 11432(d)(5) of
16 Title 42 of the United States Code;

17 (2) require a liaison to receive training on an annual
18 basis;

19 (3) collaborate with the State Coordinator for
20 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education and the contact liaisons
21 designated under Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) of Title 42 of
22 the United States Code to facilitate the efficient
23 transition of homeless students from secondary to
24 postsecondary education and provide homeless students and
25 students in care information about support services,
26 including financial aid, on-campus and off-campus housing,

1 food and meal plan programs, and counseling services, and
2 other resources and any other relevant information to
3 assist these students; and

4 (4) collect and compile data to be issued in an annual
5 report about students experiencing homelessness and
6 students in care enrolled at academic institutions.

7 (d) After 3 academic years, if the data submitted to the
8 Board of Higher Education indicates that the number of students
9 experiencing homelessness or the number of students in care
10 exceeds 1% or more of the student body of the institution, the
11 institution must create a position whose primary function is to
12 carry out the responsibilities of a liaison as described in
13 subsection (b).

14 (e) Each institution that provides on-campus housing for
15 students enrolled at the institution shall:

16 (1) grant priority for on-campus housing to students
17 experiencing homelessness and students in care who are
18 enrolled at the institution, including but not limited to,
19 access to on-campus housing that remains open during
20 academic breaks, and waive fees for the on-campus housing
21 during academic breaks;

22 (2) allow students experiencing homelessness and
23 students in care who are enrolled part-time at the
24 institution to access on-campus housing;

25 (3) provide information about the availability of
26 on-campus housing to students experiencing homelessness

1 and students in care; and

2 (4) provide information about the services and
3 assistance offered by the institution regarding
4 homelessness in financial aid packets and admission
5 packets and on the institution's website.

6 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect August 1,
7 2021.