

1 AN ACT in relation to homeless persons.

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 Bill
5 of Rights for the Homeless Act.

6 Section 5. Legislative intent. It is the long-standing
7 policy of this State that no person should suffer unnecessarily
8 from cold or hunger, be deprived of shelter or the basic rights
9 incident to shelter, or be subject to unfair discrimination
10 based on his or her homeless status. At the present time, many
11 persons have been rendered homeless as a result of economic
12 hardship, a severe shortage of safe and affordable housing, and
13 a shrinking social safety net. It is the intent of this Act to
14 lessen the adverse effects and conditions caused by the lack of
15 residence or a home.

16 Section 10. Bill of Rights.

17 (a) No person's rights, privileges, or access to public
18 services may be denied or abridged solely because he or she is
19 homeless. Such a person shall be granted the same rights and
20 privileges as any other citizen of this State. A person
21 experiencing homelessness has the following rights:

22 (1) the right to use and move freely in public spaces,

1 including but not limited to public sidewalks, public
2 parks, public transportation, and public buildings, in the
3 same manner as any other person and without discrimination
4 on the basis of his or her housing status;

5 (2) the right to equal treatment by all State and
6 municipal agencies, without discrimination on the basis of
7 housing status;

8 (3) the right not to face discrimination while
9 maintaining employment due to his or her lack of permanent
10 mailing address, or his or her mailing address being that
11 of a shelter or social service provider;

12 (4) the right to emergency medical care free from
13 discrimination based on his or her housing status;

14 (5) the right to vote, register to vote, and receive
15 documentation necessary to prove identity for voting
16 without discrimination due to his or her housing status;

17 (6) the right to protection from disclosure of his or
18 her records and information provided to homeless shelters
19 and service providers to State, municipal, and private
20 entities without appropriate legal authority; and the
21 right to confidentiality of personal records and
22 information in accordance with all limitations on
23 disclosure established by the federal Homeless Management
24 Information Systems, the federal Health Insurance
25 Portability and Accountability Act, and the federal
26 Violence Against Women Act; and

1 (7) the right to a reasonable expectation of privacy in
2 his or her personal property to the same extent as personal
3 property in a permanent residence.

4 (b) As used in this Act, "housing status" means the status
5 of having or not having a fixed or regular residence, including
6 the status of living on the streets, in a shelter, or in a
7 temporary residence.

8 Section 15. Damages and attorney's fees. In any civil
9 action alleging a violation of this Act, the court may award
10 appropriate injunctive and declaratory relief, actual damages,
11 and reasonable attorney's fees and costs to a prevailing
12 plaintiff.

13 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon
14 becoming law.