

CHAPTER 464

HUMAN SERVICES - SOCIAL SERVICES

HOUSE BILL 24-1431

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Lukens and Armagost, Amabile, Bacon, Bird, Boesenecker, Duran, English, Epps, Froelich, Garcia, Hamrick, Hernandez, Herod, Jodeh, Lieder, Lindsay, Lindstedt, Mabrey, Mauro, McCormick, McLachlan, Ortiz, Pugliese, Ricks, Rutinel, Sirota, Snyder, Story, Titone, Weissman, Woodrow, Young, McCluskie;
also SENATOR(S) Winter F. and Michaelson Jenet, Bridges, Buckner, Cutter, Exum, Ginal, Jaquez Lewis, Mullica, Priola, Roberts, Sullivan, Zenzinger.

AN ACT

CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A PROGRAM TO PROVIDE STABLE HOUSING ASSISTANCE FOR SURVIVORS OF ABUSE, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION.

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

SECTION 1. Legislative declaration. (1) The general assembly finds that:

(a) Domestic and sexual violence inflicts profound and enduring harm on children, youth, and their caregivers, with economic abuse tactics often exacerbating the challenges survivors of domestic and sexual violence often face in escaping their abusive environments;

(b) Stable housing is paramount for individuals who escape abusive environments, with rapid rehousing programs playing a crucial role in addressing homelessness among survivors of domestic and sexual violence and their children;

(c) Providing timely financial assistance for housing expenses to survivors of domestic and sexual violence significantly enhances the safety and well-being of affected households;

(d) The domestic violence program within the department of human services utilized federal "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021" (ARPA), Pub.L. 117-2 funds to administer a time-limited flex fund project to help survivors of domestic and sexual violence overcome barriers to safety and recovery. Data from this ARPA-funded flexible funding project emphasizes the critical need for housing support among survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material added to existing law; dashes through words or numbers indicate deletions from existing law and such material is not part of the act.

(e) Community organizations that provide crisis intervention services are well-positioned to provide the financial support survivors of domestic and sexual violence need to overcome housing barriers and establish a sense of safety and stability for themselves and their children; and

(f) Individuals who have experienced domestic or sexual violence make up a disproportionate share of the TANF program caseload, which highlights the intersecting challenges faced by survivors of domestic and sexual violence and their children.

(2) Therefore, the general assembly declares that using unused Colorado works program state money to establish and execute a housing-focused flexible financial assistance project for domestic and sexual violence survivors is a proactive and effective solution to address the immediate needs of this vulnerable population.

SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add 26-2-726** as follows:

26-2-726. Stable housing for survivors of domestic or sexual violence program - creation - funding - appropriation - definitions. (1) AS USED IN THIS SECTION, UNLESS THE CONTEXT OTHERWISE REQUIRES:

(a) "CONTRACTED ORGANIZATION" MEANS A COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT CONTRACTS WITH TO PROVIDE STABLE HOUSING SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE PROVIDED PURSUANT TO THE COLORADO WORKS PROGRAM THROUGH THE PROGRAM.

(b) "PROGRAM" MEANS THE STABLE HOUSING FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROGRAM CREATED IN SUBSECTION (2) OF THIS SECTION.

(c) "SHORT-TERM ASSISTANCE PAYMENT" HAS THE MEANING SET FORTH IN SECTION 26-2-706.6 (3).

(2) THERE IS CREATED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES THE STABLE HOUSING FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROGRAM TO PROVIDE STABLE HOUSING SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE WHO ARE ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE PROVIDED PURSUANT TO THE COLORADO WORKS PROGRAM.

(3) ON OR BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2025, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SHALL CONTRACT WITH COMMUNITY-BASED ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM.

(4) A CONTRACTED ORGANIZATION SHALL USE THE MONEY ALLOCATED TO IT BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO A SURVIVOR OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE PURSUANT TO

THE COLORADO WORKS PROGRAM TO OBTAIN A SHORT-TERM ASSISTANCE PAYMENT FOR STABLE HOUSING.

(5) FOR EACH STATE FISCAL YEAR 2024-25 THROUGH 2028-29, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHALL APPROPRIATE TWO MILLION DOLLARS FROM THE COLORADO LONG-TERM WORKS RESERVE, CREATED IN SECTION 26-2-721, TO THE PROGRAM.

(6) THE COLORADO WORKS PROGRAM SHALL ACCOUNT FOR THE FUNDS USED FOR THE PROGRAM IN ITS ANNUAL COLORADO WORKS REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE.

SECTION 3. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 26-2-721, **amend** (2) introductory portion; and **add** (2)(c) as follows:

26-2-721. Colorado long-term works reserve - creation - use. (2) The general assembly, upon request of the state department, may appropriate the ~~moneys~~ MONEY in the reserve for the purposes of:

(c) THE STABLE HOUSING FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC OR SEXUAL VIOLENCE PROGRAM CREATED IN SECTION 26-2-726.

SECTION 4. Appropriation. For the 2024-25 state fiscal year, \$2,000,000 is appropriated to the department of human services for use by the office of economic security. This appropriation is from the Colorado long-term works reserve created in section 26-2-721 (1), C.R.S., and is based on the assumption that the office will require an additional 1.3 FTE. To implement this act, the office may use this appropriation for the stable housing for survivors of domestic or sexual violence program.

SECTION 5. Safety clause. The general assembly finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety or for appropriations for the support and maintenance of the departments of the state and state institutions.

Approved: June 6, 2024