

LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ESTIMATE

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 684

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 220th LEGISLATURE

DATED: NOVEMBER 15, 2022

SUMMARY

- Synopsis:** Requires Homelessness Prevention Program agencies to remain open during public health emergency and mandates funding of additional agencies in certain counties.
- Type of Impact:** Annual State cost increases.
- Agencies Affected:** Department of Community Affairs.

Office of Legislative Services Estimate

Annual Fiscal Impact	
State Cost Increase	Indeterminate

- The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) concludes that the bill will result in an indeterminate increase in annual State costs to the Department of Community Affairs associated with providing funds to support the operations of additional non-profit agencies in the management and implementation of the Homelessness Prevention Program.
- The bill requires the department to utilize federal funding related to COVID-19 to initially establish additional agencies to provide services through the Homelessness Prevention Program. If federal funding is not available, the department may request funding from the General Fund or other State funding source for this purpose.

BILL DESCRIPTION

The bill requires that at least two Homelessness Prevention Program agencies operate in populous counties, defined as having a population of 350,000 or more people in the most recent decennial census, and that all Homelessness Prevention Program agencies remain open during public health emergencies.

The bill specifically requires DCA to provide funding to ensure that at least two agencies are established in these counties to help manage and implement the HPP within that populous county.

Under the bill, to the extent permitted by federal law, the funding provided to an additional agency in a populous county are to be paid from the monies received by the State under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act or any other financial assistance provided by the federal government to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. If federal funding is not available to satisfy the full amount of establishing a second agency within a populous county, then the Department of Community Affairs is permitted to notify the Department of the Treasury and the Joint Budget Oversight Committee of the Legislature of the deficiency and to request that the Legislature appropriate a portion of the remainder from the General Fund, or other available State funding sources.

FISCAL ANALYSIS

EXECUTIVE BRANCH

None received.

OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The OLS concludes that the bill will result in an indeterminate increase in annual State costs to the Department of Community Affairs associated with providing funds to support the operations of additional non-profit agencies in the management and implementation of the Homelessness Prevention Program.

The bill requires that the department provide funding to support the operations of at least two agencies in each populous county in the State to help manage and implement the Homelessness Prevention Program within each of these counties. Based on 2020 census data, the following 12 counties would be considered a populous county under the bill: Bergen County, Essex County, Middlesex County, Hudson County, Monmouth County, Ocean County, Union County, Passaic County, Camden County, Morris County, Burlington County and Mercer County. The bill's provisions would require the department to provide funding to support the Homelessness Prevention Program operations of at least 24 agencies. According to department's website, each of these counties currently has one agency to operate the Homelessness Prevention Program so that funding for an additional 12 would need to be provided. The OLS notes that the agencies provide services in addition to the Homelessness Prevention Program. The OLS is unable to estimate the costs currently incurred by the agencies for the operation of the Homelessness Prevention Program and is therefore unable to predict the costs that would be incurred by the department to support the establishment and operations of the required number of additional Homelessness Prevention Program agencies.

The Department of Community Affairs would be responsible for funding the establishment of one additional Homelessness Prevention Program agency in each populous county, at least 12 total, through monies provided by the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, or any other financial assistance provided by the federal government to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. If federal funding is not available, to satisfy the full amount of establishing a second agency within each populous county, the Department of Community Affairs may request that the Legislature appropriate a portion of the remainder from the General Fund or other State funding source.

Section: Local Government

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This legislative fiscal estimate has been produced by the Office of Legislative Services due to the failure of the Executive Branch to respond to our request for a fiscal note.

This fiscal estimate has been prepared pursuant to P.L.1980, c.67 (C.52:13B-6 et seq.).