

1 S.235

2 Introduced by Senators Fox, Ashe and Lyons

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Human services; housing; homelessness

6 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to create a two-year pilot program
7 between the agency of human services and the Burlington Housing Authority
8 to coordinate those agencies' resources and their ability to assist low income
9 households in Chittenden County that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

10 An act relating to a homeless prevention and rapid rehousing pilot program

11 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

12 Sec. 1. PURPOSE

13 It is the purpose of this act to create a homeless prevention and rapid
14 rehousing pilot program across agencies and departments which focuses on
15 housing retention and rapid rehousing in order to reduce the problem of
16 homelessness for low income Vermonters in Chittenden County.

17 Sec. 2. HOMELESS PREVENTION/RAPID REHOUSING TEAM

18 (a) The agency of human services' field services director for the Burlington
19 district, in consultation with the Burlington Housing Authority's homeless

1 prevention/rapid rehousing (HPRR) program coordinator, shall establish and
2 supervise an HPRR service coordination team comprising:

3 (1) two employees of the agency of human services, selected by the
4 secretary of human services and supervised by the agency's field services
5 director for the Burlington district; and

6 (2) two housing retention/rapid rehousing specialists employed by the
7 Burlington Housing Authority through a contract with the agency of human
8 services.

9 (b) The HPRR team shall receive referrals from the agency of human
10 services and the agencies with which it contracts of current or potential client
11 households that are either at risk of homelessness or homeless and have
12 significant barriers to permanent housing. All such households shall be
13 eligible for assistance from the case management team.

14 (c) Each member of the team shall specialize in one or more of the
15 following areas:

16 (1) individuals and families for whom the agency of human services is
17 providing housing in a motel;

18 (2) individuals receiving Reach Up benefits pursuant to chapter 11 of
19 this title; and

20 (3) individuals and families with mental health or developmental
21 disabilities.

1 Sec. 3. HOMELESS PREVENTION/RAPID REHOUSING TEAM DUTIES

2 The HPRR team shall:

3 (1) work with households that are at risk of homelessness to preserve or
4 improve their housing situations;

5 (2) work with households that are homeless and have significant barriers
6 to permanent housing to identify and secure long-term housing;

7 (3) coordinate existing homeless prevention, housing, and rehousing
8 services provided by state agencies and departments and through community
9 resources;

10 (4) promote the idea that stable, affordable housing is essential to the
11 delivery and efficacy of supportive services and family stability;

12 (5) commit to comprehensive data collection, periodic analysis, and
13 documentation of outcomes;

14 (6) encourage and support improved collection and utilization of data on
15 homelessness by the Chittenden County Continuum of Care and integration of
16 those data with statewide data;

17 (7) provide support to the Chittenden County hoarding task force; and

18 (8) provide technical assistance and training on housing searches,
19 housing options, rental assistance, and housing retention to case managers in
20 the agency of human services and to social service organizations.

1 Sec. 4. RESOURCES

2 (a) The agency of human services' field services director for the Burlington
3 district shall administer a fund available to the HPRR team for one-time
4 expenses directly associated with securing a permanent housing solution,
5 including moving-related expenses, hoarding remediation, and security
6 deposits.

7 (b) The agency of human services and the Burlington Housing Authority
8 shall develop a protocol to link Section 8 housing choice vouchers to
9 households that the HPRR team assists.

10 (c) The HPRR team shall receive priority for its program clients in vacant
11 supportive, transitional housing units developed by the Burlington Housing
12 Authority with capital fund support from the agency of human services.

13 (d) The Burlington Housing Authority may, on a case-by-case basis, give
14 priority consideration to program clients for placement in its public housing
15 developments.

16 Sec. 5. EFFECTIVE DATE; SUNSET

17 The pilot program shall begin on July 1, 2012 and shall expire on
18 July 1, 2014.