

2013 - 2014 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Ready for Notebook

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104	1	A	1

Budget Action Title: Reports on Prioritization Policy and Barriers to Housing for Homeless Families

Councilmembers: Bagshaw; Harrell; Licata

Staff Analyst: Traci Ratzliff

Date		Total	SB	BH	TR	RC	TB	NL	JG	SC	MO
	Yes										
	No										
	Abstain										
	Absent										

Statement of Legislative Intent:

Council members are interested in reviewing the proposed policy for prioritizing placement of homeless families in permanent housing, and a report on barriers for families accessing housing. The Human Services Department is requested, in collaboration with King County Family Homelessness Initiative, FHC, and others to provide the following two reports to the Housing, Human Services, Health and Culture Committee:

- 1) The proposed prioritization policy for placement of homeless families into housing that will be implemented by the Family Housing Connections Program. This report is expected no later than January 30, 2013.
- 2) Information regarding the extent to which issues including, but not limited to, differing interpretations or definitions of homelessness, and strict eligibility criteria related to sobriety, are barriers to housing for homeless families. In addition, if barriers are identified, what recommended policy or program changes could be implemented to help families overcome identified barriers and access housing. This report is expected no later than July 1, 2013.

Background:

Family Housing Connections (FHC), the Countywide coordinated entry and assessment program, has a placement list of over 1,800 families Countywide who have been formally assessed and are in need of housing and other services. This number includes families who are homeless, those already residing in and those placed into emergency shelter, and families at risk of losing housing (within 30 days).

Currently, people are placed in housing from the FHC placement list based on eligibility for specific program services and the date they are referred by the Community Information Line (2-1-1) to FHC. A formal prioritization policy is not in place that guides which families on the placement list should be given housing first. The King County Family Homelessness Initiative - consisting of partners involved in implementing the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness that funds FHC - is developing a prioritization policy for FHC that will be reviewed with agency partners prior to being vetted and

approved by the Committee to End Homelessness Funders Group and Interagency Council, by early 2013. Council members are interested in reviewing this policy and aligning use of City funds for homeless families with this policy.

In addition, in a July 2012 report to the Housing, Human Services, Health and Culture Committee, staff from FHC indicated there were high denial rates for housing placement for families due to:

- Differing interpretations of homelessness definitions
- Strict eligibility criteria related to sobriety

Council members have indicated a desire to obtain further understanding of what issues pose barriers for families accessing housing and potential policy or program options that could be implemented to overcome such barriers.

Responsible Council Committee(s): Housing, Human Services, Health, & Culture

Date Due to Council: January 30, 2013 & July 1, 2013