

H.B. 298 HOMELESS SERVICES AMENDMENTS



ABOUT THIS BILL

Utah's homeless population is among the most vulnerable in the state. The trending increase in homelessness over the years is of great concern to the Legislature. One of the biggest challenges in reversing this trend has been the lack of effective data surrounding this population. This piece of Legislation will help agencies collect and track data, and increase transparency and accountability by bringing all funding and governance under one roof.

CHANGES THE EXISTING
COUNCIL FROM

29  **9**

MEMBERS, WITH AN ADDITIONAL
NON VOTING MEMBER TO

**STREAMLINE
EFFECTIVENESS**

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE UTAH HOMELESS BOARD?

- Regularly update the state strategic plan on homelessness to reflect proven strategies to reduce homelessness among the unsheltered, the persistently homeless, and the situationally homeless.
- Develop annual state and local goals for reducing homelessness
- Develop accountability systems that measure provider effectiveness towards helping clients progress out of homelessness
- Adopt rules and policies to guide the administration of services to people experiencing homelessness in Utah
- Approve strategic plans developed by local homelessness councils.
- Identify best practices for responding to unsheltered individual's experiencing mental illness and substance abuse disorder
- Adopt and promote strategies to enforce illegal drug use within homeless shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing
- Facilitate client connection to alternative support systems including behavioral health, addiction recovery, and residential services.
- Authorize the distribution of funds distributed by the department to local homelessness councils.
- Distribute funds to local homelessness councils based on their performance in reaching goals to reduce homelessness.



Utah House of Representatives

House Majority Caucus

2024 General Session

Homeless Services Amendments

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Legislation

1. H.B. 298 (Rep. Tyler Clancy) – Homeless Services Amendments

3 Key Messages

- Although Utah ranks well below the national average, chronic homelessness imposes immense health, public safety, and economic burdens on individuals and local communities.
- We can't create solutions for a problem we don't understand the full scope of. Collecting and tracking data is the first step in implementing real change to reduce and prevent homelessness.
- We will work with counties and cities to end unsanctioned camping, improve housing affordability, and mitigate the effects of homelessness on local communities.

H.B. 298 Homeless Services Amendments

Rep. Tyler Clancy

Key Policy Changes

- Changes the existing 29 person council to a 9 person board, with an additional non voting member, to streamline effectiveness. The board shall consist of:
 - A representative, appointed jointly by the speaker of the House of Representatives the president of the Senate;
 - A statewide philanthropic leader, appointed by the governor;
 - A representative, appointed by the governor;
 - A statewide philanthropic leader, appointed by the Utah Impact Partnership or the partnership's successor organization;
 - The mayor of Salt Lake City;
 - The chief executive officer appointed by the Shelter Cities Advisory Council

- An elected official appointed by the Utah Association of Counties or the association's successor organization;
 - A county employee who oversees behavioral health, appointed by the Utah Association of Counties or the association's successor organization;
 - An individual who represents the Utah Homeless Network;
 - The coordinator.
- Outlines each homelessness subpopulation and our goal of functional zero for each group, including:
 - The number who are homeless for the first time;
 - The number of who returned to homelessness after having exited homelessness within the prior two years;
 - The number who remain homeless during the reporting period;
 - The number who exited homelessness by exit destination;
 - The number of individuals whose exit status is unknown.
 - The number of individuals experiencing homelessness for the first time, plus the number of individuals returning to homelessness, less the number exiting homelessness.
 - Brings all funding and governance decisions under one roof (The new Utah Homeless Board) to ensure accountability and transparency and streamline funding decisions.
 - Requires year-to-date reports on progress towards the number receiving homeless services during the latest fiscal year, during each of the past three years, during each of the last five years.
 - Requires the Homeless Services Board to regularly update the state strategic plan on homelessness to reflect proven strategies to reduce homelessness among the unsheltered, the persistently homeless, and the situationally homeless.

Key Messaging

- We want to reduce homelessness by focusing our efforts and funding on proven solutions that work for our communities.
- During the last two sessions, the Legislature appropriated \$175 million to address homelessness in Utah but chronic homelessness continues to impose immense health, public safety, and economic burdens on individuals and local communities.

- This legislation aims to collect and track data surrounding our homeless population to identify lasting solutions that reduce homelessness for Utahns.
- We want to help those who are struggling to find shelter, but we won't condone or support crime in any form.
- Reducing homelessness will also reduce crime in our communities.
- Consolidating our governance decisions under one roof in the form of the Utah Homeless Board will ensure accountability and transparency.