

## **2026 Homelessness, Housing, and Support Services Administration (HHSSA) Policy Bill Summary**

### **HS-06: Substance Use Disorder (SUD)-only Eligibility for Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Program**

This proposal is a technical correction to the Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) program. PATH was established to help prevent and end homelessness for people with serious mental illness, substance use disorder, or a co-occurring substance use disorder. When statute was updated in 2024, however, a reference to substance use disorder was unintentionally omitted from the section describing what grant funds can be used for. This technical change clarifies that allowable grant activities include services for individuals with a substance use disorder (absent a co-occurring mental illness) and aligns eligible uses with the stated program purpose.

### **HS-04: Expanding Housing with Support for Adults with Serious Mental Illness (HSASMI) Program Eligibility**

This proposal amends eligibility criteria for the Housing with Support for Adults with Serious Mental Illness (HSASMI) grant program to allow individuals with a substance use disorder (SUD) diagnosis to qualify for services, absent an identified co-occurring mental illness. Discerning the behavioral health needs of individuals experiencing housing instability may take time, and people presenting with SUD may have underlying serious mental health needs that require more time to identify. This policy change would remove a barrier to access for individuals who present with SUD and create a stronger housing safety net by supporting a more integrated, person-centered behavioral health approach.

### **HS-21: Economic Assistance Program Reforms**

This proposal improves policy clarity, increases program uniformity, and removes outdated, non-person-centered language in the Minnesota Supplemental Aid (MSA) and General Assistance (GA) programs. More specifically, it extends the period during which MSA applicants must apply for other benefits from 30 days to 90 days, aligning with all other state cash assistance programs; and it eliminates language requiring mandatory vendor payment of GA benefits for individuals with substance use disorder.

### **HS-03: Emergency General Assistance (EGA) Policy Transparency**

This proposal responds to recommendations from the 2023 Workgroup for Expediting Rental Assistance (WERA) by requiring counties and Tribal Nations to report their Emergency General Assistance (EGA) policies to DHS for

centralized publication. EGA is formula-based emergency funding distributed statewide to counties and Tribes. Counties and Tribes establish program rules, resulting in different requirements for applicants and providers. Publishing policies statewide will make program rules visible and accessible, ensuring that Minnesotans can understand and pursue the assistance available to them, regardless of where they live.

### **HS-08: Increasing Housing Support Access through Process Transparency and Outcome Reporting**

This proposal adds new requirements for county and Tribal agencies to develop, make available, and report on processes by which they review and approve Housing Support agreements with providers. It was prompted by provider concerns regarding local discretion and lack of transparency for entering into Housing Support agreements, as well as agency concerns regarding local need for services and capacity to administer agreements. Increasing transparency of processes will benefit agencies, providers, and the individuals they serve, and the data collected by DHS will be used to guide future policy reforms that strengthen access to Housing Support.

### **HS-02: Repealing Homeless Youth Act and Shelter-Linked Mental Health Legislative Reports**

This proposal repeals statutory requirements for DHS to produce the biennial Homeless Youth Act Report (Minn. Stat. 256K.45, Subd. 2) and Shelter-Linked Mental Health Report (Minn. Stat., 256K.46., Subd. 5). In recent years, national and statewide data sources, such as the Minnesota Homeless Study, have replaced the Homeless Youth Act Report and Shelter-Linked Mental Health Report as more comprehensive and up-to-date resources for youth homelessness. Removing the biennial reporting requirement will save state resources and avoid duplication.