

Subject Shelter Inhabitants' Bill of Rights

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Overview

This bill creates a shelter inhabitants' bill of rights including the rights to: be treated with dignity and respect, adequate facilities, reasonable accommodations, privacy, confidentiality of records, know about shelter rules and available resources, meet with attorneys and others, and complain. The bill also directs the commissioner of human services to consult with others to develop a list of resources to be distributed to shelter inhabitants and appropriates money for the development of the resource list.

Summary

Section	Description
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1	Shelter Inhabitants' Bill of Rights.
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Creates § 256K.50.

Subd. 1. Definitions. Defines "homeless," "homeless shelter," and "inhabitant."

Subd. 2. Right to be treated with dignity and respect. Specifies inhabitants have the right to be treated with courtesy, dignity, and respect and the right to be treated equally and without discrimination.

Subd. 3. Right to adequate facilities. Specifies inhabitants have the right to be sheltered in facilities that are clean, sanitary, and adequate to meet their temporary housing needs. If a shelter serves food, specifies inhabitants have the right to food prepared in a safe and sanitary manner with all applicable health codes.

Subd. 4. Right to reasonable accommodations. Specifies inhabitants with disabilities have the right to reasonable accommodations and modifications of policies, practices, and procedures. Specifies inhabitants have the right to reasonable modification of rules and policies to accommodate work or child care hours and schedules, emergencies, obligations to care for relatives who do not reside in the shelter, and other extenuating circumstances that would result in

Section	Description
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the need to leave or return at times other than those articulated in the shelter rules.

Subd. 5. Right to privacy. Specifies when inhabitants have the right to personal privacy.

Subd. 6. Right to confidentiality of records. Specifies inhabitants have the right to have their personal, financial, health, and medical records kept private. Prohibits a shelter from releasing an inhabitant's records without the inhabitant's consent, except as otherwise required or allowed under law.

Subd. 7. Right to know about shelter rules and available resources. Upon admission to a shelter, requires inhabitants to be offered a written notice that includes specified information.

Subd. 8. Right to meet with attorneys, advocates, and others. Specifies inhabitants have the right to meet and communicate privately with attorneys, advocates, clergy, physicians, medical providers, social workers, and other professionals. Requires the meetings to be allowed at reasonable hours and immediately when necessary in an emergency, consistent with any physical limitations of the shelter facility.

Subd. 9. Right to complain. Specifies inhabitants have the right to file, without fear of retaliation, grievances with the shelter provider, the ombudsperson for shelter inhabitants, or any other relevant government entity regarding inhabitant treatment or the services provided by the shelter.

Subd. 10. Displacements. Specifies the circumstances under which a shelter may displace an inhabitant. Requires shelters to exercise judgment and to take specified actions before displacing an inhabitant. Specifies that an inhabitant who is displaced has the right to written documentation of the reason for the displacement, the effective date of the displacement, the procedure to file a grievance, and contact information for the ombudsperson for shelter inhabitants.

Subd. 11. No effect on other rights. Specifies nothing in this section shall be construed to eliminate, limit, or modify any rights of the inhabitant, including rights of appeal, granted under any other provision of law.

Provides an August 1, 2023, effective date, except subdivision 7 is effective January 1, 2024.

Section	Description
2	<p>Direction to commissioner; shelter inhabitants' bill of rights.</p> <p>No later than January 1, 2024, requires the commissioner of human services, in consultation with others, to develop a list of resources to be distributed to shelter inhabitants.</p>
3	<p>Appropriation; shelter inhabitants' bill of rights.</p> <p>Appropriates an unspecified amount in fiscal year 2024 from the general fund to the commissioner of human services to develop a list of resources to be provided to shelter inhabitants. Specifies this is a onetime appropriation.</p>



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