

RCW 43.20A.790 Homeless families with children—Shelter and housing services. (1) The department shall collaborate with the department of commerce in the development of the coordinated and comprehensive plan for homeless families with children required under RCW 43.63A.650, which designates the department of commerce as the state agency with primary responsibility for providing shelter and housing services to homeless families with children. In fulfilling its responsibilities to collaborate with the department of commerce pursuant to RCW 43.63A.650, the department shall develop, administer, supervise, and monitor its portion of the plan. The department's portion of the plan shall contain at least the following elements:

- (a) Coordination or linkage of services with shelter and housing;
- (b) Accommodation and addressing the needs of homeless families in the design and administration of department programs;
- (c) Participation of the department's local offices in the identification, assistance, and referral of homeless families; and
- (d) Ongoing monitoring of the efficiency and effectiveness of the plan's design and implementation.

(2) The department shall include community organizations involved in the delivery of services to homeless families with children, and experts in the development and ongoing evaluation of the plan.

(3) The duties under this section shall be implemented within amounts appropriated for that specific purpose by the legislature in the operating and capital budgets. [2023 c 470 s 2034; 1999 c 267 s 2.]

Explanatory statement—2023 c 470: See note following RCW 10.99.030.

Findings—Intent—1999 c 267: "The legislature finds that homelessness for families with children is a serious, widespread problem that has a devastating effect on children, including significant adverse effects upon their growth and development. Planning for and serving the shelter and housing needs of homeless families with children has been and continues to be a responsibility of the *department of community, trade, and economic development. The legislature further finds that the department of social and health services also plays an important role in addressing the service needs of homeless families with children. In order to adequately and effectively address the complex issues confronting homeless families with children, planning for, implementing, and evaluating such services must be a collaborative effort between the *department of community, trade, and economic development and the department of social and health services, other local, state, and federal agencies, and community organizations. It is the intent of the legislature that the *department of community, trade, and economic development and the department of social and health services jointly present the plan to the appropriate committees of the legislature as required in section 3 of this act. It is the intent of the legislature that children should not be placed or retained in the foster care system if family homelessness is the primary reason for placement or the continuation of their placement. It is the further intent of the legislature that services to homeless families with children shall be provided within funds appropriated for that specific purpose by the legislature in the operating and capital budgets. Nothing in this act is intended to prevent the court's review of the plan developed by the department of

social and health services and the *department of community, trade, and economic development under *Washington State Coalition for the Homeless v. Department of Social and Health Services*, King County Superior Court No. 91-2-15889-4. However, it is the intent of the legislature that the court's review in that proceeding be confined solely to review of the plan submitted under the order of February 4, 1998. Nothing in sections 1 through 10 of this act is intended to grant the court in this proceeding continuing review over the department of social and health services after July 25, 1999." [1999 c 267 s 1.]

***Reviser's note:** The "department of community, trade, and economic development" was renamed the "department of commerce" by 2009 c 565.

Severability—1999 c 267: "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1999 c 267 s 25.]