

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Higher
5 Education Housing and Opportunities Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. As used in this Act:

7 "Institution of higher education" or "institution" means
8 any publicly or privately operated university, college,
9 community college, business, technical, or vocational school,
10 or other educational institution offering degrees and
11 instruction beyond the secondary school level.

12 "Student experiencing homelessness" or "homeless student"
13 means an individual enrolled in an institution who lacks or is
14 at imminent risk of lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate
15 nighttime residence or whose parent or legal guardian is
16 unable or unwilling to provide shelter and care and includes a
17 homeless individual as defined under the federal
18 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. For the purposes of
19 this definition, the term "fixed, regular, and adequate
20 nighttime residence" does not include residence in an
21 institution of higher education's on-campus housing.

22 "Student in care" means any person, regardless of age, who
23 is or was under the care and legal custody of the Department of

1 Children and Family Services, including youth for whom the
2 Department has court-ordered legal responsibility, youth who
3 aged out of care at age 18 or older, or youth formerly under
4 care who have been adopted and were the subject of an adoption
5 assistance agreement or who have been placed in private
6 guardianship and were the subject of a subsidized guardianship
7 agreement.

8 Section 10. Housing and Opportunities that are Useful for
9 Students' Excellence (HOUSE) liaison.

10 (a) In an effort to provide assistance to students
11 experiencing homelessness, each institution of higher
12 education shall designate at least one staff member to serve
13 as a liaison to assist homeless students enrolled at the
14 institution. The designated staff member may be employed in
15 the office of financial aid, in campus housing services, or in
16 any other appropriate office or department as determined by
17 the institution.

18 (b) The liaison designated under subsection (a) shall
19 offer assistance and resources to any homeless student or
20 student in care enrolled at the institution. The liaison shall
21 have all of the following responsibilities:

22 (1) To understand provisions pertaining to the
23 financial aid eligibility of homeless students, including
24 eligibility as an independent student under the federal
25 Higher Education Act of 1965.

1 (2) To identify services and resources that are
2 available to and appropriate for a homeless student.

3 (3) To assist a homeless student or student in care in
4 applying for and receiving federal and State financial aid
5 and available services.

6 (4) To track and monitor the graduation rate and
7 retention rate of homeless students and students in care
8 enrolled at the institution.

9 (5) To report annually to the Board of Higher
10 Education or the Illinois Community College Board, as
11 appropriate, the number of homeless students and students
12 in care enrolled at the institution. The report must
13 include the number of students who received assistance or
14 services through the liaison and the type of service or
15 assistance received by the student. If the information is
16 available, the report may describe the outcome for the
17 student as a result of the services or assistance he or she
18 received through the liaison.

19 (6) To act as an intermediary between a homeless
20 student or student in care and the office of financial
21 aid, student support services, and campus housing
22 services.

23 (7) To connect a homeless student or student in care
24 to a local continuum of care program.

25 (8) To publish on the institution's website
26 information about the services and resources available

1 through the institution's liaison, as well as contact
2 information for local, State, and federal services.

3 (9) To develop a plan to provide access to on-campus
4 housing or to suitable off-campus housing between academic
5 breaks to homeless students or students in care enrolled
6 at the institution.

7 (10) To train the institution's employees to identify
8 students experiencing homelessness and to refer those
9 students to the liaison.

10 At his or her discretion, the liaison may provide any
11 additional service he or she reasonably believes is within the
12 purview of the role of liaison.

13 (c) The Board of Higher Education and the Illinois
14 Community College Board shall adopt rules, policies, and
15 procedures to implement and administer this Act. Each Board
16 must:

17 (1) provide access to a training program developed by
18 a homeless advocacy organization;

19 (2) require a liaison to receive training on an annual
20 basis;

21 (3) collaborate with the State Coordinator for
22 McKinney-Vento Homeless Education and the contact liaisons
23 designated under Section 11432(g)(1)(J)(ii) of Title 42 of
24 the United States Code to facilitate the efficient
25 transition of homeless students from secondary to
26 postsecondary education and provide homeless students and

1 students in care information about support services,
2 including financial aid, on-campus and off-campus housing,
3 food and meal plan programs, and counseling services, and
4 other resources and any other relevant information to
5 assist these students; and

6 (4) issue annual reports about students experiencing
7 homelessness and students in care enrolled at academic
8 institutions.

9 (d) After 3 academic years, if the data submitted to the
10 Board of Higher Education or the Illinois Community College
11 Board, as appropriate, indicates that the number of students
12 experiencing homelessness or the number of students in care
13 exceeds 2% or more of the student body of the institution, the
14 institution must create a position whose primary function is
15 to carry out the responsibilities of a liaison as described in
16 subsection (b).

17 (e) Each institution that provides on-campus housing for
18 students enrolled at the institution shall:

19 (1) grant priority for on-campus housing to students
20 experiencing homelessness and students in care who are
21 enrolled at the institution, including, but not limited
22 to, access to on-campus housing that remains open during
23 academic breaks, and waive fees for the on-campus housing
24 during academic breaks;

25 (2) allow students experiencing homelessness and
26 students in care who are enrolled part-time at the

1 institution to access on-campus housing;

2 (3) provide information about the availability of
3 on-campus housing to students experiencing homelessness
4 and students in care; and

5 (4) provide information about the services and
6 assistance offered by the institution regarding
7 homelessness in financial aid packets and admission
8 packets and on the institution's website.

9 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect August
10 1, 2022.