

CHAPTER 147

(HB 376)

AN ACT relating to the homelessness prevention pilot project.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 194A IS CREATED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) *Subject to sufficient funding, the Cabinet for Health Services, the Justice Cabinet, and the Cabinet for Families and Children, in consultation with any other state agency as appropriate, shall develop and implement a homelessness prevention pilot project that offers institutional discharge planning on a voluntary basis to persons exiting from state-operated or supervised institutions involving mental health and foster care programs, and persons serving out their sentences in any state-operated prison in Oldham County.*
- (2) *The primary goal of the project shall be to prepare a limited number of persons in a foster home under supervision by the Cabinet for Families and Children, state-operated prison in Oldham County under supervision by the Justice Cabinet, and mental health facility under supervision by the Cabinet for Health Services for return or reentry into the community, and to offer information about any necessary linkage of the person to needed community services and supports.*
 - (a) *The pilot project shall be jointly supported by each of the cabinets. One (1) office for the pilot project shall be located in a family resource center or Department for Community Based Services building in Jefferson County due to its urban population, and one (1) office shall be located in Clinton, Cumberland, McCreary, or Wayne County, due to its rural population. The pilot project office in Jefferson County shall serve persons intending to locate in Jefferson County who are being released from a mental health facility under supervision by the Cabinet for Health Services and persons intending to locate in Jefferson County who are being released after serving out their sentences from any state-operated prison in Oldham County. The pilot project office in Clinton, Cumberland, McCreary, or Wayne County shall serve persons intending to locate in Clinton, Cumberland, McCreary, or Wayne County who are aging out of the foster care program following placement in Clinton, Cumberland, McCreary, or Wayne County.*
 - (b) *Within thirty (30) days following the effective date of this Act, the cabinets shall supply each pilot project director with the collection of information on available employment, social, housing, educational, medical, mental health, and other community services in the county. The information shall include but not be limited to the service area of each public and private provider of services, the capacity of each provider to render services to persons served by the pilot project, the fees of each provider, contact names and telephone numbers for each provider, and an emergency contact for each provider.*
 - (c) *Within thirty (30) days following the effective date of this Act, the cabinets and directors shall begin a program of education for each of the cabinet and foster home and mental health and appropriate state-operated prison facility staff who will participate in the development of a discharge plan for volunteer participants under this section.*

- (3) *The pilot project shall operate on a voluntary basis. One (1) of each five (5) persons eligible for discharge or completing their sentence shall be offered the opportunity to participate in the pilot program. This offer shall be made at least six (6) months prior to discharge. There shall be a cap on the number of persons served in each office, to be determined by available funding and staffing requirements.*
- (a) *The staff member designated as the homelessness prevention coordinator for each foster home or mental health facility shall maintain a file for each volunteer participant in the foster home or mental health facility, relating to the participant's employment, social, housing, educational, medical, and mental health needs. This file shall be updated from time to time as appropriate and pursuant to an administrative regulation promulgated by the cabinet in accordance with KRS Chapter 13A that establishes standards for the discharge summary. The staff member designated as the homelessness prevention coordinator for the appropriate state-operated prison participating in the pilot project shall maintain a file containing appropriate forms completed and updated by each person voluntarily participating in the pilot project, relating to the information provided under subsection (6) of this section. All applicable privacy and confidentiality laws shall be followed in assembling and maintaining this file.*
- (b) *Six (6) months prior to the expected date of discharge, the discharge coordinator for each foster home and mental health and state-operated prison facility shall contact the homelessness prevention director for Jefferson County or the homelessness prevention director for Clinton, Cumberland, McCreary, or Wayne County, as appropriate, about the pending release of the volunteer participant who is eligible for discharge from a foster home or mental health facility or who will have served out his or her sentence in a state-operated prison facility that is participating in the pilot project. The director shall visit the home or facility, as appropriate, to assist with the preparation of the final comprehensive discharge plan.*
- (c) *The director and the discharge coordinator for each participating foster home and mental health and state-operated prison facility shall work together to develop a final comprehensive discharge plan that addresses the employment, health care, educational, housing, and other needs of the person to be released, subject to the consent of the person and the funding and staffing capabilities of the director. Information provided by the coordinator may include and be limited to, subject to the staffing and funding capabilities of the coordinator, information provided by the person to be released on a form or forms made available by the foster home or mental health or state-operated prison facility. The discharge plan shall contain but not be limited to the following:*
- 1. Estimated discharge date from the foster home, state-operated prison facility, or mental health facility;*
 - 2. Educational background of the person to be released, including any classes completed or skills obtained by the person while in the foster home, state-operated prison facility, or mental health facility;*
 - 3. The person's medical and mental health needs;*
 - 4. Other relevant social or family background information;*

5. *A listing of previous attempts to arrange for post-release residence, employment, medical and mental health services, housing, education, and other community-based services for the person; and*
6. *Other available funding and public programs that may reimburse any services obtained from a provider listed in the discharge plan. Every effort shall be made in the discharge plan to refer the person to a provider that has agreed to an arranged public or private funding arrangement.*

No discharge plan shall be completed unless the written consent, consistent with state and federal privacy laws, to compile the information and prepare the plan has been given by the person eligible for release who has volunteered to participate in the pilot program.

- (4) *The director shall assist with the completion of a final comprehensive discharge plan that may include, but need not be limited to, the following:*
 - (a) *Availability of appropriate housing, including but not limited to a twenty-four (24) month transitional program, supportive housing, or halfway house. Planning discharge to an emergency shelter is not appropriate to meet the housing needs of the person being discharged from foster care, a state-operated prison facility, or a mental health facility;*
 - (b) *Access to appropriate treatment services for participants who require follow-up treatment;*
 - (c) *Availability of appropriate employment opportunities, including assessment of vocational skills and job training; and*
 - (d) *Identification of appropriate opportunities to further education.*
- (5) *Discharge planning shall be individualized, comprehensive, and coordinated with community-based services.*
 - (a) *Each discharge plan shall create a continuous, coordinated, and seamless system that is designed to meet the needs of the person.*
 - (b) *Staff of the foster home or facility and staff of community-based services providers shall be involved in the planning.*
 - (c) *Each facility shall utilize, wherever possible, community-based services within the facility to establish familiarity of the person residing in the facility with the community services.*
- (6) *The Department of Corrections shall, through an administrative regulation promulgated in accordance with KRS Chapter 13A, develop a discharge plan that addresses the education; employment, technical, and vocational skills; and housing, medical, and mental health needs of a person who is to be released after serving out his or her sentence in a state-operated prison facility participating in the pilot project.*
- (7) *Appropriate data about discharge placements and follow-up measures shall be collected and analyzed. The analysis shall be included in the interim and final reports of the pilot program specified in subsection (8) of this section.*
- (8) *Each homelessness prevention director shall have regular meetings with appropriate state cabinet and agency staff to review the pilot project and make recommendations for the benefit of the program. Each director shall be assisted by a local advisory council*

composed of local providers of services and consumer advocates who are familiar with homelessness prevention issues. Priority for membership on the advisory council shall be given to existing resources and regional mental health and substance abuse advisory councils at the discretion of the director.

- (9) *Each cabinet shall collect data about the discharge plans, referrals, costs of services, and rate of recidivism related to the homelessness prevention program, and shall submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislative Research Commission no later than October 1 that summarizes the data and contains recommendations for the improvement of the program. The annual report also shall be forwarded to the Kentucky Commission on Services and Supports for Individuals with Mental Retardation and Other Developmental Disabilities, Kentucky Commission on Services and Supports for Individuals with Mental Illness, Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Disorders, and Dual Diagnoses, and the Kentucky Housing Corporation Homelessness Policy Council.*

Section 2. The development and implementation of the homelessness prevention pilot project in this Act shall be subject to sufficient funding for this project as provided in the Executive Branch Budget Bill.

Approved April 22, 2004