

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3923

To provide emergency relief to youth, children, and families experiencing homelessness, in light of the health and economic consequences of COVID-19.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 9, 2020

Ms. MURKOWSKI (for herself, Mr. MANCHIN, and Ms. SINEMA) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To provide emergency relief to youth, children, and families experiencing homelessness, in light of the health and economic consequences of COVID-19.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Emergency Family
5 Stabilization Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

8 (1) CURRENT ACF GRANT OR SUBGRANT RE-
9 CIPIENT.—The term “current ACF grant or sub-

1 grant recipient” means an Indian Tribe, Tribal or-
2 ganization, local educational agency, or a local pub-
3 lic, private, or Indian nonprofit agency or organiza-
4 tion (including culturally specific community-based
5 and faith-based organizations) that, as of the date of
6 application for a grant under section 3, is also re-
7 ceiving another grant or subgrant administered by
8 the Administration for Children and Families.

9 (2) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
10 the Director of the Office of Community Services of
11 the Department of Health and Human Services.

12 (3) DIRECT SERVICES.—

13 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
14 subparagraph (B), the term “direct services”
15 does not include providing referrals or oper-
16 ating a coordinated entry system or homeless
17 management information system, by itself.

18 (B) INDIAN TRIBES OR TRIBAL ORGANIZA-
19 TIONS.—An Indian Tribe or Tribal organization
20 that provides referrals or assists other service
21 providers with direct services shall be consid-
22 ered as providing direct services for purposes of
23 this Act.

24 (4) FAMILY STABILIZATION AGENCY.—The
25 term “family stabilization agency” means—

1 (A) a current ACF grant or subgrant re-
2 cipient;

3 (B) an Indian Tribe or Tribal organiza-
4 tion;

5 (C) an urban Indian organization;

6 (D) a local educational agency; or

7 (E) a local public, private, or Indian non-
8 profit agency or organization (including com-
9 munity-based and faith-based organizations),
10 with expertise and demonstrated experience
11 providing direct services to one or more of the
12 following populations:

13 (i) Children experiencing homeless-
14 ness, including children under age 6.

15 (ii) Unaccompanied homeless youth
16 under the age of 18.

17 (iii) Unaccompanied homeless youth
18 between the ages of 18 and 25.

19 (iv) Pregnant women, and pregnant or
20 parenting youth, experiencing homeless-
21 ness.

22 (v) Families experiencing homeless-
23 ness.

1 (vi) Survivors of dating violence, do-
2 mestic violence, family violence, or traf-
3 ficking.

4 (5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
5 means an Indian tribe, as defined in section 4 of the
6 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
7 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

8 (6) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term
9 “local educational agency” has the meaning given
10 the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
11 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

12 (7) RURAL.—The term “rural” means a unit of
13 local government with a population of less than
14 50,000.

15 (8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
16 the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

17 (9) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Tribal
18 organization” means a tribal organization, as de-
19 fined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination
20 and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

21 (10) URBAN INDIAN ORGANIZATION.—The term
22 “urban Indian organization” has the meaning given
23 the term “Urban Indian organization” in section 4
24 of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (25
25 U.S.C. 1603).

1 (11) YOUTH, CHILD, OR FAMILY EXPERIENCING
2 HOMELESSNESS.—The term “youth, child, or family
3 experiencing homelessness” means—

4 (A) a homeless child or youth, as defined
5 in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento
6 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
7 11434a(2)), who is under the age of 25;

8 (B) an unaccompanied youth, as defined in
9 section 725(6) of the McKinney-Vento Home-
10 less Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(6)), who
11 is under the age of 25; or

12 (C) a household of not less than 2 people
13 that includes not less than 1 person under age
14 22 who is a homeless child or youth, as defined
15 in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento
16 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
17 11434a(2)).

18 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO FAMILY STABILIZATION AGENCIES.**

19 (a) GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts made avail-
21 able under section 4 and not reserved under sub-
22 section (b), the Secretary, acting through the Direc-
23 tor, shall, on a competitive basis in accordance with
24 subsection (d), award grants to family stabilization
25 agencies (including current ACF grant or subgrant

1 recipients and entities that have not previously re-
2 ceived grants from the Administration for Children
3 and Families) to enable the family stabilization
4 agencies to carry out the activities described in sub-
5 section (e).

6 (2) DISTRIBUTION TIMING.—

7 (A) CURRENT ACF GRANT OR SUBGRANT
8 RECIPIENTS.—The Secretary shall award grants
9 under this section, in accordance with sub-
10 section (d), to family stabilization agencies that
11 are current ACF grant or subgrant recipients
12 by not later than the date that is 45 days after
13 the date of enactment of this Act.

14 (B) ADDITIONAL GRANTEEES.—The Sec-
15 retary shall award grants under this section, in
16 accordance with subsection (d), to family sta-
17 bilization agencies that are not current ACF
18 grant or subgrant recipients by not later than
19 the date that is 130 days after the date of en-
20 actment of this Act.

21 (3) DISSEMINATION OF APPLICATIONS.—The
22 Secretary shall—

23 (A) ensure the application for grants under
24 this Act is broadly disseminated, including
25 through public posting on the website of the

1 Administration for Children and Families and
2 sharing with current ACF grant or subgrant re-
3 cipients; and

4 (B) make special dissemination efforts to
5 rural areas and among Indian Tribes and Trib-
6 al organizations.

7 (b) RESERVATION.—The Secretary shall reserve not
8 less than 1 percent and not more than 1.5 percent of the
9 amount appropriated under this Act to be used for admin-
10 istration, oversight, and technical assistance activities
11 through the Administration for Children and Families.

12 (c) APPLICATION.—A family stabilization agency that
13 desires to receive a grant under this Act shall submit an
14 application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner,
15 and containing or accompanied by such information as the
16 Secretary may reasonably require. Such application shall
17 include the following:

18 (1) A description of the housing, education,
19 health, mental and behavioral health, employment,
20 and other needs of youth, children, and families ex-
21 periencing homelessness, in the area served by such
22 agency, specifically including youth, children, and
23 families who are sharing the housing of other per-
24 sons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or
25 a similar reason.

1 (2) Available data on the extent of youth, child,
2 and family homelessness in the area served by such
3 agency, including data available from local edu-
4 cational agencies and data on child poverty in the
5 area.

6 (3) A description of barriers youth, children,
7 and families experiencing homelessness face in ac-
8 cessing services, including barriers related to dating
9 violence, domestic violence, family violence, poverty,
10 lack of employment, lack of transportation, lack of
11 telephone and internet connectivity, educational
12 needs, and language accessibility.

13 (4) A description of such agency's direct service
14 expertise and experience with youth, child, or family
15 homelessness, specifically including youth, children,
16 and families who are sharing the housing of other
17 persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship,
18 or a similar reason.

19 (5) A description of the area served by such
20 agency, including whether the service area is urban,
21 suburban, rural, or Tribal. If the applicant claims to
22 cover a Tribal service area but is not an Indian
23 Tribe or Tribal organization, the applicant shall pro-
24 vide evidence of having consulted with the Indian
25 Tribe or Tribal organization whose service area the

1 applicant claims to cover and provide proof that the
2 Indian Tribe or Tribal organization supports the ap-
3 plicant's application.

4 (6) A description of such agency's existing part-
5 nerships with other agencies or organizations with
6 experience serving youth, children, and families ex-
7 periencing homelessness.

8 (7) A description of how funds received under
9 the grant will be used to provide emergency relief to
10 youth, children, and families experiencing homeless-
11 ness, specifically including—

12 (A) youth, children, and families who are
13 sharing the housing of other persons due to loss
14 of housing, economic hardship, or a similar rea-
15 son; and

16 (B) youth, children, and families experi-
17 encing homelessness who are not receiving serv-
18 ices through the Continuum of Care program
19 under subpart C of title IV of the McKinney-
20 Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
21 11381 et seq.) as of the date of the application.

22 (d) AWARD BASIS.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award
24 grants under this section on the basis of—

1 (A) the need in the area served by each ap-
2 plicant;

3 (B) the quality of each application; and

4 (C) the distribution and priority require-
5 ments under paragraphs (4) and (5).

6 (2) NEED.—In determining need under para-
7 graph (1)(A), the Secretary shall consider—

8 (A) the extent of children, youth, and fam-
9 ilies experiencing homelessness in the area
10 served by the family stabilization agency, in-
11 cluding data available from local educational
12 agencies and data on child poverty;

13 (B) the extent to which the proposed uses
14 of funds will provide emergency relief to meet
15 unmet needs of youth, children, and families ex-
16 perienceing homelessness, specifically including
17 youth, children, and families who are sharing
18 the housing of other persons due to loss of
19 housing, economic hardship, or a similar rea-
20 son;

21 (C) the extent to which the proposed uses
22 of funds will provide emergency relief to youth,
23 children, and families experiencing homeles-
24 ness who are not currently receiving services
25 through the Continuum of Care program under

1 subpart C of title IV of the McKinney-Vento
2 Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11381 et
3 seq.); and

4 (D) the extent to which the application ad-
5 dresses the particular needs of pregnant
6 women, pregnant and parenting youth, Indian
7 women, children under age 6, children with dis-
8 abilities, families experiencing domestic vio-
9 lence, survivors of sexual assault or human traf-
10 ficking, or historically marginalized and under-
11 served communities of color.

12 (3) QUALITY.—In determining quality under
13 paragraph (1)(B), the Secretary shall consider, for
14 both current ACF grant or subgrant recipients and
15 not current ACF grant or subgrant recipients, the
16 following:

17 (A) The family stabilization agency’s needs
18 assessment under subsection (c)(1) and the
19 likelihood that the program presented in the ap-
20 plication will meet such needs.

21 (B) The types, intensity, and coordination
22 of the emergency relief to be provided under the
23 program to youth, children, and families experi-
24 encing homelessness.

1 (C) The extent of the family stabilization
2 agency’s demonstrated expertise and experience
3 providing direct services to youth, children, and
4 families experiencing homelessness who are
5 sharing the housing of other persons due to loss
6 of housing, economic hardship, or a similar rea-
7 son.

8 (D) The robustness of such agency’s plan
9 to reach youth, children, and families experi-
10 encing homelessness who are sharing the hous-
11 ing of other persons due to loss of housing, eco-
12 nomic hardship, or a similar reason, including
13 those who have lost a caregiver or family mem-
14 ber to COVID–19.

15 (E) The extent of such agency’s dem-
16 onstrated expertise and experience in providing
17 direct services to youth, children, and families
18 experiencing homelessness specifically.

19 (F) The extent to which the program pre-
20 sented in the application represents a multi-
21 generational approach to supporting youth, chil-
22 dren, and families experiencing homelessness.

23 (G) The extent to which the application re-
24 flects coordination with local educational agen-
25 cies and public or private nonprofit agencies or

1 organizations with experience serving youth,
2 children, and families experiencing homeless-
3 ness.

4 (H) The extent to which the family sta-
5 bilization agency is, has been, or has specific
6 plans to partner with, a recipient of a grant or
7 subgrant administered by the Administration
8 for Children and Families.

9 (4) DISTRIBUTION OF AWARDS.—

10 (A) DISTRIBUTION AMONG TYPES OF COM-
11 MUNITIES.—In awarding grants under sub-
12 section (a), the Secretary shall ensure that
13 funds are distributed according to the following
14 allocation percentages:

15 (i) Not less than 10 percent of the
16 funds available for grants under this sec-
17 tion shall be awarded to family stabiliza-
18 tion agencies that are Indian Tribes or
19 Tribal organizations serving youth, chil-
20 dren, and families experiencing homeless-
21 ness.

22 (ii) Not less than 36 percent of the
23 funds available for grants under this Act
24 shall be awarded to family stabilization
25 agencies serving predominantly rural areas.

1 (iii) Not less than 30 percent of the
2 funds available for grants under this Act
3 shall be awarded to family stabilization
4 agencies serving predominantly suburban
5 areas.

6 (iv) Not more than 24 percent of the
7 funds available for grants under this Act
8 shall be awarded to family stabilization
9 agencies serving predominantly urban
10 areas.

11 (B) DISTRIBUTION TO EXPERIENCED
12 GRANTEES.—In awarding grants under sub-
13 section (a), the Secretary shall ensure that—

14 (i) 80 percent of the funds available
15 for grants under this section are distrib-
16 uted to family stabilization agencies—

17 (I) that are current ACF grant
18 or subgrant recipients; and

19 (II) which may apply in partner-
20 ship with local educational agencies,
21 Tribal educational agencies, public
22 housing agencies, tribally designated
23 housing entities, community develop-
24 ment financial institutions, State
25 housing finance agencies, programs

1 that provide shelter to youth experi-
2 encing homelessness who are pregnant
3 or parenting, public health agencies,
4 domestic violence, dating violence, and
5 family violence organizations, institu-
6 tions of higher education as defined in
7 section 101 of the Higher Education
8 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001), urban
9 Indian organizations, or other commu-
10 nity partners; and

11 (ii) 20 percent of the funds are dis-
12 tributed as grants to family stabilization
13 agencies that are not current ACF grant
14 or subgrant recipients.

15 (C) SPECIAL EXCEPTION FOR GRANTS TO
16 INDIAN TRIBES OR TRIBAL ORGANIZATIONS.—

17 (i) IN GENERAL.—In awarding grants
18 to family stabilization agencies that are In-
19 dian Tribes or Tribal organizations pursu-
20 ant to subparagraph (A)(i), the Secretary
21 may waive any requirements of paragraph
22 (2) or (3) or subsection (c).

23 (ii) ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS.—
24 In awarding grants pursuant to subpara-
25 graph (A)(i), the Secretary shall consider

1 family stabilization agencies that are In-
2 dian Tribes and Tribal organizations that
3 provide services that address child abuse
4 and neglect.

5 (5) PRIORITY IN AWARDS.—In awarding grants
6 under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall give pri-
7 ority to applications that will provide emergency re-
8 lief to youth, children, and families experiencing
9 homelessness who are sharing the housing of other
10 persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship,
11 or a similar reason, while ensuring the distribution
12 of awards in accordance with paragraph (4).

13 (e) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Family stabilization
14 agencies may use funds awarded under this section to pro-
15 vide emergency relief to youth, children, and families expe-
16 riencing homelessness, including the following:

17 (1) The provision of personnel necessary to pro-
18 vide emergency relief and ensure services, resources,
19 and assistance reach youth, children, and families
20 experiencing homelessness, whether such personnel
21 are employees of the family stabilization agency or
22 a nonprofit community partner.

23 (2) The provision of personal protective equip-
24 ment, hygiene supplies, and other supplies deter-
25 mined to be necessary to mitigate the spread of

1 Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID–19) by the Cen-
2 ters for Disease Control and Prevention, the Occu-
3 pational Safety and Health Administration, a State,
4 an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization, or a locality
5 for personnel delivering services and for youth, chil-
6 dren, and families experiencing homelessness.

7 (3) Payments to meet shelter and housing-re-
8 lated needs to support safety and health, including
9 payments for—

10 (A) security deposits;

11 (B) eviction prevention;

12 (C) utility connection fees and payments;

13 (D) outstanding rental, utility, motel, and
14 other bills as needed to enter housing or con-
15 nect utilities;

16 (E) motel or hotel stays;

17 (F) housing placement;

18 (G) records expungement; and

19 (H) other assistance.

20 (4) The provision of food and equipment needed
21 to prepare food.

22 (5) The provision of medical and dental health
23 services, including preventive care.

24 (6) The provision of mental and behavioral
25 health services, including preventive care.

1 (7) The provision of clothing, access to laundry
2 facilities, clothes washers and dryers, detergent, and
3 personal hygiene supplies.

4 (8) The provision of transportation, including
5 payments for gas, emergency vehicle repairs, re-
6 quired insurance, driver's education and driver's li-
7 cense fees, public transportation, and other trans-
8 portation appropriate for Tribal and rural locations.

9 (9) The provision of support to meet commu-
10 nications and connectivity needs, including internet
11 connectivity, outstanding internet or telephone bills
12 as needed to connect communications services, elec-
13 tronic and connected devices, hotspots, portable
14 chargers, pre-paid phone cards, calling minutes and
15 data plans, and costs to ship items and supplies.

16 (10) The provision of support to meet edu-
17 cational and employment needs, including academic
18 support, distance learning support, resources, and
19 access, child care, social and emotional supports, ca-
20 reer and technical education, employment training
21 and placement, and similar supports.

22 (11) The purchase and distribution of store
23 cards, gift cards, prepaid debit cards, and vouchers
24 to allow youth, children, and families experiencing

1 homelessness to purchase any items or services that
2 constitute emergency relief.

3 (12) The provision of mentorship and service
4 coordination.

5 (13) The provision of services and supports to
6 meet the particular needs of pregnant women, preg-
7 nant and parenting youth, and children birth to age
8 five, experiencing homelessness.

9 (14) The provision of services and supports to
10 meet the particular needs of unaccompanied youth
11 experiencing homelessness.

12 (15) The provision of services and supports to
13 meet the particular needs of survivors of domestic
14 violence, sexual assault, or trafficking.

15 (16) The provision of assistance in accessing
16 advance refunds payable under section 6428(f) of
17 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (commonly re-
18 ferred to as “economic impact payments”), unem-
19 ployment compensation, and other benefits provided
20 by Federal, State and local governments.

21 (17) The provision of services and supports to
22 prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect.

23 (18) The provision of other extraordinary or
24 emergency assistance needed to promote the safety

1 and self-sufficiency of youth, children, and families
2 experiencing homelessness.

3 (19) Other purposes as determined by the Sec-
4 retary.

5 **SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

6 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
7 this Act \$800,000,000.

○