

# Senate Bill 496

Sponsored by Senators PATTERSON, GELSER BLOUIN; Senators ANDERSON, CAMPOS, WAGNER, Representatives GOMBERG, LIVELY, NERON, NOSSE (Pre-session filed.)

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Amends allowable purposes of Emergency Housing Account to include account moneys to be used for grants to assist pets of individuals experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Appropriates moneys to account from General Fund for those purposes.

Requires Housing and Community Services Department to report on use of funds to interim committee of Legislative Assembly on or before September 15, 2024.

Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2023.

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

1  
2 Relating to assisting vulnerable populations with pets; creating new provisions; amending ORS  
3 458.650; and declaring an emergency.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1.** ORS 458.650 is amended to read:

6 458.650. (1) The Housing and Community Services Department shall administer the Emergency  
7 Housing Account to assist homeless individuals and individuals who are at risk of becoming  
8 homeless, through means including the emergency housing assistance program and the state  
9 homeless assistance program. Notwithstanding subsection (3)(a) of this section, the state homeless  
10 assistance program shall serve individuals experiencing homelessness, especially unsheltered  
11 homelessness, without respect to income.

12 (2) The Oregon Housing Stability Council shall develop a policy for the use of program funds  
13 with the advice of:

14 (a) Persons who have experienced housing instability;

15 (b) Tribes;

16 (c) The Community Action Partnership of Oregon;

17 (d) Continuums of care, as defined in 24 C.F.R. part 578;

18 (e) Local governments;

19 (f) Nonprofit organizations;

20 (g) Homeless services providers;

21 (h) Culturally specific organizations;

22 (i) Housing providers;

23 (j) Veterans' services organizations; and

24 (k) Other entities identified by the department by rule.

25 (3) The policy under subsection (2) of this section shall direct that program funds shall be used:

26 (a) To provide to low and very low income individuals, including but not limited to individuals  
27 more than 65 years of age, persons with disabilities, agricultural workers and Native Americans:

28 (A) Emergency shelters and attendant services;

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 (B) Transitional housing services designed to assist individuals to make the transition from  
2 homelessness to permanent housing and economic independence;

3 (C) Supportive housing services to enable individuals to continue living in their own homes or  
4 to provide in-home services for such individuals for whom suitable programs do not exist in their  
5 geographic area;

6 (D) Programs that provide emergency payment of home payments, rents or utilities; *[or]*

7 **(E) Support for the individuals' pets, including pet food, shelter, supplies and basic**  
8 **veterinary services; or**

9 *[(E)]* (F) Some or all of the needs described in subparagraphs (A) to *[(D)]* (E) of this paragraph.

10 (b) To align with federal strategies and resources that are available to prevent and end  
11 homelessness, including the requirement of providing culturally responsive services and using  
12 evidence-based and emerging practices effective in ending homelessness, including practices unique  
13 to rural communities.

14 (4)(a) The council shall require as a condition of awarding a grant that the organization dem-  
15 onstrate to the satisfaction of the council that the organization:

16 (A) Has the capacity to deliver any service proposed by the organization;

17 (B) Is a culturally responsive organization or is engaged in a process to become a culturally  
18 responsive organization;

19 (C) Engages with culturally specific organizations; and

20 (D) Supports local homelessness system planning efforts.

21 **(b) The council shall require that an organization receiving funds to provide individuals**  
22 **with pet assistance described in subsection (3)(a)(E) of this section operate or provide fund-**  
23 **ing to operate an emergency or domestic violence shelter that:**

24 (A) Has rules of conduct and responsibility regarding pets and their owners;

25 (B) Provides crates or kenneling either onsite or offsite that is easily accessible to the  
26 pet owners;

27 (C) Provides food for both individuals staying at the shelter and their pets; and

28 (D) Offers veterinary services, onsite or offsite, including vaccination, behavioral support  
29 and spaying and neutering.

30 *[(b)]* (c) Any funds granted under this section may not be used to replace existing funds. Funds  
31 granted under this section may be used to supplement existing funds. An organization may use funds  
32 to support existing programs or to establish new programs.

33 (5) The department may expend funds from the account for:

34 (a) The administration of the account as provided for in the legislatively approved budget, as  
35 that term is defined in ORS 291.002, for the department in support of directing a statewide policy  
36 on homelessness that ensures use of evidence-based and emerging practices, service equity in fund-  
37 ing and local planning processes.

38 (b) The development of technical assistance and training resources for organizations developing  
39 and operating emergency shelters as defined in ORS 197.782 and transitional housing accommo-  
40 dations as described in ORS 197.746.

41 (6) The department shall utilize outcome-oriented contracting processes and evidence-based and  
42 emerging practices for account program funds, including evidence-based and emerging practices for  
43 serving rural communities.

44 (7) Twenty-five percent of moneys deposited in the account pursuant to ORS 294.187 are dedi-  
45 cated to the emergency housing assistance program for assistance to veterans who are homeless or

1 at risk of becoming homeless.

2 **SECTION 2.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-  
3 ated to the Housing and Community Services Department, for the biennium beginning July  
4 1, 2023, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$6,000,000, for deposit into the Emergency  
5 Housing Account to provide grants to organizations described in ORS 458.650 (4)(b).

6 **SECTION 3.** (1) An organization described in ORS 458.650 (4)(b) that receives a grant  
7 from the Emergency Housing Account shall submit a report to the Housing and Community  
8 Services Department on or before August 1, 2024, that includes:

9 (a) A description of the activities undertaken by the organization using the grant;

10 (b) A statement showing the costs of each activity under paragraph (a) of this subsection;  
11 and

12 (c) An assessment of the effectiveness of the program grants under ORS 458.650 and any  
13 recommendations for improving the program.

14 (2) On or before September 15, 2024, the department shall provide a report to an appro-  
15 priate interim committee of the Legislative Assembly in the manner provided in ORS 192.245  
16 summarizing the information collected in the reports under subsection (1) of this section.

17 **SECTION 4.** This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public  
18 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect  
19 July 1, 2023.