

Senate Bill 603

Sponsored by Senator CAMPOS; Representative PHAM K (Presession 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**.

Establishes People's Housing Assistance Fund Demonstration Program, administered by Department of Human Services, to provide 12 monthly payments of \$1,000 to individuals who are experiencing homelessness, are at risk of homelessness, are severely rent burdened or earn at or below 60 percent of area median income. Sunsets January 2, 2026.

Requires Portland State University Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative to study long-term cash assistance programs and to report findings to interim committee of Legislative Assembly no later than September 15, 2024.

Requires department to submit legislative concept for long-term cash assistance program to interim committees of Legislative Assembly no later than December 1, 2024, for introduction in 2025 regular session of Legislative Assembly.

Declares emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to income supports for low-income individuals; and declaring an emergency.

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

4 **SECTION 1. (1) The People's Housing Assistance Fund Demonstration Program is estab-**
5 **lished in the Department of Human Services. Participants in the program shall receive**
6 **monthly payments of \$1,000 for a 12-month period. Payments may be used for rent, emer-**
7 **gency expenses, food, child care or other goods or services of the participant's choosing.**

8 **(2) A participant qualifies for the program if the participant:**

9 **(a) Is experiencing homelessness;**

10 **(b) Is at risk of homelessness;**

11 **(c) Spends more than 50 percent of the participant's monthly household income on rent;**

12 **or**

13 **(d) Earns 60 percent or less of the area median income, as defined in ORS 458.610.**

14 **(3) The department shall cap enrollment in the program based on the availability of**
15 **moneys appropriated by the Legislative Assembly for the program.**

16 **(4) The department shall adopt rules for the administration of the program.**

17 **SECTION 2. (1) The Portland State University Homelessness Research and Action**
18 **Collaborative shall conduct a study on the costs and benefits and policy choices of providing**
19 **cash assistance to Oregonians who are experiencing severe rent burden or homelessness or**
20 **are at risk of homelessness. The cash assistance may be used for utilities, telephones, cable**
21 **plans, student loans, medical expenses, auto loans, auto repairs, transportation or any other**
22 **goods or services needed as basic human necessities.**

23 **(2) The study must include:**

24 **(a) Exploration of various administrative and policy design choices and program models**
25 **for providing long-term cash assistance.**

26 **(b) Estimates of the costs to provide long-term cash assistance across different ge-**

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 **ographic regions and serving different populations, including households with:**

2 **(A) Children five years of age or younger;**

3 **(B) Children over six years of age and under 18 years of age;**

4 **(C) Unaccompanied homeless youths, as defined in ORS 343.035;**

5 **(D) Wards who have aged out of permanent foster care, shelter care or substitute care,**
 6 **as those terms are defined in ORS 419A.004;**

7 **(E) Individuals who have been victims of domestic violence, as defined in ORS 135.230,**
 8 **181A.355 or 411.117, or who are at risk of domestic violence;**

9 **(F) Individuals who are at least 58 years of age;**

10 **(G) Persons with disabilities;**

11 **(H) Persons of color;**

12 **(I) Veterans;**

13 **(J) Incomes below 30 percent of area median income, as defined in ORS 458.610; or**

14 **(K) Incomes between 30 percent and 50 percent of area median income, as defined in ORS**
 15 **458.610.**

16 **(c) A review of best practices, including those used in local, state and federal long-term**
 17 **cash assistance programs and nongovernment programs that provide long-term cash assist-**
 18 **ance.**

19 **(d) A literature review of existing research regarding the impact of cash assistance pro-**
 20 **grams on populations experiencing severe rent burden, including educational and health**
 21 **benefits and outcomes of the programs.**

22 **(3) The study must consider:**

23 **(a) Various administrative program designs and delivery models;**

24 **(b) How agencies can make long-term cash assistance programs accessible to individuals**
 25 **who do not have Social Security numbers or who have only taxpayer identification numbers;**

26 **(c) How a long-term cash assistance program can be designed to prevent recipients of the**
 27 **assistance from losing eligibility for other state and federal programs such as the Supple-**
 28 **mental Nutrition Assistance Program, the temporary assistance for needy families program,**
 29 **the Women, Infants and Children Program, tenant-based federal rent subsidy payments un-**
 30 **der the Housing Choice Voucher Program authorized by 42 U.S.C. 1437f or the rental assist-**
 31 **ance voucher program administered by a housing authority under section 8 of the United**
 32 **States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f (o)(13)); and**

33 **(d) Long-term cash assistance programs administered by other states.**

34 **(4) In conducting the study, the collaborative must consult with community-based or-**
 35 **ganizations such as food banks and community action agencies that provide support and as-**
 36 **sistance to low-income individuals and families.**

37 **(5) The study must consider disparate impacts on communities of color, immigrant and**
 38 **refugee communities and persons identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer**
 39 **and other minority gender identities and sexual orientations.**

40 **(6) All agencies of state government, as defined in ORS 174.111, are directed to assist the**
 41 **collaborative in conducting the study, and to the extent permitted by laws related to**
 42 **confidentiality, to furnish information and advice necessary for the collaborative to complete**
 43 **its study.**

44 **(7) No later than September 15, 2024, the collaborative shall provide a report, in the**
 45 **manner provided under ORS 192.245, of the findings of the study to the interim committee**

1 of the Legislative Assembly related to human services.

2 **SECTION 3.** No later than December 1, 2024, the Department of Human Services, based
3 on the experience of the department in administering the People’s Housing Assistance Fund
4 Demonstration Program under section 1 of this 2023 Act and the findings of the Portland
5 State University Homelessness Research and Action Collaborative under section 2 of this
6 2023 Act, shall provide to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to hu-
7 man services a legislative concept, to be introduced in the 2025 regular session of the Leg-
8 islative Assembly, to implement a long-term cash assistance program administered by the
9 department.

10 **SECTION 4.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
11 ated to the Department of Human Services, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, out of
12 the General Fund, the amount of \$500,000,000, which may be expended for making payments
13 in the People’s Housing Assistance Fund Demonstration Program established in section 1 of
14 this 2023 Act and for administration of the program if funds for administration are not oth-
15 erwise available.

16 **SECTION 5.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
17 ated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1,
18 2023, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$250,000, for Portland State University to con-
19 duct the study required under section 2 of this 2023 Act.

20 **SECTION 6.** Section 1 of this 2023 Act becomes operative on January 1, 2024. The De-
21 partment of Human Services shall take steps necessary prior to January 1, 2024, to carry out
22 the provisions of section 1 of this 2023 Act on and after January 1, 2024.

23 **SECTION 7.** Section 1 of this 2023 Act is repealed on January 2, 2026.

24 **SECTION 8.** This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
25 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect
26 on its passage.