

Fact Sheet about the Homeless Youth Act of 2018 (Senate Bill 918-Wiener)

In September 2018, California adopted the Homeless Youth Act of 2018, which adds new responsibilities related to homeless youth to the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council, the state entity charged with addressing homelessness.

What did SB 918 accomplish?

1. Added Five Youth-Related Goals to HCFC

SB 918 added five new goals to the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC), bringing the total in statute to 18 goals. Prior to SB 918, the HCFC had no stated goals related youth homelessness. These new goals include:

- Set goals to prevent and end homelessness among California's youth.
- Work to improve the safety, health, and welfare of young people experiencing homelessness in the state.
- Increase system integration and coordinating efforts to prevent homelessness among youth who are currently or formerly involved in the child welfare system or the juvenile justice system.
- Lead efforts to coordinate a spectrum of funding, policy, and practice efforts related to young people experiencing homelessness.
- Identify best practices to ensure homeless minors who may have experienced maltreatment, as described in Section 300, are appropriately referred to, or have the ability to self-refer to, the child welfare system.

2. Set Explicit Goals Related to Youth Homelessness

SB 918 requires HCFC to set goals related to youth homelessness, which must include but are not limited to the four following:

- Measurably decreasing the number of young people experiencing homelessness in the state.

- Measurably increasing permanency rates among young people experiencing homelessness by decreasing the length and occurrences of young people experiencing homelessness caused by a youth's separation from family or a legal guardian.
- Decreasing the duration and frequency of experiences of homelessness among California's youth.
- Decreasing barriers to services through promoting cross-systems partnerships to expedite access to services, including social services, child welfare services, regional center services, and mental health services.

3. Required HCFC to Define Outcome Measures and Gather Data

SB 918 requires HCFC to define outcome measures and gather data related to the goals.

- The information required to be collected includes the number of young people experiencing homelessness in California and their dependency status, delinquency status, family reunification status, housing status, program participation, and runaway status.
- SB 918 requires data collection and sharing among state and county agencies and service providers, including relevant data from Homeless Management Information Systems.