

Section by Section
The Emergency Family Stabilization Act:
Meeting the Needs of Homeless Children, Youth and Families in the Wake of COVID-19

Section 1. Short Title: the Emergency Family Stabilization Act

Section 2. Definitions:

This section defines key terms to ensure that they align with the definitions of homelessness used by public schools and programs funded through the Administration for Children and Families, including Head Start and Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, and sets out the benchmarks for the specific entities that would be eligible for this emergency funding. It clearly defines an Indian Tribe and Tribal Organization using the correct definition under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.

It defines a Family Stabilization Agency as:

- A current ACF grant or subgrant recipient;
- An Indian Tribe or Tribal organization;
- A local educational agency; or
- A local public, private, or Tribal nonprofit agency or organization (including community-based and faith-based organizations), with expertise and demonstrated experience providing direct services to 1 or more of the following populations:
 - Children experiencing homelessness, including children under age 6.
 - Unaccompanied homeless youth under the age of 18.
 - Unaccompanied homeless youth between the ages of 18 and 25.
 - Pregnant women, and pregnant or parenting youth, experiencing homelessness.
 - Families experiencing homelessness.
 - Survivors of dating violence, domestic violence, family violence, or trafficking.

Section 3. Grants to Family Stabilization Entities: This section establishes that the Secretary will award the majority of funding (80 percent) to current ACF grantees, but also award a smaller portion of the funds (20 percent) to new grantees. The Secretary will have 45 days from the date of enactment to discharge the funds to existing grantees and 130 days to discharge the funds to new grantees. This section discusses providing accessibility for the dissemination of applications and reserves not less than 1 percent of the funds for administrative purposes which will allow ACF at HHS to administer the program. This section describes the application requirements that must be submitted to the Secretary. The Secretary is directed to award grants on the basis of need in the area served by each applicant, the quality of each application, and ensuring distribution and prioritization as specified. The Secretary must ensure that at least one agency in each state that submits applications that meet the requirements of this section receives a grant.

This section requires the Secretary to ensure that the majority of awards are distributed to rural areas. The “rural” definition is used in various pieces of legislation in the jurisdiction of Energy and Natural Resources (ENR), which specifies communities less than 50,000 according to the U.S. Census, and tends to be the definition used in ENR legislation.

In order to ensure flexibility for tribes and tribal organizations, this section allows the Secretary to waive any application and quality requirements for those organizations. There is a provision on the

priority of awards, to once again ensure those primarily serving youth, children and families receive this emergency funding. The following allowable uses are listed as authorized grant activities:

- Health and safety needs, including PPE, food, hygiene supplies, and mental health services
- Housing-related needs, such as eviction prevention, utility payments, motel stays, and housing placement assistance
- Transportation assistance
- Emergency child care
- Communications and connectivity needs
- Education, training, and employment-related needs
- The particular needs of pregnant women, pregnant and parenting youth, children birth to age five; unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness; survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or trafficking, and culturally specific services and supports to meet the particular needs of children, family, and youth from racial and ethnic minority populations.
- The provision of culturally specific services and supports to meet the particular needs of children, family, and youth from racial and ethnic minority populations.
- Staffing for outreach and case management
- Assistance in accessing Economic Stimulus Payments, unemployment compensation, and other benefits provided by federal, state and local governments

This section also requires an agency receiving a grant to submit a report to the Secretary and for the Secretary to provide a Report to Congress no later than 18 months after the date of enactment of the Act. No personally identifying information is allowed to be disclosed in either report requirements.

Section 4. Authorization of Appropriations: There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this Act \$2,000,000,000.