

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Committee Substitute

for

Senate Bill 873

By Senator Maynard

[Reported March 27, 2025, from the Committee on
Health and Human Resource]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new section,
2 designated §9-5-31a, relating to the creation of the West Virginia Homelessness
3 Rehabilitation and Public Safety Act.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 5. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

§9-5-31a. West Virginia Homelessness Rehabilitation and Public Safety Act.

1 (a) Purpose. – The purpose of this legislation is to address homelessness in West Virginia
2 by assessing individuals for mental health needs and providing structured rehabilitation programs.
3 The Department of Human Services shall oversee the transition of individuals into independent
4 living through skills training, financial planning, and job placement assistance.

(b) Structured Residence Halls for Rehabilitation. –

6 (1) The Department of Human Services shall make an effort to repurpose vacant public
7 buildings into structured residence halls to provide temporary housing for homeless individuals
8 who are found to be of sound mind.

9 (2) These residence halls shall operate as minimum-security facilities, emphasizing
10 structure, responsibility, and skill-building.

(3) Residents shall be required to:

12 (A) Participate in hygiene, cleanliness, and organizational training.

13 (B) Maintain their living spaces and contribute to facility upkeep.

14 (C) Receive instruction in vocational skills, including maintenance, agriculture, and food
15 preservation, in collaboration with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture.

(c) Transition to Independent Living. –

17 (1) Upon program completion, the Department of Health Services shall coordinate with
18 Workforce West Virginia and relevant agencies to assist with job placement.

19 (2) A financial plan shall be created for each resident, ensuring savings accumulation
20 under the supervision of an appointed financial overseer.

21 (3) The individual shall be eligible for assistance in purchasing a vehicle once sufficient
22 savings are acquired.

23 (4) Upon saving enough for a security deposit and one month's rent, the program shall
24 provide assistance in securing housing and transitioning into independent living.

25 (d) Funding and Partnerships. –

26 (1) All funding for this program shall be absorbed through the Department of Human
27 Services.

28 (2) The department may partner with nonprofits, faith-based organizations, and mental
29 health facilities to enhance service delivery.

30 (e) Accountability and Reporting. –

31 (1) The Department of Human Services shall submit an annual report to the Legislature for
32 the first five years following the implementation of this act.

33 (2) Reports shall include key metrics such as:

34 (A) The number of individuals rehabilitated.

35 (B) Job placements facilitated.

36 (C) Financial independence rates achieved.

37 (f) Enforcement of Existing Penalties. –

38 (1) Any individual refusing participation in rehabilitation programs shall be subject to
39 penalties as prescribed under existing West Virginia law.

40 (2) Law enforcement shall strictly enforce penalties for repeat violations of loitering and
41 vagrancy laws as already codified.