

CHAPTER 2026-125

Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 1602

An act relating to housing for veterans; creating s. 83.684, F.S.; providing a short title; defining terms; establishing the Homes for Veterans Property Management Incentive Pilot Program in certain counties, subject to legislative appropriation; requiring the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, in consultation with other entities and persons, to establish and oversee specified aspects of the pilot program; providing the responsibilities of the corporation for the pilot program; requiring contracted program administrators to maintain certain functions of the pilot program; authorizing certain landlords to apply to a contracted program administrator to request funding under certain circumstances; requiring a landlord to submit to the contracted program administrator required documentation within a specified time period to apply for funding; requiring certain case managers to assist the contracted program administrator; requiring the contracted program administrator to maintain and provide certain documentation to the corporation; requiring the entity responsible for certain functions to maintain any supporting documentation; authorizing the corporation to rely on certifications, determinations, and documentation provided by specified entities; authorizing a landlord to apply for up to a specified dollar amount from the funds; providing requirements to apply for funding; providing that funding for the pilot program is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis; authorizing the corporation to suspend the acceptance of applications under certain circumstances; requiring specified notice; requiring the corporation to adopt rules; providing an effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 83.684, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

83.684 Homes for Veterans Property Management Incentive Pilot Program.—

(1) This section may be cited as the “Homes for Veterans Property Management Incentive Pilot Program Act.”

(2) As used in this section, the term:

(a) “Corporation” means the Florida Housing Finance Corporation.

(b) “HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program” means a program that combines the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development’s housing choice voucher rental assistance for homeless veterans with case management and clinical services provided by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

(c) “Pilot program” means the Homes for Veterans Property Management Incentive Pilot Program.

(d) “Veteran” has the same meaning as in s. 1.01(14).

(3) The Homes for Veterans Property Management Incentive Pilot Program is established in Broward, Escambia, Hillsborough, and Santa Rosa Counties to provide eligible landlords with incentives to lease eligible dwelling units to veterans who are participating in the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program. Implementation of this pilot program is subject to annual legislative appropriation. The corporation, in consultation with the local public housing authority and case managers assigned to veterans by the United States Department of Veterans’ Affairs, shall establish and oversee the document requirements and all processes of the pilot program. The corporation’s responsibilities under this section are limited to program administration, including rulemaking, oversight, and establishing and executing contracts with one or more local public housing authorities, contracted program administrators, or other public or nonprofit entities that have experience administering the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program, supportive housing, or landlord mitigation programs to perform intake, documentation review, and claim verification functions to locally administer funds and to distribute funding to the contracted program administrator for payment of approved reimbursement requests. The corporation is not responsible for maintaining eligibility files, tenancy records, or other case-level documentation for the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program. Such functions shall be maintained by the contracted program administrator.

(4)(a) A landlord who enters into a rental agreement with an eligible veteran may apply to a contracted program administrator to request funding for the purpose of allowing a landlord to hold a dwelling unit for a period of time, and still be compensated for the time that the dwelling unit is vacant, until the veteran is able to move into the dwelling unit. Such funding provides proportional rent to eligible landlords for a period of up to 45 days after the date the dwelling unit becomes available or until the actual date that the veteran moves into the dwelling unit, whichever is sooner.

(b) To apply for funding under paragraph (a), a landlord must submit all required documentation to the contracted program administrator within 60 days after the veteran moves into the dwelling unit. The case manager assigned to the veteran shall assist the contracted program administrator by facilitating funding requests from landlords and documentation compliance. The contracted program administrator shall maintain all documentation required under this subsection and provide the corporation with a certification of eligibility, tenancy dates, and verified costs within the timeframe established by the corporation by rule. At a minimum, a landlord shall submit documentation to the contracted program administrator in the form and manner established by the corporation. Required supporting documentation necessary to confirm eligibility for reimbursement and oversight shall be maintained by the entity responsible for case management or rental

assistance administration in the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program.

(c) The corporation may rely on certifications, determinations, and documentation provided by public housing authorities, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, providers of Supportive Services for Veteran Families, continuums of care, or other entities responsible for administering or supporting the functions of the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program. The corporation's reliance on such certifications, determinations, and documentation satisfies the corporation's oversight and evaluation responsibilities of the functions, activities, and outcomes for the pilot program.

(5)(a) If a veteran moves out of the dwelling unit during the first 12 months of a year-to-year rental agreement or after the expiration of a rental agreement for any duration, the landlord may apply to the contracted program administrator for funding to cover property loss at the dwelling unit caused by the veteran which exceeds the amount of the deposit money. The landlord may apply for up to \$2,000 beyond the deposit money.

(b) To apply for funding under paragraph (a), a landlord must submit all required documentation to the contracted program administrator within 60 days after the veteran moves out of the dwelling unit. The case manager assigned to the veteran shall assist the contracted program administrator by facilitating funding requests from landlords and documentation compliance. The contracted program administrator shall maintain all documentation required under this subsection and provide the corporation, within the timeframe established by rule, a certification of eligibility, tenancy dates, verified damage amounts, and verified costs. Required supporting documentation necessary to confirm eligibility for reimbursement and oversight shall be maintained by the entity responsible for case management or rental assistance administration in the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing program.

(c) After the veteran vacates the dwelling unit, the landlord shall provide the contracted program administrator a copy of the move-out checklist with current photos of the dwelling unit and a copy of the written notice provided to the veteran by the landlord in accordance with s. 83.49(3)(a).

(d) A landlord may apply for funding under paragraph (a) only if the landlord previously applied for funding under paragraph (4)(a).

(6) Funding for the pilot program is limited, and the corporation shall award funds on a first-come, first-served basis. The corporation may suspend acceptance of applications when available appropriations are fully obligated. The corporation must notify contracted program administrators if intake of applications is suspended and when intake of applications is resumed.

(7) The corporation shall adopt rules to implement this section.

Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

Approved by the Governor June 11, 2026.

Filed in Office Secretary of State June 11, 2026.