

Hi Senator Lyons!

Vermont Legal Aid strongly urges you to include the language around maintaining the right to appeal (like we have now) within H.938. **The suggested language is highlighted below:**

§ 2216. RULEMAKING

The Department shall adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 for the implementation of the Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum, addressing at a minimum:

- (1) requirements for community providers participating in the Program;
- (2) standards for highly structured, low-barrier, and specialized shelters;
- (3) documentation requirements for household eligibility, including disability;
- (4) required elements for supportive services, including case management;
- (5) the creation of a brief, standardized initial assessment form that may be completed by hand, electronically, or by telephone;
- (6) a process for issuing timely, written approval or denial notifications to applicants;
- (7) a process for issuing advanced notice to households when the household is being terminated from the program;
- (8) applicant and household appeal procedures, including:

1. the right of a participant to appeal an action or decision made by AHS pursuant to 3 V.S.A. § 3091; and

2. a grievance and appeal process for participants who are housed through community providers that includes at a minimum the right to notice, the right to grieve a community provider's action or decision to the Agency of Human Services, and the right to appeal AHS's determination on that grievance to the Human Services Board; and

3. A requirement that a participant remain housed throughout the grievance and appeal process;

- (10) time limits for Program participation, including procedures for extensions;
- (11) expectations for the Office's oversight and quality monitoring; and
- (12) other subjects as deemed necessary.

This language preserves the right to appeal to the Human Services Board, including for individuals housed through community providers. **Without it, participants could lose their ability to appeal decisions made by either the Department or community providers.**

Happy to answer any questions around this issue.

Thank you for your consideration,
Andrea