

HB 235: Bill of Rights for Persons Experiencing Homelessness

SPONSORSHIP

Sponsors: Representative Lynn & Senator Pinkney

Co-Prime Sponsors: Representative Dorsey
Walker & Senator Townsend

Co-Sponsors: Senator McBride, Representatives
Morrison & Wilson-Anton

Provides persons experiencing homelessness protection from discrimination when seeking housing, employment, and temporary shelter. The bill also provides basic legal and civil protections to ensure equal treatment during the use of public spaces and buildings.

Quick Facts

FICTION

The bill gives persons experiencing homelessness additional rights.

Actually, the bill just protects the rights persons experiencing homelessness already have, such as the ability to move freely in public spaces. No person's rights, privileges, or access to public services should be denied or abridged solely because she or he is identified as homeless.

FACT

The bill has an enforcement mechanism.

Yes! While several other states, such as Rhode Island, California, and Illinois have these bills of rights, Delaware will be the first to include an enforcement mechanism. Those that believe they have been discriminated against based on their housing status can file a complaint with the Human Relations Commission, who will then investigate the claim.

FICTION

The bill legalizes asking for help and loitering.

Nope, the bill does not address asking for help in any way. The bill does not infringe on any private property loitering laws or ordinances.

FACT

The number of unhoused individuals has risen due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yes! On average, there are over 1,100 Delawareans that are unsheltered every night. Over a quarter of these are children.

ENFORCEMENT

The Bill provides a reporting mechanism through the **State Human Relations Commission/ Division of Human Relations**. No complaint may be filed with the division more than 90 days after the alleged discriminatory act or practice.