



# Legislative Report

## Homeless Youth Cash Stipend Pilot Project Report

**Office of Economic Opportunity**

January 2024

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Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 3.197, requires the disclosure of the cost to prepare this report. The estimated cost of preparing this report is \$222.

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# Contents

- I. Legislation..... 4
- II. Introduction..... 6
- III. Project Implementation Summary ..... 7

# I. Legislation

[Laws of Minnesota 2023, chapter 70, article 11, section 13](#)

HOMELESS YOUTH CASH STIPEND PILOT PROJECT.

Subdivision 1.

Pilot project established.

The commissioner of human services shall establish a homeless youth cash stipend pilot project to provide a direct cash stipend to homeless youth in Hennepin and St. Louis Counties. The pilot project must be designed to meet the needs of underserved communities.

Subd. 2.

Definitions.

(a) For purposes of this section, the following terms have the meanings given.

(b) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of human services.

(c) "Homeless youth" means a person 18 to 24 years of age who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The following are not fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residences:

(1) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;

(2) an institution or a publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;

(3) transitional housing;

(4) a temporary placement with a peer, friend, or family member that has not offered permanent residence, a residential lease, or temporary lodging for more than 30 days; or

(5) a public or private place not designed for, nor ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

Subd. 3.

Administration.

The commissioner, as authorized by Minnesota Statutes, section 256.01, subdivision 2, paragraph (a), clause (6), shall contract with Youthprise to:

(1) identify eligible homeless youth under this section;

(2) provide technical assistance to cash stipend recipients;

(3) engage with cash stipend recipients to develop youth-designed optional services;

(4) evaluate the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of the pilot program;

(5) collaborate with youth leaders of each county to identify and contract with the appropriate service providers to offer financial coaching, housing navigation, employment, education services, and trauma-informed mentoring and support; and

(6) submit annual updates and a final report to the commissioner.

Subd. 4.

Eligibility.

Homeless youth who are 18 to 24 years of age and who live in Hennepin or St. Louis County at the time of initial enrollment are eligible to participate in the pilot project.

Subd. 5.

Cash stipend.

The commissioner, in consultation with Youthprise and Hennepin and St. Louis Counties, shall establish a stipend amount for eligible homeless youth who participate in the pilot project.

Subd. 6.

Stipends not to be considered income.

(a) Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, cash stipends under this section must not be considered income, assets, or personal property for purposes of determining eligibility or recertifying eligibility for:

- (1) child care assistance programs under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 119B;
- (2) general assistance and Minnesota supplemental aid under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 256D;
- (3) housing support under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 256I;
- (4) the Minnesota family investment program and diversionary work program under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 256J; and
- (5) economic assistance programs under Minnesota Statutes, chapter 256P.

(b) The commissioner must not consider cash stipends under this section as income or assets for medical assistance under Minnesota Statutes, section 256B.056, subdivision 1a, paragraph (a); 3; or 3c.

Subd. 7.

Report.

The commissioner, in cooperation with Youthprise and Hennepin and St. Louis Counties, shall submit an annual report on Youthprise's findings regarding the efficacy and cost-effectiveness of the homeless youth cash stipend pilot project to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over homeless youth policy and finance by January 15, 2024, and each January 15 thereafter.

Subd. 8.

Expiration.

This section expires June 30, 2027.

## II. Introduction

### Purpose of Report

This report was prepared in response to Laws of Minnesota 2023, Chapter 70, Article 11, Section 13, which requires that an annual report on the Homeless Youth Cash Stipend Pilot Project be submitted to the Minnesota Legislature. Its purpose is to update the Minnesota Legislature on Youthprise's findings regarding the cost effectiveness and efficacy of direct cash assistance as an intervention for youth experiencing homelessness.

### Contents of Report

This is the first report presented to the Minnesota Legislature on the Homeless Youth Cash Stipend Pilot Project. The project is in the beginning stages of implementation. The Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), executed a contract with Youthprise on December 15, 2023. Staff from the Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), prepared this report. Staff used information gathered from Youthprise. The body of this report will provide information on:

- Project implementation plan and scope
- Workshops from 2023 which set up the legislative-directed work for 2024
- Youth leadership in the creation and implementation of the pilot project
- Tribal Leadership engagement to ensure youth access to tribal-specific services
- Youthprise's partnership with Chapin Hall to assist with the research methods and data evaluation (

## IV. Project Implementation Summary

Youthprise and their research partner, Chapin Hall, have designed a random assignment trial to evaluate direct cash transfers as an intervention for youth homelessness in Minnesota. Three hundred youth will be enrolled in the project with 135 of these youth randomly selected by Chapin Hall to receive monthly direct cash payments for the duration of the study. Four Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) will be selected through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to deliver youth-directed services to project participants. There will be one community-based organization selected for each region (Hennepin County, Northern St. Louis County, and Southern St. Louis County) and one Indigenous-specific organization selected that will serve participants across the three regions.

The [Community-Based Organization RFP](#) was released on February 1, 2024. Applications are due by February 29, 2024.

Youthprise aims to enroll youth in the pilot project by June 2024.

### Key Work Activities

St. Louis County leaders have been meeting regularly to align on the vision, mission, and implementation of the pilot project in St. Louis County. Youthprise had leaders from St. Louis County, Bois Forte, Lutheran Social Services, VEMA, Life House, Divine Konnections, American Indian Community Housing Organization, YWCA Duluth, Churches United in Ministry (CHUM), and others attending nine community meetings in 2023.

Discussions in these regular meetings helped establish a coalition to lead to net zero for youth homelessness in St. Louis County and started a complementary meeting to organize the system for net zero.

### Youth Leadership

Youth Adaptation Workshops were held to determine the key population and design elements of the optional services. Local youth were recruited from each region to engage in these discussions and ensure youth voice and lived experience was accounted for in project development. These workshops helped to shape the work plan and align on the amount of the cash stipend for each region. Youth Adaptation Workshops took place in the following locations:

Hennepin County:

- July 14, 2022: Connections to Independence Adaptation Workshop
- July 20, 2022: Youthlink Adaptation Workshop
- July 21, 2022: Avenues for Youth Adaptation Workshop
- July 27, 2022: The Link Adaptation Workshop
- August 2, 2022: Oasis for Youth Adaptation Workshop

St. Louis County:

- September 28, 2023: Duluth Adaptation Workshop
- October 6, 2023: Virginia Adaptation Workshop
- November 9, 2023: Duluth Adaptation Workshop
- December 7, 2023: Bois Forte Adaptation Workshop
- January 15, 2024: Chisholm Adaptation Workshop

## **Partnership with Key Tribal Leaders**

On January 3, 2024, Youthprise presented to the Bois Forte Tribal Council to seek administrative approval for Band Member participation. The Bois Forte Tribal Council voted to administratively support the Homeless Youth Stipend Pilot and move forward with Band participation.

In response to feedback about the project from the Bois Forte Tribal Council, Youthprise adapted their RFP to include a request for an Indigenous-specific service provider that can better address cultural-specific elements and better align with tribal-specific services for American Indian youth enrolled in the project.

## **Chapin Hall Partnership**

Youthprise's research partner, Chapin Hall, was invited to submit a proposal to CoLab (Constellation Lab), which funds anti-poverty, longitudinal research projects that will strengthen and scale solutions for Minnesota.

In Chapin Hall's proposal, they outline the architecture of the future research methods. Youthprise and Chapin Hall anticipate securing funding for the research in February, once the community-based organizations to provide voluntary support services to youth participants have been identified. Youthprise anticipates being prepared for the Institutional Review Board (IRB) in March 2024. The research proposal will be made available in future legislative reports.

Jasmine Clark has been hired as the Youth Researcher to represent St. Louis County. Jasmine was also recently appointed to the Foster Ombudsman Board.

## **Upcoming Work and Presentations**

Constellation Fund is highlighting the Homeless Youth Cash Stipend Pilot Project as part of their 2024 Impact Forum. This virtual event will take place on February 7, 2024, at 11 a.m.