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## Public Law Update - Increased Transparency and Reporting Requirements for State Homelessness Programs (AB 799)

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On September 19, 2024, Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law Assembly Bill 799 (“AB 799”) which amends Section 8257 of the Welfare and Institutions Code to require the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) to implement reporting requirements for fiscal and outcome data of state homelessness programs.

Cal ICH, formerly known as the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC), was created to oversee the implementation of “Housing First” policies, guidelines, and regulations to reduce the prevalence and duration of homelessness in California. As the state’s homelessness crisis has worsened, the role of Cal ICH has significantly increased as it is responsible for administering the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) and the Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAPP).

Under existing law, Cal ICH collects data regarding its efforts to prevent and end homelessness, but does not report that data publicly. The Joint Legislative Audit Committee released an audit report on April 9, 2024 of the cost-effectiveness of state programs noting that Cal ICH’s lack of consistent tracking and evaluation created a significant gap in the State’s ability to assess programs’ effectiveness.

AB 799 addresses the auditor’s report by requiring Cal ICH to track and report how money is being spent on homelessness programs and how effective the programs are in using that funding. AB 799 also imposes new requirements on local agencies and departments administering State homelessness programs to report updated information on new or existing funding opportunities on a quarterly basis. AB 799 specifically requires Cal ICH staff to specify the form and substance of the required reporting data elements imposed on local agencies administering State homelessness programs. Notably, Cal ICH will administer the Homeless Data Integration System to collect local data.

Burke, Williams & Sorensen, LLP regularly advises clients on legal matters relating to housing and homelessness.

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