



Montgomery  
County Council

**Committee:** PHED/HHS  
**Committee Review:** At a future date  
**Staff:** Christine Wellons, Legislative Attorney  
**Purpose:** To introduce agenda item – no vote expected  
**Keywords:** #MoCoCommissionOnHomelessness

AGENDA ITEM #6B  
February 25, 2020  
**Introduction**

## SUBJECT

Bill 7-20, Interagency Commission on Homelessness – Membership and Duties  
Lead Sponsors: Councilmembers Glass, Albornoz, and Rice

## EXPECTED ATTENDEES

N/A; Introduction of Bill

## COUNCIL DECISION POINTS & COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

- N/A; Introduction of Bill

## DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

Bill 7-20 would alter the membership and duties of the Interagency Commission on Homelessness.

## SUMMARY OF KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- N/A; Introduction of Bill

### This report contains:

Staff Report  
 Bill 7-20  
 Legislative Request Report

Pages 1  
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**MEMORANDUM**

February 20, 2020

TO: County Council

FROM: Christine Wellons, Legislative Attorney

SUBJECT: Bill 7-20, Interagency Commission on Homelessness – Membership and Duties <sup>1</sup>

PURPOSE: Introduction – no Council votes required

Council Bill 7-20, Interagency Commission on Homelessness – Membership and Duties, sponsored by Lead Sponsors Councilmembers Glass, Alborno, and Rice, is scheduled to be introduced on February 25, 2020. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for March 17 at 1:30 p.m.

Bill 7-20 would alter the membership and duties of the Interagency Commission on Homelessness.

**BACKGROUND**

The Interagency Commission on Homelessness (ICH) is a 25-member commission created by the County Council in 2014 to coordinate public and private programs to reduce homelessness in the County.

The ICH has requested that several modifications and updates be made to its membership and duties. The purpose of these amendments is to improve the governance and effectiveness of the ICH, as well as to clarify the mission of the ICH to “end and prevent” homelessness, as opposed to simply “reducing” homelessness.

**BILL DESCRIPTION**

Under Bill 7-20, the ICH would remain a 25-member commission, but its composition would change. At the request of the ICH, certain ex officio slots would be replaced with more public representatives, including homeless service providers, healthcare providers, family services providers, and affordable housing providers.

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<sup>1</sup> #MoCoCommissionOnHomelessness

Regarding operations of the ICH, the bill would require the ICH to maintain a governance committee co-chaired by the ICH Chair and the Chief of Services to End and Prevent Homelessness of the Department of Health and Human Services. The bill also would clarify that a majority of the ICH constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

Importantly, the bill would update certain policy approaches of the ICH. In particular, it would provide that the ICH's purpose is to end and prevent homelessness (*i.e.*, bring homelessness to functional zero), rather than simply reducing homelessness. It also would explicitly prioritize finding permanent housing for homeless individuals and valuing client choice.

This packet contains:

Bill 7-20

Legislative Request Report

Circle #

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Bill No. 7-20  
Concerning: Interagency Commission on  
Homelessness – Membership and  
Duties  
Revised: 01/28/2020 Draft No. 4  
Introduced: February 25, 2020  
Expires: August 25, 2021  
Enacted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Executive: \_\_\_\_\_  
Effective: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sunset Date: None  
Ch. \_\_\_\_\_, Laws of Mont. Co. \_\_\_\_\_

## COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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Lead Sponsors: Councilmembers Glass, Alborno, and Rice

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**AN ACT** to:

- (1) alter the membership of the Interagency Commission on Homelessness;
- (2) alter the duties of the Commission; and
- (3) generally amend the law regarding the Commission.

By amending

Montgomery County Code  
Chapter 24, Health and Sanitation  
Sections 24-62, 24-63, 24-65, 24-66, 24-67, and 24-68

<b>Boldface</b>	<i>Heading or defined term.</i>
<u>Underlining</u>	<i>Added to existing law by original bill.</i>
[Single boldface brackets]	<i>Deleted from existing law by original bill.</i>
<u>Double underlining</u>	<i>Added by amendment.</i>
[[Double boldface brackets]]	<i>Deleted from existing law or the bill by amendment.</i>
* * *	<i>Existing law unaffected by bill.</i>

*The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following Act:*



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End homelessness or ending homelessness means:

- (A) reaching functional zero for an identified type of homelessness; and
- (B) having systems in place adequate to house all individuals entering homelessness during a specific time period.

*Housing First Initiative* means a [process for placing homeless people into housing that discourages imposing conditions on placement related to health, employment, or sobriety, and seeks to reduce the time in shelter or transitional programs and provide the needed supports to people in a permanent home] public policy approach to homeless assistance that:

- (A) prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness;
- (B) reduces barriers to accessing housing and other key services; and
- (C) is guided by the theories that:
  - (i) people need basic necessities like food and housing before attending to other needs, such as employment, budgeting, or substance abuse treatment;
  - (ii) client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation; and
  - (iii) exercising a choice in housing is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving the client's life.

\* \* \*

**24-65. Members.**

- (a) The Commission has 25 members.
- (b) The Executive must appoint the following to serve as ex officio members:

- 55 (1) Director of the Department of Health and Human Services or the  
 56 Director's designee;
- 57 (2) Chief of Services to End and Prevent Homelessness of the  
 58 Department of Health and Human Services or the Chief's  
 59 designee;
- 60 [(3) Chief of Behavioral Health and Crisis Services of the Department  
 61 of Health and Human Services;
- 62 (4) Director of the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation;
- 63 (5)] (3) Director of the Department of Housing and Community  
 64 Affairs or the Director's designee; and
- 65 [(6) Assistant Chief for Field Services of the Montgomery County  
 66 Police Department; and
- 67 (7)] (4) A representative from the Office of the County Executive.
- 68 (c) The Executive must invite the following to serve as ex officio members:
- 69 (1) A [member] Councilmember or staff member of the County  
 70 Council, selected by the Council President;
- 71 (2) Executive Director of the Housing Opportunities Commission or  
 72 the Executive Director's designee; and
- 73 [(3) Director of Student Services of the Montgomery County Public  
 74 Schools;
- 75 (4) The Mayor or the representative of the Mayor of the City of  
 76 Gaithersburg;
- 77 (5) The Mayor or the representative of the Mayor of the City of  
 78 Rockville;
- 79 (6) The Mayor or the representative of the Mayor of the City of  
 80 Takoma Park;

- 81 (7) A representative of either the United States Department of  
 82 Veterans Affairs or the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs;  
 83 (8) The Montgomery County Sheriff or the representative of the  
 84 County Sheriff; and  
 85 (9)] (3) A member of the County Legislative Delegation selected  
 86 jointly by the Chairs of the House and Senate Delegations.
- 87 (d) The Executive must appoint [5] 4 members [that] who are representatives  
 88 of [the Montgomery County Continuum of Care] government agencies.
- 89 (e) The Executive must appoint 4 members who are representatives of  
 90 homeless service organizations that:
- 91 (1) prevent homelessness or assist homeless families, single adults, or  
 92 youth; or
- 93 (2) help households to exit homelessness and maintain stable,  
 94 permanent housing.
- 95 (f) The Executive must appoint 4 members who are representatives of  
 96 private organizations that provide behavioral health, children and family  
 97 services, healthcare, domestic violence services, aging and senior  
 98 services, disability services, or veterans' services.
- 99 [(e)] (g) The Executive must appoint [4 members of the public]:
- 100 (1) [At] at least 1 [public] member [must be] who is a homeless or  
 101 formerly homeless resident of Montgomery County; [and]
- 102 (2) at least 1 member [must be] who is a representative of a hospital  
 103 or other healthcare provider located in Montgomery County;
- 104 (3) at least 1 member who is a representative of a private philanthropic  
 105 organization or foundation; and
- 106 (4) at least 1 member who is a representative of an affordable housing  
 107 developer.

108 (h) The Executive must appoint 2 members of the general public who are  
 109 residents of the County.

110 [(f)] (i) The term of each non-ex officio member is 3 years. If a member  
 111 is appointed to fill a vacancy before a term expires, the successor serves  
 112 the rest of the unexpired term.

113 (j) Recommendations by the Commission.

114 (1) The Commission may recommend to the Executive persons to  
 115 serve on the Commission under subsections (d), (e), and (f).

116 (2) The Executive should appoint members under subsections (d), (e),  
 117 and (f) from among the persons recommended by the Commission.

118 **24-66. Voting, officers, chairs, meetings, compensation; [subcommittees]**  
 119 **committees.**

120 (a) Each member of the Commission is a voting member.

121 (b) The [Executive] Commission must [designate] elect a Chair and Vice  
 122 Chair from among its members.

123 (c) The Commission must meet at least 4 times each year.

124 (d) A majority of the members of the Commission constitutes a quorum for  
 125 the transaction of business.

126 [(d)] (e) A member serves without compensation. However, a member may  
 127 request reimbursement for mileage and dependent care costs at rates  
 128 established by the County.

129 [(e)] (f) The Commission may establish 1 or more [subcommittees]  
 130 committees to assist in carrying out any function of the Commission.  
 131 Any [subcommittee] committee action is not the action of the  
 132 Commission and must not bind the Commission or its members. A  
 133 [subcommittee] committee may include a person who is not a member of  
 134 the Commission.

135 (g) The Commission must establish a governance committee to ensure  
 136 effective coordination of the Continuum of Care. The governance  
 137 committee must:

138 (1) be co-chaired by the Chair of the Commission and the member  
 139 appointed under Section 24-65(b)(2); and

140 (2) include the member appointed under Section 24-65(b)(3) and a  
 141 representative of each committee established under subsection (f).

142 **24-67. Duties.**

143 The Commission must:

144 (a) promote a community-wide goal to end and prevent homelessness;

145 (b) develop a strategic plan to prevent and [reduce] end homelessness and  
 146 minimize the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless families and  
 147 individuals;

148 (c) review and monitor any program that is a component of the Continuum  
 149 of Care[, 100,000 Homes Campaign,] and Housing First Initiative,  
 150 including:

151 (1) permanent housing, including permanent supportive housing and  
 152 rapid re-housing;

153 (2) transitional housing;

154 (3) supportive services;

155 (4) homeless management information system;

156 (5) homelessness prevention; **[and]**

157 (6) emergency shelter; and

158 (7) outreach;

159 (d) recommend to the Executive and Council any improvements to [the  
 160 Continuum of Care, including process changes, to reduce any barrier to

- 161 housing and minimize the time needed to move someone from  
 162 homelessness to housing] local policies to end and prevent homelessness;
- 163 (e) educate the community about homelessness, best practices to [reduce]  
 164 end and prevent homelessness, resources needed to [reduce] end and  
 165 prevent homelessness, and long term savings that are achieved by  
 166 providing permanent stable housing; [and]
- 167 (f) recommend and promote partnerships with any private organization,  
 168 business, corporation, philanthropic organization or foundation, and any  
 169 municipal, state, or federal government agency to improve the County's  
 170 ability to prevent and [reduce] end homelessness; and
- 171 (g) establish procedures for the effective coordination of the Continuum of  
 172 Care.

173 **24-68. Annual report.**

174 By November 30 of each year, the Commission must submit to the Executive  
 175 and Council a report that:

- 176 (a) provides data and trends regarding homelessness, including data from the  
 177 Council of Government's Point-in-Time survey [and the 100,000 Homes  
 178 Campaign survey];
- 179 (b) identifies gaps in the Continuum of Care that prevent or impede the  
 180 County's ability to address needs identified through the review of data on  
 181 [homeless] homelessness;
- 182 (c) makes recommendations for the capital and operating budget [for the  
 183 following fiscal year];
- 184 (d) makes [recommendation] recommendations for any legislative or  
 185 regulatory changes needed to implement the Continuum of Care strategic  
 186 plan; and

187 (e) reports on any educational or public outreach activities undertaken during  
188 the preceding year.

189 **Sec. 2. Transition.** Non-ex officio members of the Interagency Commission  
190 on Homelessness on the effective date of this Act continue to serve on the Commission  
191 until the end of their terms.

## LEGISLATIVE REQUEST REPORT

Bill 7-20

### *Interagency Commission on Homelessness – Membership and Duties*

**DESCRIPTION:** Interagency Commission on Homelessness – Membership and Duties

**PROBLEM:** Update and modify the membership and duties of the Interagency Commission on Homelessness.

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:** Bill 7-20 would alter the membership of the Interagency Commission of Homelessness (ICH) to include fewer ex officio members and more public members. The bill would update the duties of the ICH to, among other things, prioritize ending and preventing homelessness as opposed to simply reducing homelessness.

**COORDINATION:** Interagency Commission on Homelessness

**FISCAL IMPACT:** OMB

**ECONOMIC IMPACT:** Department of Finance

**EVALUATION:** To be done.

**EXPERIENCE ELSEWHERE:** To be researched.

**SOURCE OF INFORMATION:** Christine Wellons, Legislative Attorney

**APPLICATION WITHIN MUNICIPALITIES:** N/A

**PENALTIES:** N/A