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ASSEMBLYMAN, SEVENTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT  
&

# MIGUEL SANTIAGO

ASSEMBLYMAN, FIFTY-THIRD DISTRICT

## Assembly Bill 1921

### CalWORKs Housing Assistance

#### **Background**

Homelessness continues to be a problem in our state and throughout the country. While often hidden, homelessness among families with children is at an all-time high. The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program works to alleviate the problem of child homelessness by providing temporary housing assistance to families with children.

#### **Current Law**

CalWORKs currently provides temporary housing assistance for 16 consecutive days during one calendar year to homeless families with children. Current law inadvertently undermines the success of this benefit and support to families if their temporary housing situation is interrupted for one or more of the 16 consecutive days, regardless of the reason.

As an unintended consequence, families with children that are homeless may be refused or lose their temporary housing due to family emergencies, offers of temporary housing from family or friends, or even the pursuit of employment or housing opportunities elsewhere.

Additionally, current law and regulations require CalWORKs recipients who are homeless requesting permanent housing assistance through the program to secure housing with a commercial establishment or a person in the business of renting, or with experience renting properties.

As a result, suitable shared-home living accommodations for families with children are unable to be used to prevent homelessness among CalWORKs households.

#### **This Bill**

AB 1921 would:

- Remove the consecutive day requirement and allow families to receive 16 total days of temporary housing assistance per year, excluding a case of documented domestic violence.
- Allow CalWORKs recipients receiving permanent housing assistance to use their payment towards shared housing.

By making these changes, AB 1921 would increase options for our state's poorest families with children while also improving the effectiveness of the CalWORKs program's homelessness interventions.

#### **Sponsors**

Western Center on Law and Poverty  
County Welfare Directors Association  
Coalition of California Welfare Rights Org.

#### **Staff**

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