

2026 PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITIES

Legalize permanent supportive housing and shelter

Washington must ensure that every community does its part to welcome the housing and shelter needed to prevent and end homelessness, but unfortunately some local governments are still deploying discriminatory tactics to delay, discourage, or block housing and shelter altogether. But the state can outlaw these practices and build on legislation passed in recent years to "legalize" the housing needed for everyone in our communities.

House Bill 2266/Senate Bill 6069 will streamline local zoning and remove the many obstacles that some local governments intentionally create that make it harder, more expensive, or even impossible to site housing and shelter for low-income and disabled community members. This would ensure that local politics don't stand in the way of people accessing safe, healthy, and affordable places to live.

Key points:

- HB 2266/SB 6069 will increase access to affordable housing and shelter, especially supporting our disabled, non-white, and LGBTQ+ neighbors who are disproportionately impacted by homelessness. Even while the federal government attempts to dismantle access to housing and shelter, Washington lawmakers can take decisive action to clear roadblocks to building the permanent supportive housing and shelter needed statewide.
- Under HB 2266/SB 6069, proposed development of permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing, or indoor emergency shelters (STEP) in a residential or commercial zone, would be precluded from denial for permit application as well as streamlining local zoning. This legislation will allow necessary oversight by the state to ensure local jurisdictions are not making critical homelessness solutions harder, more expensive, or even impossible to site. These changes would eliminate the uncertainty around siting and permitting that is often a deterrent to potential developers of STEP housing.

Welcoming shelter and services for people facing homelessness in all communities is a key policy element in our "Roadmap to Housing Justice" – a comprehensive strategy to end the housing and homelessness crisis in Washington. Learn more at wliha.org/roadmap