

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.  
Act 160 of the Regular Session

State of Arkansas  
94th General Assembly  
Regular Session, 2023

As Engrossed: H2/2/23 S2/14/23  
**A Bill**

HOUSE BILL 1196

By: Representatives Underwood, Beaty Jr., Burkes, Long, Ray, R. Scott Richardson, Rose, McAlindon,  
*Lundstrum*

By: Senator Gilmore

**For An Act To Be Entitled**

AN ACT TO MODIFY THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC HOUSING;  
TO CREATE THE HOUSING WELFARE REFORM ACT OF 2023; AND  
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

**Subtitle**

TO MODIFY THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC  
HOUSING; AND TO CREATE THE HOUSING  
WELFARE REFORM ACT OF 2023.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Title.

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Housing Welfare Reform Act of 2023".

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 14, Chapter 169, Subchapter 1, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

14-169-109. Public housing authority work requirement – Legislative intent – Definitions.

(a) This section is intended to ensure that an individual who is able to work is required to work, train, or volunteer to qualify for and receive public housing benefits and is intended to preserve limited resources for truly needy Arkansans.

(b) As used in this section:

(1) "Able-bodied adult" means an individual who is not:



- (A) Under nineteen (19) years of age;
- (B) Over sixty-four (64) years of age;
- (C) Medically certified as physically or mentally unfit for employment;
- (D) Pregnant;
- (E) A parent or caretaker who is responsible for the care of a dependent child under five (5) years of age;
- (F) A parent or caretaker who is personally providing the care for a dependent child with a serious medical condition or disability;
- (G) Receiving unemployment compensation and in compliance with work requirements that are part of the unemployment compensation benefit program; or
- (H) Participating in a drug addiction or alcoholic treatment and rehabilitation program;

(2) "Public housing authority" means a housing authority created under § 14-169-207; and

(3) "Work requirement" means a requirement that able-bodied adults are required to do at least one (1) of the following as a condition of eligibility:

- (A) Work an average of twenty (20) hours or more per week;
- (B) Participate in and comply with the requirements of a work program for twenty (20) hours or more per week;
- (C) Volunteer at least twenty (20) hours per week;
- (D) Meet any combination of working and participating in a work program for a total of twenty (20) hours or more per week; or
- (E) Participate in and comply with the requirements of a workfare program.

(c)(1) As a condition of being chartered and operating in this state, a public housing authority shall implement a work requirement for able-bodied adults in households that receive housing assistance.

(2) To ensure the requirement under subdivision (c)(1) of this section is met, a public housing authority shall:

- (A) Conduct a screening to determine whether each applicant or tenant in public housing administered by the housing authority is an able-bodied adult who is compliant with the work requirement;
- (B) Create an employability plan for each able-bodied

adult in a household that receives housing assistance consistent with the work requirement; and

(C) Terminate assistance for any household with an able-bodied adult who fails to comply with the work requirement within sixty (60) days of noncompliance with the work requirement.

(d)(1) As a condition of being chartered and operating in this state, a public housing authority shall operate, among eligible households on a waiting list for benefits, a housing-authority-wide local preference prioritizing the admission of a household in which all able-bodied adults in the household are compliant with the work requirement, whether or not the able-bodied adult is compliant with a work requirement in another public assistance program.

(2) Notwithstanding subdivision (d)(1) of this section, a public housing authority is not required to give priority to a household in which there are able-bodied adults compliant with a work requirement over a household in which there are no able-bodied adults subject to a work requirement.

(e)(1) To the extent necessary to carry out this section under federal law, each public housing authority shall request federal approval from the United States Department of Housing and Urban development by January 1, 2025.

(2) If federal approval is denied, each public housing authority shall resubmit a request for approval within twenty-four (24) months of each denial.

SECTION 3. DO NOT CODIFY. EFFECTIVE DATE. This act is effective on and after January 1, 2024.

*/s/Underwood*

**APPROVED: 2/27/23**