



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 722

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 7062

House of Representatives, April 16, 2025

The Committee on Planning and Development reported through REP. KAVROS DEGRAW of the 17th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING TEMPORARY SHELTER UNITS FOR PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR REFUGEES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2025*) (a) As used in this section
2 and section 2 of this act:

3 (1) "As of right" has the same meaning as provided in section 8-1a of
4 the general statutes;

5 (2) "Municipality" has the same meaning as provided in subsection
6 (a) of section 7-148 of the general statutes;

7 (3) "Refugee" means any person located in the state who has been
8 admitted to the United States under the United States Refugee
9 Admissions Program established pursuant to the Immigration and
10 Nationality Act and who is outside such person's country of origin for
11 reasons of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence or other
12 circumstances that have significantly disturbed public order;

13 (4) "Religious organization" has the same meaning as provided in
14 section 49-31k of the general statutes; and

15 (5) "Temporary shelter unit" means a nonpermanent commercially
16 prefabricated accessory structure that is designed to be easily
17 dismantled or removed, but does not include tarps, tents, other nonrigid
18 materials or motor vehicles.

19 (b) In each municipality with a population of twenty-five thousand
20 or more, as determined by the most recent decennial census, any zoning
21 regulations adopted pursuant to section 8-2 of the general statutes by
22 such municipality shall allow, as of right, the installation and
23 maintenance of temporary shelter units to provide shelter for persons
24 experiencing homelessness or refugees upon any real property owned
25 by a religious organization, provided any such temporary shelter unit
26 shall be an accessory use to a house of religious worship owned by such
27 organization. A municipality may:

28 (1) Prohibit the installation of more than eight temporary shelter units
29 on any single lot;

30 (2) Prescribe a maximum size of four hundred square feet for any
31 temporary shelter unit;

32 (3) Require that each temporary shelter unit be structurally sound,
33 protect occupants from the elements and not pose a threat to the health
34 or safety of any occupant;

35 (4) Require that each temporary shelter unit be equipped with
36 necessary heating and cooling equipment in proper operating condition;

37 (5) Require that each temporary shelter unit have sufficient electrical
38 sources to permit the safe use of personal electrical appliances and
39 devices and lighting fixtures in the unit;

40 (6) Prohibit the occupancy of any shelter unit by more than one family
41 or two unrelated individuals;

42 (7) Prohibit any individual from occupying a temporary shelter unit
43 for a period exceeding twelve consecutive months;

44 (8) Prohibit the installation of any temporary shelter unit within one
45 thousand feet of any public or private elementary or secondary school
46 or cemetery;

47 (9) Require any religious organization that installs a temporary
48 shelter unit on the real property of such organization to provide
49 sufficient numbers of male and female toilets and shower facilities to
50 accommodate the occupants of any such unit, including (A) a minimum
51 of one toilet for every eight such occupants per gender, and (B) a
52 minimum of one shower for every eight such occupants per gender;

53 (10) Require that any temporary shelter unit be set back not less than
54 ten feet from any adjacent real property not owned by the religious
55 organization;

56 (11) Require that any outdoor storage of the personal belongings of
57 any occupant of a temporary shelter unit be obscured from public view
58 by a minimum six-foot-tall wall or fence; and

59 (12) Require the illumination by exterior lighting of the entire outdoor
60 and parking area of the property upon which any temporary shelter unit
61 is installed.

62 (c) The as-of-right permit application and review process for
63 approval of any temporary shelter unit shall require that a decision on
64 any such application be rendered not later than sixty-five days after
65 receipt of such application by the applicable zoning commission, except
66 an applicant may consent to one or more extensions of not more than an
67 additional sixty-five days or may withdraw such application.

68 (d) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to exempt a temporary
69 shelter unit from any applicable provision of any building code or fire
70 safety code, except no provision of the State Building Code that would
71 have the effect of limiting the duration of the permitted use of a
72 temporary shelter unit shall apply to such unit.

73 (e) Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to limit a religious
74 organization from using any building, or portion of a building, located
75 on real property owned by such organization to provide temporary
76 shelter for persons experiencing homelessness or refugees.

77 (f) A municipality shall not condition the approval of a temporary
78 shelter unit on the correction of a nonconforming use, structure or lot.

79 (g) A municipality, special district or sewer or water authority shall
80 not (1) consider a temporary shelter unit to be a new residential use for
81 the purposes of calculating connection fees or capacity charges for
82 utilities, including water and sewer service, or (2) require the
83 installation of a new or separate utility connection directly to a
84 temporary shelter unit or impose a related connection fee or capacity
85 charge.

86 (h) If a municipality fails to adopt new zoning regulations or amend
87 existing zoning regulations by July 1, 2026, for the purpose of complying
88 with the provisions of subsections (b) to (g), inclusive, of this section,
89 any noncompliant existing zoning regulation shall become void. No
90 municipality shall use or impose additional standards concerning the
91 installation and maintenance of temporary shelter units to provide
92 shelter for persons experiencing homelessness or refugees upon any real
93 property owned by a religious organization beyond those standards set
94 forth in subsections (b) to (g), inclusive, of this section.

95 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) The State Building Inspector and
96 the Codes and Standards Committee shall, jointly, with the approval of
97 the Commissioner of Administrative Services, in accordance with the
98 provisions of section 29-252b of the general statutes, include in the
99 amendments to the State Building Code next adopted after the effective
100 date of this section, and the State Fire Marshal and the Codes and
101 Standards Committee shall, in accordance with section 29-292a of the
102 general statutes, include in the amendments to the Fire Safety Code next
103 adopted after the effective date of this section, provisions that regulate
104 the erection and use of temporary shelter units, as defined in section 1
105 of this act, in such a way as to:

- 106 (1) Be consistent with safe occupancy and egress;
- 107 (2) Regulate the installation and use of heating and cooking
108 equipment and equipment that utilizes flammable fuel; and
- 109 (3) Require that such units comply with requirements of Appendix Q
110 of the 2021 International Residential Code applicable to tiny houses.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section

Section 1	<i>October 1, 2025</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section

PD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: See below

Explanation

The bill exempts certain temporary shelters from zoning restrictions for towns with a population of 25,000 or more beginning in FY 26.¹ Any fiscal impact to municipalities will be dependent on how the temporary shelters are used. The bill has no impact on municipalities with a population of less than 25,000.

The bill also requires the State Building Code and Fire Safety Code to include provisions on temporary shelter units which results in no fiscal impact to the state.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to the number of temporary shelters.

¹ According to the U.S. Census Bureau population estimates, in 2023 there were 44 towns in Connecticut with a population of 25,000 or greater.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 7062*****AN ACT CONCERNING TEMPORARY SHELTER UNITS FOR PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS OR REFUGEES.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires zoning regulations in certain municipalities to allow, as of right, federally tax-exempt religious organizations to install and maintain on their property temporary shelter units for refugees and people experiencing homelessness, subject to certain conditions and limitations. The bill's requirement applies to municipalities with at least 25,000 residents, based on the most recent decennial census, that adopt zoning regulations under the statutes (CGS § 8-2), as opposed to a special act.

The bill authorizes municipalities to, among other things, (1) require the units to meet certain size and structural specifications, (2) prohibit more than eight of these units on a single lot, and (3) limit individuals' occupancy to 12 consecutive months. Under the bill, if an impacted municipality does not amend or adopt new zoning regulations to comply with the bill by July 1, 2026, its noncompliant regulations are voided. Municipalities may not use or impose additional standards on these units' installation and maintenance beyond those set in the bill.

The bill also requires the State Building Code and Fire Safety Code, when next amended and in conformity with the existing processes for amendments, to include provisions on temporary shelter units that, among other things, (1) ensure safe occupancy and (2) impose on these units certain model code requirements applicable to tiny homes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025, except the building and fire code amendment provisions are effective upon passage.

§ 1 — TEMPORARY SHELTER UNITS

The bill defines these units as nonpermanent, commercially prefabricated accessory structures designed to be easily dismantled or removed, excluding motor vehicles, tarps, tents, and other nonrigid materials. It requires that they be an accessory use to a house of religious worship owned by the religious organization. It also specifies that its provisions do not limit a religious organization from using all or part of any building on their property to provide temporary shelter for refugees or people experiencing homelessness. Under the bill, a “refugee” is anyone (1) located in Connecticut who was admitted to the country under the Immigration and Nationality Act’s federal refugee admissions program and (2) who is outside their country of origin because of feared persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or other circumstances that significantly disturbed public order.

The bill explicitly subjects these units to building and fire safety codes but exempts them from any State Building Code provision that effectively limits the duration of their use. It also authorizes municipalities to set certain additional requirements and limitations for these units, as described below.

Density, Size, and Occupancy Limitations

Municipalities may (1) prohibit more than eight temporary shelter units on a single lot and (2) set their maximum size at up to 400 square feet. They may also prohibit (1) more than one family or two unrelated people from occupying a unit and (2) anyone from occupying the unit for longer than 12 consecutive months.

Permissible Locations

Municipalities may (1) prohibit these units from being installed within 1,000 feet of any cemetery or elementary or secondary school (public or private) and (2) require they be set back at least 10 feet from any adjacent property the organization does not own.

Municipalities may also require that (1) any outdoor storage of occupants’ personal belongings be blocked from public view by a wall

or fence at least six feet tall and (2) the entire outdoor and parking area of the property where they are installed have exterior lighting.

Structural and Facilities Requirements

Municipalities may require that these units (1) be structurally sound, protect occupants from the elements, and pose no threat to their health or safety; (2) have working heating and cooling equipment; and (3) have enough electrical sources to allow the safe use of lighting and personal electrical appliances and devices.

They may also require the religious organizations installing temporary shelter units to provide enough male and female toilets and shower facilities to accommodate their occupants (including at least one toilet and shower for every eight occupants per gender).

Permit Application and Review Process

The bill requires an as-of-right permit application and review process for approving these units. By law, and under the bill, “as of right” means able to be approved without requiring (1) a public hearing; (2) a variance, special permit, or special exception; or (3) other discretionary zoning action, other than a determination that a site plan conforms with applicable zoning regulations.

It requires municipalities to issue their decisions on applications within 65 days after the applicable zoning commission receives an application, unless the applicant agrees to one or more extensions of up to an additional 65 days or withdraws their application. They may not condition the unit’s approval on the correction of a nonconforming use, structure, or lot.

Utility Connections

The bill prohibits municipalities, special districts, and sewer and water authorities from:

1. considering a temporary shelter unit to be a new residential use for calculating utility connection fees or capacity charges, including for water or sewer service, and

2. requiring new or separate utility connections directly to a unit or imposing related connection fees or capacity charges.

§ 2 — BUILDING CODE AND FIRE SAFETY CODE AMENDMENTS

Subject to the procedural requirements described below, the bill requires the State Building Code and Fire Safety Code, when they are next amended and adopted, to include provisions that regulate temporary shelter units' erection and use, ensuring the applicable code provisions:

1. are consistent with safe occupancy and egress;
2. regulate the installation and use of heating and cooking equipment and equipment that utilizes flammable fuel; and
3. require units to comply with Appendix Q of the 2021 International Residential Code, which generally applies to tiny houses (see BACKGROUND).

But the bill's amendment requirements only apply if:

1. for the State Building Code, the state building inspector and the Codes and Standards Committee amend it jointly, with the administrative services commissioner's approval, and in conformity with existing law's procedures and requirements on amending the code; and
2. for the Fire Safety Code, the state fire marshal and the Codes and Standards Committee adopt the amendments in conformity with existing law's procedures and requirements on amending the code.

BACKGROUND

Appendix Q of the 2021 International Residential Code

The International Residential Code is a model building code developed by the International Code Council. Appendix Q is its model code for foundation-based and movable tiny houses, providing building standards for houses that are 400 square feet or smaller.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 18 Nay 3 (03/28/2025)