



General Assembly

**Substitute Bill No. 5505**

February Session, 2026



**AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF CERTAIN COMMERCIAL  
WAREHOUSES FOR THE HOUSING OR SHELTER OF PERSONS.**

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) As used in this section: (1)  
2 "Commercial warehouse" means any building or structure that (A)  
3 exceeds twenty-five thousand square feet, and (B) is primarily designed  
4 for, or has previously been used for, the importation, storage or  
5 distribution of goods in commerce, (2) "municipality" has the same  
6 meaning as provided in section 7-148 of the general statutes, and (3)  
7 "person" has the same meaning as provided in section 7-148hh of the  
8 general statutes.

9 (b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of any municipal charter,  
10 ordinance, regulation or resolution, any special act or any provision of  
11 the general statutes, no person shall use, operate or permit the use of a  
12 commercial warehouse to house or provide shelter to any individual for  
13 a period exceeding twenty-four hours without first obtaining a permit  
14 from the municipality in which such warehouse is located. A  
15 municipality shall designate an officer or board of the municipality to  
16 review any permit application and issue any such permit pursuant to  
17 the provisions of this section.

18 (2) The officer or board designated by the municipality shall hold a

19 public hearing on any permit application submitted pursuant to  
20 subdivision (1) of this subsection and approve or deny the application  
21 not later than one hundred eighty business days after the submission of  
22 such application. Any such permit applicant shall deliver notice of the  
23 permit application, by certified or registered mail, to each person  
24 appearing of record as an owner of property that abuts the property  
25 upon which the commercial warehouse proposed for use or operation  
26 as housing or shelter is located. Such notice shall be given not later than  
27 three business days after the submission of any permit application  
28 pursuant to this subdivision.

29 (c) No officer or board designated by the municipality pursuant to  
30 subsection (b) of this section shall issue a permit pursuant to this section  
31 unless the applicant demonstrates that each individual to be housed or  
32 sheltered in the commercial warehouse shall have continuous access to:

33 (1) Sanitary restroom and shower facilities;

34 (2) Potable drinking water;

35 (3) Sleeping accommodations, including a bed, cot or elevated  
36 sleeping surface with clean bedding materials, and adequate space to  
37 maintain health and safety;

38 (4) Sufficient heating and cooling systems to maintain a comfortable  
39 indoor temperature; and

40 (5) Storage sufficient to secure personal belongings.

41 (d) No commercial warehouse shall be used or operated as housing  
42 or shelter pursuant to this section unless such commercial warehouse:

43 (1) Complies with the requirements of the State Building Code, Fire  
44 Prevention Code, Fire Safety Code and Public Health Code applicable  
45 to public lodging accommodations; and

46 (2) Provides not less than two hundred square feet of space inside  
47 such warehouse for each individual housed or sheltered in such

48 warehouse.

49 (e) Following the issuance of a permit pursuant to this section, the  
50 municipality may require that the permit holder provide written  
51 evidence of compliance with this section as long as the commercial  
52 warehouse remains in use or operation as housing or shelter. Evidence  
53 of compliance may be obtained through an inspection of such  
54 warehouse by the municipality, including by the zoning enforcement  
55 officer, any public health official or any code official employed by the  
56 municipality.

57 (f) The officer or board designated by the municipality pursuant to  
58 subsection (b) of this section may revoke or suspend a permit issued  
59 pursuant to this section if the permit holder violates any provision of  
60 this section.

61 (g) A municipality may, by vote of its legislative body or, in a  
62 municipality where the legislative body is a town meeting, by vote of  
63 the board of selectmen, prohibit the issuance of permits for the use or  
64 operation of a commercial warehouse as housing or shelter.

65 (h) Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the use or  
66 operation of a commercial warehouse as housing or shelter (1) in  
67 connection with a declaration of an emergency or a major disaster by  
68 the Governor pursuant to title 28 of the general statutes, (2) for use as a  
69 temporary warming or cooling shelter, (3) if such warehouse has been  
70 converted into a residential property pursuant to section 8-2t of the  
71 general statutes, or (4) if such commercial warehouse was in use as  
72 housing or shelter on or before the effective date of this section.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: |                     |             |
| Section 1   | <i>from passage</i> | New section |

**Statement of Legislative Commissioners:**  
In Subsec. (g), "the issuance of" was added after "prohibit", for clarity.

**PD**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*