



CDSS

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

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EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

February 13, 2015

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-05-15

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS

SUBJECT: CALIFORNIA WORK OPPORTUNITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO
KIDS (CalWORKs) HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM (HSP)
TRAINING MATERIALS

REFERENCE: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER (JULY 18, 2014)

The purpose of this All County Information Notice (ACIN) is to provide updates to county welfare departments (CWDs) regarding the CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP). Per Senate Bill (SB) 855 (Chapter 29, Statutes of 2014), the California Legislature and the Governor, recognizing the critical importance of stable housing, appropriated \$20 million to address homelessness and housing instability in the CalWORKs program as part of the 2014-15 State Budget. As a condition of funding, the twenty CWDs receiving HSP funds are required to attend quarterly CDSS-hosted HSP seminars through fiscal year 2014-15. Two HSP seminars have taken place to date.

On September 24, 2014, CDSS held its first HSP workshop, which was a collaboration between state agencies, counties, nonprofits, and the private sector. During the workshop, exciting new resources and information were shared between counties and program partners.

Regional experts from Abode Services and Alameda County Housing & Community Development (HUD) shared background information about Rapid Rehousing models. These evidence-based models are used nationwide to help remove homeless families from the streets. Many of these evidence-based models have been adopted by the United States Department of Housing, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, and the National Alliance to End Homelessness. Models include a focus on first housing people, which enables participants to then work with counties on removing barriers through case management and progressive engagement in a safe and

supportive environment, resulting in a higher degree of success. HSP counties have based their housing support programs on these national models.

Leaders in the nonprofit sector along with Los Angeles County staff, who have extensive experience in administering housing support programs, shared information on how to recruit, engage, and retain registries of local landlords to ensure a steady housing supply for homeless families. Best practices on how to design and execute effective landlord partnerships were circulated. Some of these best practices include using housing navigators to assist participants in finding housing that is conducive to success, educating landlords on why and how supporting CalWORKs participants is a benefit to all parties involved, and providing mediation should communication issues between participants and landlords arise.

Experts from Volunteers of America, Ventura County Human Services Agency, and Madera County staff provided assessment tools, including resources on how to identify homeless clients and quickly link them to services. Counties were encouraged to link their HSP programs to localized continuum of care networks as a way to eliminate administrative costs in counties and between entities, avoid duplicative efforts, and increase information flow in a way that supports participants. For many counties, collaboration with the local Housing Authority has accelerated the rate at which HSP implementation is occurring.

Lastly, private sector experts, Fresno County, and Santa Cruz County staff shared data collection factors, models, and techniques to support and track the success of projects funded through HSP. County data systems varied. While some have partnered with their local Housing Authority to use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), an information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness, others are using county data collection techniques, or designing new data collection methods. CDSS's goal is to ensure that regardless of which data collection methods are used, the same final data is being captured throughout all HSP counties.

A summary of presenters from the first HSP seminar is provided on the attachment to this letter.

During the second HSP seminar on December 2, 2014, select counties reported back on their progress. Updates included information summarizing county HSP populations and program designs, including how rental subsidies work; where programs are in terms of planning and implementation stages; if any support is needed from CDSS to help counties move closer toward complete implementation; and information on overcoming

ACIN I-05-15
Page Three

any challenges during the implementation phase. In upcoming HSP workshops, counties that have not yet reported out will have an opportunity to do so.

Materials from the September and December 2014 HSP seminars can be accessed online at:

<http://www.cdss.ca.gov/calworks/PG3658.htm>.

CDSS looks forward to providing assistance and ensuring the success of the Housing Support Program. If you have any questions regarding the CalWORKs Housing Support Program, please contact the CalWORKs Eligibility Bureau at (916) 654-1322.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

Karen Dickerson, Branch Chief
CalWORKs Employment & Eligibility Branch Research
Welfare to Work Division

Attachment

Attachment

The first seminar was held September 24, 2014. Below is a summary of topics and presenters.

CDSS Welcome

Presenters: Todd Bland, CDSS Deputy Director Welfare to Work Division

Rapid Rehousing Overview

Presenters:

Riley Wilkerson, Manager, Alameda County Housing and Community Development
Vivian Wan, Associate Director, Abode Services

Landlord Recruitment and Engagement, Overview and Best Practices

Presenters: Vivian Wan, Associate Director, Abode Services (Fremont, CA)
Jonni Miller, Family Systems Integration Manager, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)
Deon Arline, Human Services Administrator I, Los Angeles Public Social Services

Screening Tools, Overview and Best Practices

Presenters: Amani Sawires Rapaski, Chief Operating Officer/Vice President, Volunteers of America
Chris Russell, Supervising Social Worker, County of Ventura, Human Services Agency
Miguel Gonzales, Madera County Department of Social Services

Data Collection, Overview and Best Practices

Presenters: Katharine Gale, Principal, Katharine Gale Consulting
Madeline Noya, Planning & Evaluation Division Directors, County of Santa Cruz, Human Service Department
Laura Moreno, Senior Staff Analyst, Fresno Department of Social Services
Melissa Mikel, Quality Assurances Analyst– HMIS, Fresno Housing Authority
Cassie Morgan, Quality Assurance Analyst – HMIS, Fresno Housing Authority

Additional Healthy Housing Resources

Provided by: Pete Cervinka, CDSS Program Deputy Director for Benefits & Services