CDSS

WILL LIGHTBOURNE
DIRECTOR

EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

June 17, 2016

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL
[ ] State Law Change
[ ] Federal Law or Regulation Change
[ ] Court Order
[ ] Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
[X] Initiated by CDSS

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

FROM: TODD R. BLAND
             Deputy Director
             Welfare-to-Work Division

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

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is seeking proposals from County Welfare Departments (CWDs) interested in implementing a new California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Housing Support Program (HSP) or continuing an existing CalWORKs HSP in your county through FY 2016-17.

The objective of the CalWORKs HSP is to foster housing stability for homeless families in the CalWORKs program. The HSP funding shall be used to support projects that follow nationally recognized housing models, including those reflected in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) at the county level. In an effort to promote collaboration amongst human services providers, CDSS requires CWDs applying for HSP funding to consult with their local Continuum of Care (CoC). CWDs are strongly encouraged to join the continuum as a member and to partner with other local community-based organizations that are experienced in providing housing services. Data collection, progress monitoring and outcome recording are essential elements of the CalWORKs HSP. Training and technical assistance will continue to be offered to help counties strengthen and enhance their delivery of housing supports at the local level.

As a reminder, families must be homeless as defined by the CDSS (refer to attachment one, Section C) to be eligible for HSP. Counties may continue to provide housing supports after CalWORKs discontinuance, if the discontinuance is due to no longer meeting the income eligibility requirements, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code section 11330.5(h). Additional rapid rehousing program resources and best practice recommendations related to program operation costs and administrative expenses are provided within attachment four.

Process for New HSP Funding Requests

Counties requesting new funding should refer to the attached application guidelines (attachment one, D) and the *Program Scope Certification and Request for New Funding* document (attachment three). The proposal and program scope certification are due no later than July 29, 2016. Allocation letters will be issued by the CDSS in October.

Process for HSP Funded Counties to Request Continued Funding

Counties requesting continued funding should refer to the attached application guidelines (attachment one, E) and the *Updated Program Scope Certification and Request for Continued Funding* document (attachment two). The updated program scope is due no later than July 15, 2016.

Initial allocation letters will be issued by the CDSS to currently funded counties by the end of July. If the CWD is requesting *additional* funding (greater than the CWD's allocation amount for 2015-16) a second allocation letter will be issued by the CDSS in October, as applicable.

Please note the following timelines:

- Updated program scope for current HSP CWDs due: July 15, 2016
- First allocation letter for current HSP CWDs: End of July

- Program scope and proposal for new HSP CWDs due: July 29, 2016
- Allocation letters for new HSP CWDs or funding increase: October

Funding requests for FY 2016-17 shall be sent electronically to hsp@dss.ca.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. on the due date indicated above. Late applications will not be accepted. HSP funding is an augmentation to the county allocation. This is not a grant.

If you have any questions regarding the CalWORKs Housing Support Program or the application process, please contact the CalWORKs Eligibility Bureau at (916) 654-1322 or at hsp@dss.ca.gov.

Attachments

One: Fiscal Year 2016-17 Application Guidelines
Two: Program Scope Certification and Request for Continued Funding
Three: Program Scope Certification and Request for New Funding Four:
General Rapid Rehousing Program Information

ATTACHMENT ONE

2016-17 APPLICATION GUIDELINES:
REQUESTS FOR NEW AND CONTINUED FUNDING FOR THE
CALWORKS HOUSING SUPPORT PROGRAM

A.   PURPOSE

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is seeking requests from County Welfare Departments (CWDs) to implement or continue a local CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP). The program will continue to be funded with monies appropriated in the California state budget. The goal of the program is to address the housing crisis of CalWORKs families experiencing homelessness through the use of evidenced based models, including but not limited to, those established as part of HUD's Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program (SSVF).

B.   CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The nature of this application is a competitive process. It is possible that CWDs may not receive funding or may not receive the full amount of their request. In evaluating CWD requests, the CDSS will give priority to those CWDs that:

1. Demonstrate local need, including the extent to which families in their CalWORKs program experience homelessness.

2. Demonstrate the capacity to utilize a progressive engagement model of rapid rehousing or other evidence based approach that is cost effective and impactful to the identified need.

3. Maximize the use of HSP funds for direct services and minimize the use of HSP funds on administrative costs.

4. Demonstrate the ability to maintain records, collect data and track both qualitative and quantitative outcomes.

5. Are seeking to begin a new CalWORKs HSP. New funding will be prioritized for CWDs wishing to begin a new program in an effort to promote program implementation throughout the state.

C.   ELIGIBLE POPULATION

Consistent with prior years, the CalWORKs HSP funding may be used to assist families who are homeless, pursuant to the following definition:

1. Lacking a fixed or regular nighttime residence; and either
    a. Having a primary nighttime residence that is a supervised publically or privately operated shelter designed the provide temporary living accommodations; or
    b. Residing in a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; or
2. In receipt of a judgment for eviction, as ordered by the court.

ATTACHMENT ONE

D. REQUIRED ELEMENTS FOR NEW FUNDING REQUESTS

To be considered for HSP funding to **begin a new HSP**, please respond to the following items:

1. Describe the problem of homelessness in your CalWORKs program. Include applicable data as appropriate (e.g. data from the most recent Point in Time (PIT) count, specifying the number of homeless families in your community and/or additional information if the PIT count is not reflective of the population of homeless families in your community).

2. Describe how you plan to prioritize families requesting assistance. Include the following:
    *   Target population and description of your selection criteria;
    *   How participants will be identified, referred and approved for services;
    *   How you plan to identify family needs and barriers to obtaining or retaining housing; and
    *   The assessment tool you plan to use and if this tool is also the tool utilized by your Continuum of Care

3. Describe your county's strategy for providing the components listed below. Include whether the functions will be contracted out or completed in-house. For contracted functions, include the entity with whom the CWD will contract and include documentation of the entity's interest.

    *   *Housing Identification* - Include how you propose managing landlord recruitment and engagement and with whom you will work to identify potential housing units to ensure participants are accessing housing that meets habitability and safety standards.

    *   *Case Management and Services* - Include what services will be delivered, how you plan to deliver the services and how you will determine the appropriate length and depth of services needed for each family.

    *   *Rent and Move-In Assistance (Financial)* - Include the types of financial assistance you will include in your program, including but not limited to move-in costs, rental subsidies or other types of assistance. Describe the criteria you will employ to evaluate continued participation in, or renewal of, financial assistance.

4. Describe your capacity to collect data, track progress and outcomes related to housing stability, including your ability to complete and submit the HSP 14 report timely and accurately. Include information on your access to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in your community.

5. Describe strategies you will use to maximize direct services and minimize administrative expenses.

6. Include a detailed anticipated timetable for implementing the program. Include the anticipated Board approval date and what contracts shall be executed, if applicable, prior to program implementation.

7. Indicate the name of the individual you consulted within your local Continuum of Care (CoC) and describe your involvement with the CoC.

ATTACHMENT ONE

E.   REQUIRED ELEMENTS FOR CONTINUED FUNDING REQUESTS

To be considered for continued HSP funding to **continue an existing HSP**, please respond to the following items (new program shall refer to section D, above):

1. Provide a brief update on how you provide the following components and specify the name of the contractor that completes these functions, if applicable. Include a description of any changes you plan to make in these areas over the 2016-17 fiscal year.

    - *Housing Identification* - Include how you manage landlord recruitment and engagement and with whom you work to identify potential housing units to ensure participants are accessing housing that meets habitability and safety standards.

    - *Case Management and Services* - Include what services you provide, how you deliver the services and how you determine the appropriate length and depth of services needed for each family.

    - *Rent and Move-In Assistance (Financial)* - Include the types of financial assistance you include in your program, including move-in costs, rental subsidies or other types of financial assistance. Describe the criteria you employ to evaluate continued participation in, or renewal of, financial assistance.

2. Describe your current capacity to access to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) in your community.

3. Describe strategies you will use during the 2016-17 fiscal year to continue to maximize direct services and minimize administrative expenses.

4. Indicate the name of the individual you consulted within your local Continuum of Care (CoC) and describe your involvement with the CoC.

ATTACHMENT TWO

CalWORKs Housing Support Program
Program Scope Certification and Request for Continued Funding (2016-17)

This form is to be completed by CWDs in receipt of CalWORKs HSP funding for 2015-16 and who are requesting HSP funding to continue for 2016-17.

County Name: _____

Indicate the primary CWD contact regarding the HSP request for continued funding.

Contact Name and Title: _

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

I. PROGRAM SCOPE CERTIFICATION

Attach CWD's HSP update (in five pages or less) pursuant to the criteria outlined within the attached Application Guidelines, Section E: Required Elements for Continued Funding Requests.

II. BUDGET DETAIL

Attach a detailed program budget for FY 2016-17 and complete the following:

a. Total amount of funding the county is requesting:

_____

b. Number of families the CWD will **newly** house in permanent housing during FY 2016-17:

_____

c. Number of families the CWD will **continue to support** in permanent housing during FY 2016-17:

_____

III. DIRECTOR'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that the CWD will administer the CalWORKs Housing Support Program pursuant to the conditions set forth by the California Department of Social Services. I certify that the information completed above and attached is true and correct.

Director's Name: _____

Signature: _____   Date: _____

ATTACHMENT THREE

CalWORKs Housing Support Program
Program Scope Certification and Request for New Funding (2016-17)

This form is to be completed by CWDs not currently operating a HSP, but who are requesting HSP funding for 2016-17.

County Name: _____

Indicate the primary CWD contact regarding the HSP request for new funding.

Contact Name and Title: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

I. PROPOSAL

Attach your CWD's HSP proposal for FY 2016-17. Proposals must meet the criteria outlined within the attached Application Guidelines, Section D: Required Elements for New Funding Requests.

II. BUDGET DETAIL

Attach a detailed program budget for FY 2016-17 and complete the following:

a. Total amount of funding the county is requesting:

                                                                  _____

b. Number of families the CWD will house in permanent housing during FY 2016-17:

                                                                  _____

III. DIRECTOR'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that the County will administer the CalWORKs Housing Support Program pursuant to the conditions set forth by the California Department of Social Services. I certify that the information completed above and attached is true and correct.

Director's Name: _____

Signature: _____   Date: _____

ATTACHMENT FOUR

GENERAL RAPID REHOUSING PROGRAM INFORMATION

Senate Bill 855 (Chapter 29, Statutes of 2014) established the CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP). It states, in part, that "it is the intent of the Legislature that housing supports provided pursuant to this article utilize evidence-based models, including those established in the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development's Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program" (HPRP). More information and additional housing resources can be located online:

- HUD's Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program:
  http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/recovery/programs/homelessness

- National Alliance to End Homelessness:
  http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/rapidrehousing1

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF): http://www.va.gov/homeless/ssvf/index.asp, and http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/docs/SSVF/SSVF_Practice_Standards_April_2013.pdf.

- CalWORKs Housing Support Program Resources:
  http://www.cdss.ca.gov/calworks/PG3658.htm

Housing Support Program Overview

Rapid Rehousing and targeted homelessness prevention programs have been implemented nationwide as cost effective strategies to help families exit or avoid homelessness and retain permanent housing. The program's goal is to assist families in quickly obtaining permanent housing and provide wrap-around supports to families to foster housing retention.

The core components of a successful Rapid Rehousing Program include comprehensive and coordinated entry with community partners along a continuum of care, housing identification, rent and moving assistance, focused case management, and services based on individual participant needs. Services could include, but are not limited to, landlord outreach and engagement, housing search and placement, housing barrier assessment, legal services, and credit repair.

The National Alliance to End Homeless, together with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Department of Veterans Affairs, describe the core components of Rapid Rehousing as:

Housing Identification

- Landlord recruitment and engagement.
- Addressing potential barriers to landlord participation.
- Assisting households to find and secure appropriate rental housing.

<u>Rent and Moving Assistance</u>

- Provision of financial assistance to cover move-in costs, deposits, and the rental and/or utility assistance necessary to allow individuals and families to move immediately into permanent housing. These costs can also include, as appropriate, lot rent for an RV or manufactured home; application fees; credit check fees; legal fees and fines.

<u>Case Management and Services</u>

- Helping families address issues that may impede access to housing.
- Helping families negotiate manageable and appropriate lease agreements with landlords.
- Making appropriate and time-limited services and supports available to families to allow them to quickly stabilize in permanent housing.
- Ensuring that services provided are client-directed, respectful of individuals' right to self-determination, and voluntary.

Rapid Rehousing and targeted prevention programs are structured to flexibly provide only the financial assistance and service support necessary to secure housing for those without it or to retain housing for those at imminent risk of losing it ("progressive engagement"). Regular reassessments of household stability are a best practice to ensure households are neither over-nor under-assisted.

Program operations include both the services and financial assistance provided to participating families and the housing location and support services. In addition to the activities described above, program operations also include costs specifically attributed to outreach workers and housing locators, case managers, and other direct service personnel, as well as the cost of administering rental assistance and conducting inspections. It includes activities for the arrangement, coordination, monitoring, and delivery of services related to meeting the housing needs of families and helping them to obtain housing stability. Best practices allow for roughly 80 percent of funding to be allocated to program operations, with approximately 70 percent of the total funding allocated to rent and moving assistance and ten percent of the total funding allocated to case management and services.

Administrative costs, as well as data collection and reporting comprise the two remaining cost categories. Administrative costs are defined as those costs that include program managers, directors, IT, and accounting; benefits; facilities costs; office supplies; and equipment (this list is not exhaustive). Best practices allow for approximately 15 percent of funding to this category. Data collection and tracking includes staff and time dedicated to these activities, as well as necessary supplies and equipment; best practices allocate roughly five percent of funding for this purpose.