



State of California

## BUSINESS, CONSUMER SERVICES AND HOUSING AGENCY

Gavin Newsom, Governor  
Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Secretary

September 24, 2020

Dear Housing Authority Partners:

We know the safest and healthiest place for people to be is in their own homes, especially during a pandemic. Addressing homelessness is a priority for the State of California. As you may know, the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recently announced in [Notice PIH 2020-22 \(Notice\)](#) that new Mainstream Vouchers are available to housing authorities. The Notice encourages housing authorities to work with community partners to use these vouchers to support efforts to urgently house homeless populations to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**Given California's homeless and housing affordability crises, the State urges housing authorities that administer the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program to apply for these new Mainstream Vouchers as soon as possible and to partner with their local [Continuum of Care \(CoC\)](#) for referrals and services to further our collective goal to address the permanent housing needs of people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic.** The State is available to help you connect to your local CoC as needed.

The new Mainstream Vouchers are available on a non-competitive, rolling basis to any housing authority that administers the HCV program even if they do not currently have Mainstream Vouchers. Housing authorities are eligible for 40, 75 or 100 vouchers depending on the size of their HCV program. To apply for the Mainstream Vouchers, housing authorities simply need to submit the two page form [HUD-52515](#) to [MainstreamFunding@hud.gov](mailto:MainstreamFunding@hud.gov). **Requests to HUD for the vouchers will be processed on a rolling basis for as long as funding remains available. The State encourages housing authorities to let HUD know of their interest as soon as possible given that the funding pool is limited.** More details on the Mainstream Voucher program and how to apply are in the Notice.

Housing authorities can target Mainstream Vouchers to people experiencing homelessness by adopting a [homeless preference](#) and partnering with the local CoC for referrals. Local CoCs currently have an unprecedented amount of state and federal funding available that can be paired with the Mainstream Vouchers to assist with helping

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households locate housing with the vouchers and provide follow-up services as needed. CoCs receive state [Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention \(HHAP\) funds and Homeless Emergency Aid Program \(HEAP\)](#) funds along with access to other state funding and federal [CoC](#) and [Emergency Solutions \(ESG\)](#) funds for these purposes. The State encourages housing authorities to reach out to your local CoC to partner on referrals and services for the Mainstream Vouchers.

Please reach out to the State's Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council at [HCFC@bcsh.ca.gov](mailto:HCFC@bcsh.ca.gov) if we can assist you in developing partnerships with your local CoC to use Mainstream Vouchers to house people experiencing homelessness. Thank you for your partnership in addressing the urgent housing needs of our most vulnerable neighbors during the pandemic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ali Sutton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ali" and the last name "Sutton" clearly legible.

Ali Sutton, Deputy Secretary for Homelessness  
California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency

cc: Lourdes Castro Ramírez, Secretary, California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency  
Gustavo Velasquez, Director, California Department of Housing & Community Development  
Tia Boatman Patterson, Executive Director, California Housing Finance Agency