



**TO:** Project Roomkey and Non-Congregate Shelter operators, Local Homelessness Response Systems (Continuums of Care) and Homelessness Service Providers, Local Emergency Response Systems, Local Public Health Departments, and local jurisdictions receiving HHAP, HEAP, ESG, CDBG, CalWORKs HSP, and HDAP funding

**FROM:** California Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC), California Department of Social Services (CDSS), and California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

**DATE:** November 19, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Rehousing out of Project Roomkey and other non-congregate shelters

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HCFC, CDSS, and HCD extend our gratitude to local homelessness and emergency response systems for the operation of Project Roomkey (PRK) and other non-congregate shelter (NCS) sites. These sites have provided safety to our neighbors experiencing homelessness and who are most vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19. The continued [public health emergency calls for](#) keeping PRK and other NCS sites open in many communities while partnering with the families and individuals staying there to move to the safety and dignity of permanent housing as quickly as possible.

As the pandemic continues without a clear end point, there is an urgent need to assist households to rapidly move to housing at a larger scale and faster pace. It is critical to prevent families and individuals staying at PRK and other NCS sites from returning to unsheltered locations or crowded congregate settings.

COVID-19 has amplified the structural racism embedded in our systems, processes, and practices. As communities ramp up rehousing efforts out of PRK and NCS sites, it is essential to prioritize equity and embed it in the design, implementation and performance measures to ensure equitable housing outcomes.

The State seeks to support communities as they work to rapidly rehouse households from Project Roomkey and NCS sites. The State expects communities to look at all available funding sources, including re-purposing funds if needed, to support rehousing out of PRK and other NCS sites. The State is available to consult with communities on how they can re-purpose and align their State and Federal funds such as HHAP, HEAP, ESG, ESG-CV, and CDBG-CV for rehousing, as well as how best to utilize newly available [Project Roomkey and Rehousing funding](#) in alignment with these other resources. For funds coming from the State or passed through the State, the State can use allowable flexibility to assist communities to line up resources to support rehousing. HCFC is available to coordinate a State consultation for any interested jurisdictions. To request a consultation, please contact Amber Ostrander at [amber.ostrander@bcsh.ca.gov](mailto:amber.ostrander@bcsh.ca.gov).

Below is a list of funds that communities should consider for re-purposing along with other funds and housing resources that can be used for rehousing. Also below are tools to assist in ramping up rehousing efforts.

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## Funding and Housing Resources for Project Roomkey and Non-Congregate Shelter Rehousing Efforts

Communities must consider all available funding and housing resources to continue operations at Project Roomkey sites while working to quickly transition households to permanent housing. The [Guide to Strategic Uses of Key State and Federal Funds to Reduce Homelessness During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) provides more detailed information about the available funding sources. The state strongly encourages the use of these funds as described below.

- [Homeless Emergency Aid Program \(HEAP\)](#): Use for move-in and rental assistance and 25% FEMA match for NCS operations. Deadline to spend funds is 6/30/21. Communities that have HEAP funds remaining should seriously consider using them for Project Roomkey rehousing efforts and operations immediately.
- [Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program \(HHAP\)](#): Use for move-in and rental assistance, housing navigation, services coordination and 25% FEMA match for NCS operations. Communities should seriously consider repurposing HHAP Round 1 funds for rehousing out of Project Roomkey and use the soon-to-come HHAP Round 2 funds for the purposes they originally intended with HHAP Round 1. Communities that can repurpose funds should contact the State to expedite these arrangements.
- [COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness Funding](#): Use for NCS operations if there are funds remaining.
- [Emergency Solutions Grant Funding in CARES Act \(ESG-CV\)](#): Use for 12 months of rental assistance (longer in some cases, depending on U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rules), landlord incentives, housing case management and NCS operations if other FEMA-reimbursable or match funding is unavailable (ESG-CV cannot be used for 25% local cost share for FEMA funds). Communities that would like to move State ESG-CV funds from one eligible ESG-CV cost to another to support rehousing out of Project Roomkey should contact the State (example: moving funds from Prevention to Rapid Rehousing).
- [Emergency Solutions Grant \(ESG\) regular funding](#): Use for up to 24 months of rental assistance, housing case management, and NCS operations if other funding that may be used as 25% FEMA match is unavailable.
- [Community Development Block Grant in CARES Act \(CDBG-CV\)](#): Use for short-term emergency financial assistance for rent, utilities, acquisition or operating costs for NCS shelter. Can be used to pay the local 25% cost share for FEMA reimbursable costs, provided that the activities funded are otherwise eligible for CDBG-CV assistance and comply with CDBG-CV requirements.
- [Coronavirus Relief Funds \(CRF\)](#): Use for NCS operations through 12/30/20.
- [Project Roomkey and Rehousing Funding](#): Use for both PRK operations and rehousing assistance.
- [CalWORKs Housing Support Program \(HSP\)](#): For families who are eligible for CalWORKs and sheltering at PRK sites, use for short- to medium-term rental assistance, security deposits, utility payments, moving costs, housing navigation, landlord recruitment, case management.
- [Housing & Disability Advocacy Program \(HDAP\)](#): Use HDAP to provide housing assistance and benefit enrollment for individuals sheltering at PRK sites who are likely eligible for disability benefits programs. HDAP can be used for NCS and rental support while working to connect to more permanent housing.

- [Medi-Cal Whole Person Care \(WPC\)](#): Provide housing navigation and case management services for individuals sheltering in PRK sites who are enrolled in Medi-Cal. Some WPC funding may also be used for NCS and permanent housing placements.
- [Continuum of Care Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing](#): Ensure that households staying in PRK and other NCS sites have access to these resources via Coordinated Entry. Communities may want to consider adapting their coordinated entry prioritization policies to better focus on rehousing people with high COVID-19 risks.
- **Public Housing Authority** [Housing Choice Vouchers](#) and [Mainstream Vouchers](#): Local housing authorities and local homelessness response organizations should consider partnering to create a homeless preference for Housing Choice Vouchers and Mainstream vouchers. New, non-competitive [Mainstream Vouchers](#) are available via a simple application process to HUD. Deadline for housing authorities to apply is 12/31/20.
- **Housing for Veterans**: [Supportive Services for Veteran Families \(SSVF\)](#) and [HUD-VASH](#) vouchers. SSVF can provide rental assistance and housing case management. HUD-VASH vouchers are Housing Choice Vouchers paired with services specifically for Veterans experiencing homelessness and may also be well-suited for veterans sheltering at PRK sites.

## Tools to Support Rehousing from Project Roomkey and Non-Congregate Shelter Sites

### [Rehousing Surge Planning](#)

Reviews 6 steps to creating and implementing a housing surge in a COVID-19 environment.

### [Rehousing out of Non-Congregate Shelter: Maximizing Placements](#)

Assists communities facilitate rapid exits from non-congregate shelter (NCS) directly into housing.

### [Rapid Rehousing Ramp-Up](#)

Provides guidance on preparing for a ramp-up of this type of housing with a focus on how to use it for different sub-populations.

### [High Acuity: Transition from Short-term to Long-term Subsidy](#)

With many communities targeting Rapid Rehousing to a wide range of households, this tool provides tips for considering transitions from rapid rehousing to a longer-term subsidy.

### [Rehousing Activation and Racial Equity](#)

Provides a framework to examine the impact of rehousing decisions, policies, programs, and practices on racial equity.

### [Housing Problem Solving in Practice](#)

Discusses housing problem-solving (HPS) strategies that can help communities target staff time and financial resources in ways that will decrease the number of people who experience homelessness.

### [PRK Rehousing 100 Day Challenge Learnings](#)

Provides promising practices and learning from the four communities who participated in the Governor's 100 Day Challenge first cohort, which focused solely on rehousing out of PRK.