



# CALIFORNIA HOMELESS COORDINATING AND FINANCING COUNCIL

Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency  
Gavin Newsom, Governor | Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, Secretary

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**Meeting Summary**  
**March 25, 2020**  
**1:00PM – 4:00PM**  
**Teleconference**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Lourdes M. Castro Ramirez, Council Chair and Secretary of Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency calls the meeting to order at 1:05PM.

*Council Members Present:*

- Lourdes M. Castro Ramirez, Council Chair and Secretary of the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency;
- Russell Atterberry, Vice Chair and Undersecretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs;
- Amy Anderson, Chief Housing Officer, Office of Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti;
- Jacey Cooper, Chief Deputy Director of Health Care Programs in the Department of Health Care Services;
- Donald Cavier, Chief Deputy Director of the California Housing Finance Agency;
- Gina Buccieri-Harrington, Assistant Director of Grants Management, Victim Services Program in the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services;
- Jody Ketcheside, Deputy Regional Director of Turning Point of Central California
- Jennifer Loving, Executive Director of Destination: Home;
- Emilio Ramirez, Director of Housing, City of Oxnard
- Gail Gilman, Chief Strategy Officer, All Home California
- Corrin Buchanan, Chief of the Housing, Homelessness and Civil Rights Branch in the Department of Social Services
- Alexis Barries; Family Partner with Placement Service and Crisis Stabilization Response Team, Santa Clara; and
- Stephanie Welch, Executive Officer for the Council on Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health in the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

*Absent:*

- Gary McCoy, Policy and Community Affairs Manager in the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department;
- Joseph Uchishiba, Police Officer for the City of Fairfield

### **Opening Remarks**

Secretary Lourdes M. Castro Ramirez thanked the Council and state agencies for their efforts in providing support to local cities, counties, communities, and hospitals. COVID-19 is the Council's number one priority right now. The HCFC team is working with local governments to ensure there is proper planning and responsive efforts to protect the health and safety of all Californians, which include the most vulnerable.

On March 18, Governor Gavin Newsom announced SB 89, which allocates \$150 million for emergency homelessness funding, [\\$100 million](#) of which is administered by HCFC. Funds that have been allocated have been awarded to local jurisdictions. HCFC will also be providing guidance and will be facilitating coordination and communications between local health departments and emergency centers. We know more than ever that resources are needed for our communities.

### **II. Adoption of the October 8, 2019 Minutes Council meeting minutes**

Council approved the [previous minutes](#) from the October 8, 2019 meeting.

### **III. HCFC Updates**

[HHAP](#) is currently on track and awards will be made to local jurisdictions. HCFC is here in partnership and we understanding original submissions were done before the crisis, however local jurisdictions may want to think about how they are spending their funding. There will be a technical assistance grant and contract for the funding, which will be used to address COVID-19 spending.

HCFC received all annual reports for [HEAP](#) in January. There is good information and an evaluation has been done by CSUS. A recurring theme occurred in HEAP reports, which included: 1) trying something new where funding was not available before; 2) expanding a project and scaling up; or 3) rethinking about how homeless systems locally can be implemented. In addition, HEAP is also seeing good data come in for the youth set aside, such as how youth can access the homeless system to get the services they needed. HCFC is planning to send out a survey to get additional information on expenditures and how funding is going out closer to June 30, 2021 final date.

The Governor announced in the state of the state that we will be moving forward with the Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS). If successful, California will be the third

state in the nation to implement a data system. HCFC has begun its efforts with a procurement process.

There is a 100-day challenge. The first cohort was supposed to start before the crisis, but that did not happen. We are reconvening to figure out what makes the most sense given the current situation with COVID-19. Rapid Results is the TA provider that is on board with us and is helping us rethink how to best support communities.

HCFC is working in coordination with CDSS on the COVID-19 efforts. \$100 million was determined with the HHAP funding methodology and is intended to be flexible. HCFC is encouraging jurisdictions to work with Continuum of Cares (CoC) to find where funding might already be available since the emergency funding should be funding other gaps.

In addition, HCFC has put out two rounds of guidelines as it relates to COVID around the public health concerns of the homeless population, which include shelters, unsheltered and encampments, social distancing, and how to best support this community.

Lastly, the \$150 million was made available with \$50 million through CDSS. This money will be used to ensure we have isolation settings for the homeless population, which includes efforts in securing hotels, motels, and trailers. The funds will be used in some cases to secure contracts directly with hotels and motels.

Councilmember Ketcheside asked if which people are prioritized for the hotel and motel interventions.

- The priorities for isolation include 1) people who are not symptomatic, but at high risk for complications due to age or health status; or 2) individuals who are symptomatic or confirmed positive, but do not require hospitalization. Communities are prioritizing through a central triage system.

Councilmember Anderson inquired about whether there is a direction for hotels and motels or if it is entirely left up to Counties to decide how they plan to prioritize individuals experiencing homelessness.

- CDSS is providing support in a variety of ways. They are providing technical assistance and coordination, working with counties and the emergency response system, as well as staff. Funding will either be directly to county or to a hotel if the process is something that cannot be done quickly and working alongside DGS through the negotiation process. Communities should look at local resources, and contact the State for the pieces that are missing. This will allow for FEMA to approve reimbursements.

Councilmember Gilman stated that California is a week and half into this crisis. She commends the work that the Governor's office is doing during the crisis. She inquired about the long-term plan when the crisis subsides and whether there is an exit plan for when the crisis is over.

- There are conversations underway under CalOES to create a unified coordination group, establishing task forces, which include housing and social

services. BCSH is engaged with HUD technical assistance and thinking through recovery and resiliency plans. Once the economic stimulus package is approved, the state will receive additional dollars.

Councilmember Atterberry inquired about hotel/motel and whether it includes supportive services for veteran families in the program.

- CDSS has requested anyone with this same inquiry to connect with their department.

Councilmember Anderson inquired whether HCFC is the right place to create a clearinghouse around best practices, policies, procedures, and tools for what counties are using to protect people experiencing homelessness. LA county is working really hard to see what others are doing. ‘

- HCFC has a quick list of guidance on hotels/motels and more broadly on best practices. We are also confirming with communities if they are comfortable in sharing information and looking to get that information up on our site to make sure people are receiving the information.

*Public Comment:*

- Dina Fuentes, San Bernardino: Is the \$50 million an addition to what has already been allocated to the local jurisdictions?
  - The process involves working with a local emergency response system. The \$50 million is to assist in filling the gaps of where the system does not directly respond to.
- Brittney, Kings County: Is it too late to have HHAP redirected from county to CoC?
  - Per statute, the deadline passed for HHAP. For COVID funding since award letters are out, HCFC notified anyone who was interested in redirecting. At this point, everyone should be working this out locally.
- Albert, Colusa County: The COVID funding form requests a budget breakdown, proposed activities, and an approved budget. What exactly should be going on the form?
  - For these questions, you can follow up with the HCFC inbox at [HCFC@bcsh.ca.gov](mailto:HCFC@bcsh.ca.gov).
- Albert also inquired about the liberty of funding. For example, are they able to provide senior meals and our public health officials able to buy a fridge for senior meals?
  - The funding is targeted toward those who are homeless, if jurisdictions are not sure, it is encouraged that they reach out to HCFC individually to help think through some of these expenditures.

- Crystal Patterson, Accenture: Is there any additional information you can provide on the HDIS procurement timeline?
  - HCFC is expecting to have a bidder's conference soon. If you are interested, please email us and we can make sure we send you the information.
  
- Sharon Rapport, Corporate for Supportive Housing: Thank you for having this meeting and everything that you do. Two questions,
  - 1) Is there more information on the \$50 million on the CDSS or CalOES website?
    - CDSS expects to have more guidance around the \$50 million posted soon.
  - 2) In January, the Governor had a \$750 million budget request around homelessness, has everything changed since that proposal? The administration is committed to serving those who are homeless and resources will continue to be deployed.
    - We are waiting on more guidance on what it will look like moving forward. The Governor's Office has a strong commitment looking at long-term housing stability as a long-term state goal.
  
- Sharon Duncan, County of Fresno: Inquired about the terms and agreement for the \$100 million, it states that it doesn't cover the provisions of services until both parties have agreed. Due to quick acting, the County has added 3 shelters to the CoC for COVID-19, but are looking at drawing funds down ASAP. Because this goes to the board, this delays our ability to access the funds. And in the terms of the agreement, we did not see an expiration date on term of funding when it has to be used by. Will this align with HHAP?
  - HCFC is working on conversations about reimbursement and will get back to you to confirm it is feasible.
  - This funding is only tied to HHAP in that the funding methodology is the same.
  
- Laura, Kings County: IS there minimum needs that need to be available at hotels? Mental health services were mentioned, are there any other services that need to be available when in a hotel? Is there a place where we can find guidance? Is there any limitations as to what clients can be served?
  - CDSS has provided guidance with counties around minimum level of wraparound services. In most cases, counties are working directly with behavioral health and working with their own Department of Social Services to streamline in home supportive services for people who need help with daily activities, washing, etc.
  - For additional guidance, local jurisdictions can email [housing@dss.ca.gov](mailto:housing@dss.ca.gov).
  - The \$50 million is for people experiencing homelessness. Guidance says counties should prioritize individuals, not symptomatic, but at high-risk, or confirmed positive/symptomatic persons under investigation for COVID-19 who don't need hospitalization.

Secretary Lourdes reminded callers that there is an opportunity to have extended conversations at 4PM, so that they can receive additional guidance, information on homeless emergency funding, and other opportunities for discussion.

#### IV. Departmental Updates

The following Departments have provided an [update](#) of their relevant homeless programs:

- Department of Health Care Services
- Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
- Department of Housing and Community Development

No written updates provided:

- Department of Social Services
  - March 19, CDSS released homelessness guidelines as it relates to COVID-19. It outlines flexibility for funding under existing programs.
  - CDSS is continuously providing technical assistance to their grantees to be in compliance with Housing First
  - They will be making awards for new or continuing HDAP program grantees.
- Department of Veteran Affairs
  - There is an appropriations bill to increase funding for telehealth, construction and supportive services for Veterans. CA has 20% of the nation's homeless veteran population. Get plugged in with veteran services office for federal and state benefits.
  - The last program CalVet had was in conjunction with HCD and CalHFA for veteran housing homeless prevention. A NOFA for \$75 million was released January 24, applications were submitted, and 16 were received. We are currently going through the scoring process.

*There were no public comments*

#### V. Update and Feedback on State Resources

This [presentation](#) was put on the agenda before COVID took over.

CSUS conducted an evaluation on HEAP grants to better understand where local jurisdictions were spending their money. There were four main categories: services, capital improvements, rental assistance, and youth set-aside minimum. Urban communities spent greater share on services, while rural communities more on capital improvements.

In addition, the HEAP evaluation allowed for more insight on how local jurisdictions were strategizing. These included innovation, new programs that did not exist, investing in efforts to work collaboratively, safe parking, and efforts in working alongside law enforcement and hospitals.

A survey was also conducted to get a better understanding of local jurisdictions challenges when applying for HEAP. Some challenges included a shelter declaration process and having new stakeholders engaged. Others included aggressive timelines low level of infrastructure, lack of technical assistance, and thinking through avenues and projects to provide emergency funding and resources quickly.

CSUS provided tow recommendations in the event additional funding is available. These include 1) statewide evaluation for HEAP, but also to support evaluations at a local level to identify best practices; and 2) support workshops for small communities for innovative uses of funds.

Councilmembers Ketcheside inquired about whether there were challenges with youth involvement.

- CSUS did not focus on youth. There was a prior report by the John Burton Foundation that focused on youth.

Councilmember Welch inquired if the Council received a number of summary reports. If so, when can the Council expect to review findings from the summary report. There is an interest to see if there is consistency between reporting and direction toward criminal justice diversion.

- CSUS does not include annual reports. The report was done from initial surveys and applications. HCFC received annual reports about how funding was spent, how quickly it was spent, and what the funding is being spent on. HCFC hopes to have more information in the next report.

Mark Tollefson from the Governors Office wanted to inform the public and Council that the Governor signed an executive order in January, which included DGS and CalTrans looking at excess state property to be used for emergency shelter. There are over 200 properties on the list.

Additionally, there was a release of 100 trailers that went out to 7 different communities that are right now on excess property that DGS had.

Lastly, a strike team, multi-agency state team was put in place. There were communities that needed additional support.

Councilmember Buchanan stated that in the Governor's January Budget, there was an additional \$150 million in coordination with HCFC. The purpose of the funding is to reduce homelessness by moving people into permanent housing, provide shelter, and permanent supportive housing.

Councilmember Gilman wanted to inquire about whether the Council could have a shorter meeting or a summary about the state's response to COVID-19 for what providers are doing across the state before the next Council meeting. She also encouraged us to have a single focus agenda meeting.

*Public Comment:*

- Simone Turlock, John Burton Advocates for Youth: She would like to see funding specifically set-aside for youth in the state budget. Youth is a population that will suffer as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Helene Schneider, USICH: Gave an update on the federal level. She is encouraging everyone to visit the USICH website frequently for information that is being updated daily. HUD is also doing weekly Q&A on Fridays at 11:30AM PST. If USICH can help with best practices, it is encouraged that local jurisdictions reach out.
- Kelly Turner, Simple Equation: She currently works with 18-24-year-old homeless young ladies. The homes that youth stay in are only for 18 months. When looking at emergency shelter grants, most organizations like ours are unable to apply for them. She is requesting the Council look into opening up grants to homeless youth and not just for emergency shelter. She stated she works with people in emergency, but we are not an emergency shelter, which prevents organizations such as hers from applying for funding.
- Amanda Clifford, Bill Wilson Center: Her center is seeing as it relates to COVID-19 that young people are couch surfing and are being pushed out of the living arrangements. They are coming to organizations like hers to look for services or help and have reached a crisis point. She would like to see more resources related to COVID-19 directed to youth and young adults.
- Kim Lewis, California Coalition for Youth: Echoes the responses from Simone, Kelly, and Amanda. She would like to see more resources for youth programs.
- Gregory, Veteran Board Member from Sonoma County: He is advocating the Council take more of an interest in collaboration. He would like the Council to encourage more collaboration at a local level.

Secretary Lourdes thanks everyone for their attendance. She reiterated that the Governor has mobilized the entire state government and that every level is engaged in responding to this evolving situation around COVID-19. There is a strong collaboration between public health care systems and state governments to coordinate, collaborate, and to be responsive to local needs.

The Council has noted the comments particularly around homeless youth and the need for the state to facilitate local collaboration. The Council will follow up on this.



In addition, this is a reminder for everyone to wash their hands for a minimum of 20 seconds, avoid touching your face, cover your cough or sneeze with tissue or your elbow. And avoid contact with people who are sick. Do everything possible to adhere to the order to stay home. Take care of yourself, family and neighbors.

Meeting is adjourned at 4:01pm.