

# CALIFORNIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

Gavin Newsom, Governor

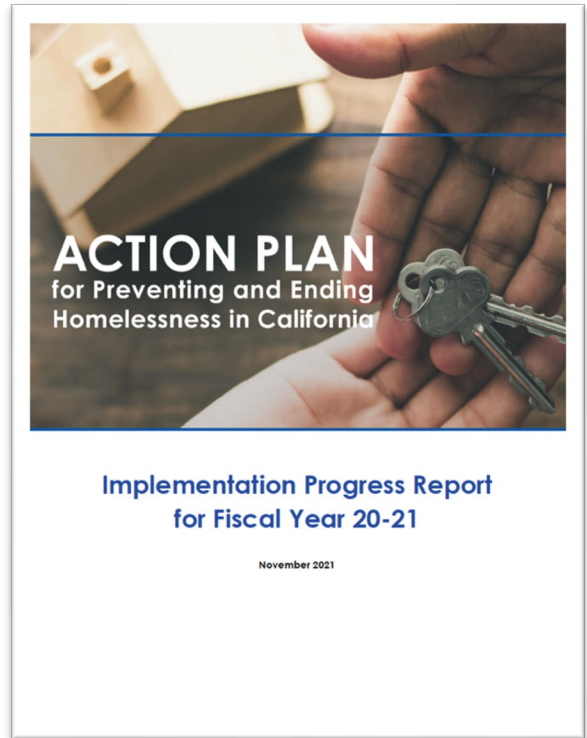
Lourdes M. Castro Ramírez, MA, Co-Chair | Dr. Mark Ghaly, MD, MPH, Co-Chair

## Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness FY 20-21 Implementation Highlights and FY 21-22 Priorities

Drawn from the [Implementation Progress Report for Fiscal Year 20-21](#) for the [Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California](#), **key achievements of state agencies and departments from the past fiscal year are highlighted below**, organized by the Plan's five action areas.

### Key Highlights from FY 20-21

Looking at the totality of the work the state completed during FY 20-21, a few common themes emerge that cut across all action areas. First, in FY 20-21, many state departments focused a significant portion of their work on mobilizing resources, funding, and direct support to people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic and other natural disasters. At the same time, Council departments continued implementing, and even expanding, programs to prevent and end homelessness in California.



Finally, the state sharpened its focus on improving coordination among state actors and systems in order to better serve people experiencing homelessness and address systemic inequities. In doing so, the state has established a key foundation upon which the Council will continue in its charge to serve as a coordinating body of the diverse and complex array of state services and resources dedicated to preventing and ending homelessness.

The activities below are only a portion of the work completed during FY 20-21, but display the breadth and depth of the state's work to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

### ACTION AREA 1

#### Strengthening Our Systems to Better Prevent and End Homelessness in California



- HCFC completed implementation of the **Homeless Emergency Aid Program**, which provided \$500 million over three years to 54 California communities as block grants to implement new initiatives, promising service models, and best practices in pursuit of reducing and ending homelessness.
- California Department of Education (CDE) helped administer funds and plan the first annual conference to improve the identification, educational stability, access, support, and academic achievement of **K-12 students experiencing homelessness**.

- California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has worked to make it easier to **employ people who have experienced homelessness** in their department by hosting job fairs, adjusting their interview process and requirements, and more. In FY 20-21, Caltrans extended 60 offers to people experiencing homelessness for Service Assistance Maintenance positions.
- The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office provided three-year grants to 14 community colleges, which provided services to 519 **community college students experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity** and assisted 116 students in maintaining stable housing for six months or more.
- HCFC's most recent **Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP)** grant requires applications to include plans to address racial disparities, involve people with lived experience of homelessness, and work collaboratively with regional partners—with technical assistance provided to applicants on these pieces.
- California's Department of Social Services (CDSS) and Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) conducted outreach, listening sessions, application workshops, and **technical assistance to Tribal Organizations** applying for their funding.
- HCFC launched the **Homeless Data Integration System**, which brings together data on individuals seeking homelessness services from nearly every Continuum of Care (CoC) to create a fuller picture of who experiences homelessness in California than the state has ever had before.

## ACTION AREA 2

### Equitably Addressing the Health, Safety, and Services Needs of Californians Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness



- CDSS implemented **Project Roomkey**, a brand-new program to provide non-congregate shelter to protect people experiencing homelessness from COVID-19. Between the program's March 2020 launch and August 2021, 50 counties and two Tribes have participated, securing 16,000 rooms and serving over 42,000 individuals.
- California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) **aided communities applying for federal reimbursement** for their Project Roomkey programs.
- HCFC hosted frequent webinars and published guidance for state and local partners on topics such as strategically utilizing the variety of **funding sources available during the pandemic, adjusting shelter** during COVID-19, and **making vaccines available** to people experiencing homelessness.
- HCFC provided guidance on how homelessness service providers should respond to fires and other natural disasters in their areas.

### ACTION AREA 3

#### Expanding Communities' Capacity to Provide Safe and Effective Sheltering and Interim Housing



- CDSS continued to operate their existing **statewide housing and homelessness programs** that allow for the provision of safe and effective sheltering and interim housing, among other eligible uses. As an example of outcomes from one of these programs, in FY 20-21, **CalWORKs Homeless Assistance** approved funding for more than 32,000 families to help cover the costs of temporary shelter, a security deposit, or prevent eviction.
- California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) adapted activities within **Whole Person Care** to address the needs of people experiencing homelessness during COVID-19, which assisted at least 9 counties in building upon their Project Roomkey efforts.
- HCD continued to implement the federal **Community Development Block Grant CARES Act** program that provided \$150 million to support acquisition, construction, conversion, and rehabilitation of temporary shelter in California.
- Cal OES continued implementing multiple grants that include housing services for **youth and adult victims of crime** who are experiencing homelessness.

### ACTION AREA 4

#### Expanding and Ensuring Equitable Access to Permanent Housing in Our Communities



- In response to the availability of hotels for Project Roomkey and the need for more housing for people experiencing homelessness, the state funded **Homekey** to facilitate the purchase and conversion of buildings to augment the supportive housing stock. As of April 2021, HCD reports that Homekey has supported 103 housing projects to bring 5,911 housing units—including 4,862 units of permanent housing—online across the state.
- In partnership with California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet), HCD also helped continue implementation of the **Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention Program**, which made awards to 16 projects to build 421 units of affordable, supportive, or transitional housing for veterans.
- California Housing Finance Agency operated the **Special Needs Housing Program**, which financed 796 permanent supportive housing units in FY 20-21 for individuals with serious mental illness and their families who are experiencing homelessness.
- California Tax Credit Allocation Committee provided priority for within both the 9% and 4% **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit** applications for projects serving people experiencing homelessness.
- HCFC continued to implement the **HHAP** grant program, which has so far provided \$950 million over two rounds of funding to support regional coordination and expand local capacity to address homelessness.

## ACTION AREA 5

### Preventing Californians from Experiencing the Crisis of Homelessness



- BCSH implemented California's **COVID-19 Rent Relief Program** that helps income-eligible households who have been impacted by COVID-19 cover the cost of rent and utilities. As of October 19, 2021, the state program had received over 433,000 household applications requesting approximately \$4.5 billion in assistance. To date, the state program has paid or approved for payment approximately \$1.7 billion in assistance. Of that total, over \$897 million has been expended, assisting more than 75,000 California households.
- California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, in partnership with the Amity Foundation, helped implement the **Returning Home Well program**, which expands the housing services available to people leaving prisons.
- HCD issued agreements to six counties totaling \$60.1 million for the **Housing for a Healthy California** program, which provides housing for individuals who are recipients of or eligible for Medi-Cal.

### Action Plan Implementation Priorities for FY 21-22

While many of the activities implemented during FY 20-21 will continue into FY 21-22, the Progress Report also identifies activities prioritized for implementation in the current fiscal year, listed below. Activity reference numbers are provided along with their descriptions from the Action Plan.

From expanding significant funding opportunities, to launching interagency working groups, to building out a more comprehensive statewide database, the state is poised to make significant progress in the year ahead to prevent and end homelessness in California.

## ACTION AREA 1

### Strengthening Our Systems to Better Prevent and End Homelessness in California



During FY 21-22, state agencies and departments will be placing an increased focus on a variety of activities within Action Area 1, including:

- 1.1.1 **Provide and coordinate technical assistance focused on racial equity to support equitable access and outcomes within State-funded programs**, and to strengthen coordinated entry systems, prioritization policies, and targeting strategies to address disparities in access to services and resources.
- 1.1.4 Provide technical assistance and training opportunities, and adapt program guidelines and guidance, to **enhance Tribal Organizations' access to state homelessness and housing programs and resources**.
- 1.2.1 **Implement a Lived Experience Advisory Board** to inform the considerations and decisions of the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council and member departments.
- 1.6.3 **Prepare public-facing materials and articles based upon data and information drawn from the Homeless Data Integration System warehouse**, to educate the public on challenges, activities, and implementation of programs and resources.

## ACTION AREA 2

### Equitably Addressing the Health, Safety, and Services Needs of Californians Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness



During FY 21-22, state agencies and departments will be placing an increased focus on a variety of activities within Action Area 2, including:

- 2.7.1. Create, disseminate, and **support implementation of clear and effective policies and procedures for addressing the needs of people currently staying in encampments**, including on State-owned land.
- 2.8.1 Utilize new Homeless Data Integration System to begin Phase 2 of the system, featuring data-matching to other statewide data systems, with the intent to **analyze the participation and access to benefits and services of people who are unsheltered within key State programs**.
- 2.8.2 Implement CalAIM proposals seeking to **extend statewide the service options available under Whole Person Care and Health Homes Program through the Enhanced Care Management program and In Lieu of Services**, including incentive funding, to better address the health and behavioral health care needs of people who are unsheltered.

## ACTION AREA 3

### Expanding Communities' Capacity to Provide Safe and Effective Sheltering and Interim Housing



During FY 21-22, state agencies and departments will be placing an increased focus on a variety of activities within Action Area 3, including:

- 3.9.1 Rapidly mobilize Homekey resources to **support acquisition of sites by local partners, including sites planned for use as interim housing** on a temporary or ongoing basis.
- 3.9.2 Implement a wide array of State and Federal funding that **support the provision of safe, effective housing-placement focused sheltering and interim housing models** for people experiencing homelessness, with identification of clear goals and targets for the number of shelter or interim housing opportunities to be supported through each program.
- 3.9.3 Develop and advance CalAIM proposals seeking to **extend statewide the service options available under Whole Person Care and Health Homes Program through the Enhanced Care Management program and In Lieu of Services care coordination and housing services**, including incentive funding, to better address the health care needs of people who are staying in shelter and interim housing sites.

## ACTION AREA 4

### Expanding and Ensuring Equitable Access to Permanent Housing in Our Communities



During FY 21-22, state agencies and departments will be placing an increased focus on a variety of activities within Action Area 4, including:

- 4.11.1 Implement Project Roomkey and Rehousing Strategy funding and technical assistance to **support the rehousing of people staying within Project Roomkey sites into permanent housing opportunities.**
- 4.11.2. Implement a wide array of State and Federal funding programs that **support the rehousing of people experiencing homelessness into a diverse range of housing models, including models appropriate for youth and young adults**, with identification of clear rehousing goals and targets for the implementation of each program.
- 4.11.5 Assess and **revise the current Housing First Checklist for State agencies, confirm alignment with Housing First requirements of relevant State programs, and provide guidance, training, and support to State departments** who need to modify programs and policies to achieve alignment.
- 4.12.1 Implement Homekey program to **support rapid financing and development of permanent housing units.**
- 4.12.2 Implement a wide array of other State and Federal funding programs that **support expansion of affordable and supportive housing opportunities**, with identification of clear unit production goals and targets for the implementation of each program.
- 4.13.1 Implement a wide array of State and Federal funding programs that **support provision of various forms of rental assistance**, with identification of clear goals and targets for the number of households to receive rental assistance through each program.

## ACTION AREA 5

### Preventing Californians from Experiencing the Crisis of Homelessness



During FY 21-22, state agencies and departments will be placing an increased focus on a variety of activities within Action Area 5, including:

- 5.14.3 Implement CalAIM to **provide care coordination and housing services to people exiting corrections settings** through Enhanced Care Management and In Lieu of Services.
- 5.14.8 Utilize the Homeless Data Integration System to **conduct analyses regarding people experiencing homelessness and their prior engagement with the homelessness response system** to identify patterns of engagement and service utilization that can inform prevention and diversion strategies.
- 5.15.1 Implement the Emergency Rental Assistance resources administered through the U.S. Department of the Treasury to **provide financial assistance to households facing rental arrears and risks of eviction and/or homelessness.**
- 5.15.2 Implement a wide array of State and Federal funding programs that **support provision of various forms of diversion and prevention services**, with identification of clear goals and targets for the number of households to receive diversion and prevention services through each program.
- 5.15.3 Continue implementation of the Housing is Key campaign, providing materials and resources to **help Californians stay in their homes or understand their housing options during COVID-19 and beyond.**