

**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
CALIFORNIA**

For the Agenda of:
December 12, 2018
Timed: 3:45 PM

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Department of Human Assistance,
Office of the County Executive

Subject: Update On The County Initiatives To Reduce
Homelessness: Early Stage Implementation

Supervisory
District(s): All

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RECOMMENDED ACTION

Receive and file this report.

BACKGROUND

For many years, Sacramento County has played a central leadership role in addressing homelessness and in delivering both targeted homeless services and essential mainstream services to persons experiencing homelessness. In the several years prior to adoption of the County Homeless Initiatives in 2017, the County invested in mobile mental health crisis support teams, mental health and homeless navigators, increased sheltering for transition-aged youth, rapid re-housing, motel vouchers, and the Winter Sanctuary.

Recognizing that the number of people experiencing homelessness had grown significantly (the Point-In-Time Count increased by 36 percent from 2,659 individuals in 2015 to 3,665 in 2017), and after multiple community meetings and Board hearings, the Board of Supervisors adopted several new homeless initiatives in 2017 with the goal of improving the County response to the crisis of homelessness and creating new pathways to permanent homes. Four initiatives were adopted in July 2017, and two "augmentation" initiatives were later approved with final FY 2017-18 budget adoption in September 2017. The County's investment in the "County Homeless Initiatives" total \$12 million annually.

Since approval of these investments, the Board of Supervisors significantly expanded behavioral health services in the FY 2018-19 Budget, and in 2018 approved County participation in the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery Program. These actions will increase behavioral health services benefitting a portion of the homeless population.

The County Initiatives to Reduce Homelessness (or “County Homeless Initiatives”) improve existing programs or systems and create new programs, particularly for persons with significant barriers who may not have accessed traditional services. Described in greater detail in this report, the initiatives are summarized here:

1. Redesign Family Homelessness Response and Shelter System: Family shelter services were redesigned to reach more families experiencing literal homelessness with high barriers to housing stability and to focus services on rapidly re-housing families into permanent and stable housing. Shelter entry is simplified via an online shelter registration system that also allows alternative resources, including diversion assistance, to be offered. Family shelter is projected to serve 33 families nightly and 268 families annually. An additional 25 families are served through this initiative receiving temporary housing and services within transitional housing at Mather Community Campus (MCC).
2. Preservation of Mather Community Campus (MCC): Operating on a unique 33-acre, County-owned property, MCC has played an important role in our homeless continuum since 1996, providing transitional housing along with employment services and recovery support. With the loss of \$2.5 million in Federal homeless funds, County funding ensures continued housing and services at MCC in the Residential and Employment program for individuals experiencing homelessness referred through Sacramento’s coordinated entry system. This residential program serves 183 persons at a time and is one of eight residential and non-residential programs at MCC serving about 800 persons annually.
3. Full Service Re-Housing Shelter (FSRS): This new approach to emergency shelter uses scattered-site housing located throughout the County to support and re-house persons experiencing homelessness who have complex behavioral and/or physical health issues and who have not engaged in traditional services. When fully operational by the end of calendar year 2018, FSRS will provide 24-hour

accommodations for up to 75 individuals at a time and serve approximately 250 to 300 persons annually. Low-barrier entry accommodates partners, pets, possessions, and other special needs, which often are barriers to obtaining traditional shelter and services. The scattered site approach was approved as an interim solution while staff continued to evaluate for a single site. Upon completion of the first full fiscal year with all 15 houses operational, County staff will re-evaluate the effectiveness of the scattered site model versus a single site. The County also dedicates funding for housing assistance to help FSRs participants find and secure permanent housing that works for them.

4. Flexible Supportive Re-Housing Program (FSRP): This program employs several new approaches for a highly targeted population that has experienced long-term homelessness and is the most frequent utilizer of costly County services (behavioral health services and jail). Employing a “whatever it takes approach,” community service providers engage and support 250 households with highly flexible re-housing and stabilization services. Housing providers engage property owners, secure housing, and use housing choice vouchers and a local flexible housing fund for ongoing tenancy support. In FSRP, the County is partnering in new ways with service providers, participants and property owners to ensure long-term housing success.
5. Expanded Services for Transition Age Youth (“Youth Services”) Ages 18-24 years: Working with three local providers, youth services have been expanded to address gaps in Sacramento’s continuum of homeless youth services. Case management services are paired with new housing choice vouchers to support participants as they transition to permanent housing stability. Youth service providers also deliver prevention services to support at-risk youth in reuniting with family or otherwise stabilize their housing, when possible.
6. Homeless Outreach, Navigation and Re-Housing Services (“Navigation Services”): In this new program, navigators engage and connect unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness in unincorporated areas around Carmichael, Rio Linda, South Sacramento and Arden-Arcade with crisis and re-housing services. The navigators work in tandem with local law enforcement, business and community leaders, medical providers and faith-based groups (sometimes organized

through Homeless Assistance Resource Teams, or HART) to find solutions.

Implementation of the six initiatives was staggered beginning in October 2017, with all initiatives operational by the end of FY 2017-18. Implementation efforts by the Department of Human Assistance (DHA) staff were significant, with DHA staff issuing multiple RFPs resulting in new provider contracts and partnerships and creating new policies, procedures, client tracking platforms and data collection methods for new programs. DHA partnered in new ways to bring clients to success, working closely with contracted providers on a client-by-client basis. Additionally, DHA partners with multiple County Departments, including Health Services, Child, Family, and Adult Services, Regional Parks, Sheriff, and the Public Defender with the end goal of ending homelessness more quickly for more families, youth and individuals in Sacramento.

This report provides the following:

1. Summary of overall results;
2. Overall conclusions and looking forward
3. Attachment 1: An in-depth assessment for each County Homeless Initiative from implementation start varying by initiative through September 30, 2018, including implementation highlights, results, challenges, and expenditure information. In addition, this report includes outcomes from the County's Winter Sanctuary program.

Overall Assessment

This section summarizes results for all programs. While performance metrics for each initiative vary by type of intervention, common measurements include:

- **Number of people served**, including how many persons were served who were experiencing literal homelessness and how many were served who are at risk of homelessness. For shelter programs, the goal is to serve more people experiencing unsheltered literal homelessness;
- **Who is being served**, in terms of household type, demographics (age, gender, ethnicity), and other characteristics related to vulnerability, chronicity or other barriers to permanent housing stability;
- **Homeless status at program entry**. For most program services, except diversion, the goal is to serve primarily families who are literally homeless, whether sheltered or unsheltered;

- **Successful program exits.** For most interventions, successful exit means the individual moved into permanent housing (which may include ongoing support), but for some program types, shelter or transitional housing exits are considered successful exits;
- **Increase in income** at program exit or annually for ongoing programs, such as FSRP. Income increases may occur because of employment or because clients are connected to mainstream income programs, such as SSI/SSDI;
- **Costs per permanent housing exit;** and
- **Returns to homelessness** 12 months after permanent housing placement.

Because the initiatives are in the first year of operation, this report does not report on cost per permanent housing exit or returns to homelessness within 12 months of permanent housing placement. Income increases are tracked in individual summaries.

Program data was collected primarily through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) with some programs participating in the Sacramento Homeless Information Network Ecosystem (SHINE), which allows closer tracking of client level services.

Number of People Served

The following chart tabulates individuals and households served by initiative. Numbers served total 1,052 individuals in 616 households from program start to September 30, 2018. However, these totals are not de-duplicated, and there is likely limited duplication of households if they participated in more than one service or program.

Initiative	Start Date	Total Individuals	Total Households	Households Served in Prevention
Family Shelter	10/1/2017	495	137	79
MCC: Family Transitional		103	29	N/A
MCC: Transitional Individuals	10/1/2017	351	351	N/A
FSRS	3/13/2018	91	90	N/A
FSRP	2/1/2018	191	191	N/A
Youth Services	5/1/2018	115	115	32
Navigation Services	4/1/2018	177	177	N/A
Total		1,523	1,090	111

Who is Being Served (Not including Youth Services or Navigation Services)

Gender

Looking at the gender of all individuals, including children, participant gender was nearly evenly split:

- 598 or 49% of the total persons served were female
- 632 or 51% of the total persons served were male

Age

Of all individuals served in family and non-family households, a wide range of ages are represented, from young children to those 92 years of age.

- 359 or 29% of the total persons served were children under age 17
- 415 or 42 % of the total persons served were between ages 18-44
- 310 or 25% of the total persons served were between ages 45-64
- 50 or 4% of the persons served were between ages 65-85+

Families with Minor Children (“Family Households”)

Of the 1,090 households receiving services, 192 included minor children. Of the 598 individuals served in family households, 359 were minor children. Most family households had three or fewer children, but over 20 percent of family households had four or more children:

- 148 families or 77% of total families served had 1 to 3 children
- 32 families or 16% of total families served had 4 to 5 children
- 10 families or 5% of total families served had 6 or more children

In programs serving individuals in households that do not include minor children, 58% of participants were males and 42% were females.

Ethnicity

Of the 1,230 individuals where ethnicity data were collected, the data below show the percentage of individuals by ethnicity participating in the initiatives to date compared to the percentage that participated in homeless services in FY 2017-2018 as tracked by HMIS:

Ethnicity	Served in County Homeless Initiatives	Served in HMIS Programs, 2017-18
American Indian or Alaskan Native	>1%	2%
Asian	>1%	1%
African-American	36%	33%
Hispanic/Latino	23%	18%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1%	1%
Multiple Races	9%	6%
White	30%	45%
Unknown	>1%	12%

Vulnerability and Presence of Barriers

In general, the initiatives targeted households which have vulnerabilities or which had high barriers, identified as household composition, medical needs, behavioral health and pets, which restricted their participation in programs. The initiatives created programs that were structured to lower barriers to facilitate participation of these households. Several factors were analyzed to understand populations served. In general, based on participation to date, the County Homeless Initiatives are reaching populations with an indication of vulnerability or high barriers, with indicators and level varying by program.

1. Chronic homelessness is defined as when an individual or head of household is disabled, and has been literally homeless for the last 12 months continuously, or on at least four occasions in the last three years where those occasions cumulatively totaled at least 12 months.

- 21% of total persons served were identified as chronically homeless.
- 76% of total persons served were identified as not chronically homeless.
- 3% of total persons served did not specify.

Programs varied significantly with the percentage of households experiencing chronic homelessness. Of the households indicating chronic status:

- 4% of individuals within family households in family programs experienced chronic homelessness.
- 10% of MCC individual households experienced chronic homelessness.
- 63% of households in FSRs experienced chronic homelessness.
- 74% of households in FSRP experienced chronic homelessness.

2. Instances of Homelessness in Past Three Years. Multiple experiences of homelessness indicate higher barriers. Of the reporting households:

- Over 53% of family households had multiple experiences, with nearly 20% having three or more experiences.
- Nearly 50% of MCC individual households had multiple experiences, with nearly 30% having three or more experiences.
- Nearly 60% of FSRs households had multiple experiences, with nearly 33% having three or more experiences.
- 100% of FSRP individuals had multiple experiences.

3. The Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool or VI-SPDAT is the tool used in the coordinated entry system and indicates high, medium and low barriers. The VI-SPDAT is voluntary for persons entering County programs; however it is necessary for participants to be eligible to qualify for Continuum of Care housing, so it is strongly encouraged by providers and staff.

- 70% of family households did not participate. Of those that participated, the majority received scores of medium barriers.
- Over 60% of MCC participants received scores with medium barriers, 18% with low barriers, and 20% with high barriers.
- While nearly 40% of FSRs participants were not scored, 56% of those scored received high barrier scores, and 95% received high and medium barrier scores.

- 100% of FSRP clients participated with 72% scoring with high barriers, 27% with medium barrier scores, and 1% with low barriers.
4. Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Support Needed. In FY 2017-18, 35% of homeless persons in HMIS with data reported had a long-term mental illness, and 11 percent had co-occurring mental health and substance abuse issues, or disability. According to the Point-In-Time, 629 individuals, or 17%, reported chronic substance abuse and 27% of chronically homeless persons said they could not work because of a substance abuse problem. While somewhat difficult to compare, the persons served through the County initiatives are comparable.
- 38% of total persons served self-reported as having a substance abuse problem.
 - 38% of total persons served identified as needing mental health support.

Homeless Status at Program Entry

A common goal among the initiatives is to increase access for persons experiencing literal homelessness. The following table shows the percentage of persons who were literally homeless upon entry into the system:

Program	Percentage Literally Homeless
Family Shelters	100%
Family Transitional	91%
MCC for Single individuals	64%
FSRS	100%
FSRP	91%

Successful Program Exits

Successful exits are defined as follows for each program type:

- Navigation Services: Placement in shelter, transitional housing, or permanent housing
- Shelter Services: Permanent housing placement and limited number of transitional housing placements
- Transitional Housing: Permanent housing. For purposes of this tracking, temporary or institutional exits are counted as successful.
- Re-Housing programs: Permanent housing

Permanent housing placements may be with or without subsidies, and may include supportive housing, living with friends or relatives, or shared housing.

For purposes of this report, temporary or institutional exits are counted as exits in addition to permanent housing exits. However, a more refined analysis is warranted, especially as programs are implemented over time.

The following chart indicates the total number of persons exiting the program, and the percentage of successful exits:

Program	Households Exiting	Percentage of Successful Exits
Family Shelters	111	99%
Family Transitional	10	50%
MCC for Single individuals	204	80%
FSRS	42	83%
FSRP	94*	49%*
Total	461	72%

**Of the FSRP participants enrolled who have been housed and continue to receive services.*

Further in-depth analysis for each initiative can be found in Attachment 1.

Conclusion

In implementing the County Initiatives to Reduce Homelessness, DHA has effectively and quickly deployed significant County resources to provide a more proactive and flexible approach to support persons experiencing homelessness as they transition into permanent housing stability. Since implementation commenced from late 2017 through mid-2018, these initiatives have engaged, stabilized and rehoused underserved individuals and families experiencing homelessness not previously engaging in services. Highlights include:

- In the first year of implementation, emergency shelter was more accessible for families and individuals, including the most vulnerable and those with high barriers to services and housing.
- From the safety of shelters, individuals and families are fully supported as they stabilize their health and lives and transition to permanent housing.
- The newly directed intensive services have been implemented to reach those with high priority and complex needs, including 191 of the 250 most vulnerable and frequent users of County systems.

- The augmentation initiatives provide additional support to vulnerable youth and individuals living in uninhabitable homeless environments in the unincorporated County.

In partnering with participants, providers, and local leadership, DHA continues to improve how services are coordinated and delivered to resolve homelessness based on each unique situation. Increased coordination among County departments is facilitating new service linkages to leverage other investments that can support individuals and improve outcomes. DHA is also partnering in fundamentally new ways with contracted service providers, recognizing that achieving success means working together creatively to resolve individuals' barriers to permanent housing stability. Finally, community partnerships have expanded with businesses and neighborhoods to leverage broader community efforts and to address local needs in a coordinated fashion.

Implementation of the County Homeless Initiatives in this first year has allowed DHA to build programmatic infrastructure to deliver supportive and rehousing services and scale to need. The foundational aspects of these programs allows for expansion; including significant financial investments and additional persons served. These non-County General Fund investments include: FSRP through HEAP Flexible Housing Pool (\$6,183,359); State Bringing Families Home funding for child welfare-involved families (\$860,100); State Housing Disability and Advocacy Program (\$1,300,000); family shelters through HEAP (\$644,280); and in expanded FSRS through HEAP (\$1,045,547) and CESH (\$538,453).

As the initiatives progress and achieve full capacity, DHA will continue to work with County and community partners to identify solutions to key challenges. The County is committed to continuing its work within and expansion of the County initiatives while pursuing greater innovation, collaboration, and resource investment in order to address the broader related issues, including extreme and generational poverty, housing affordability, drug abuse, mental health, educational attainment, incarceration.

71-J ANALYSIS

Not Applicable.

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

This report presents actual expenditures for Fiscal Year 2017-18. The Department will report back on FY 2018-19 expenditures in the next update on the County Initiatives to Reduce Homelessness.

Respectfully submitted,

APPROVED:
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County Executive

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By: _____
BRUCE WAGSTAFF,
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Attachment(s):
Attachment 1 - Individual Assessment by Homeless Initiative