

July 29, 2021

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this letter is to notify counties and tribes that the Budget Act of 2021 ([Senate Bill 129, Chapter 69, Statutes of 2021](#)) appropriated a total of \$150 million for the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to provide grant funds to counties and tribes to establish, continue and expand the Project Roomkey (PRK) and Rehousing Strategy program. This letter provides information and guidance regarding the program's purpose and requirements, funding information including allocation methodology, and steps for accepting these funds.



KIM JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



GAVIN NEWSOM
GOVERNOR

July 29, 2021

ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL FEDERALLY RECOGNIZED TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS IN
CALIFORNIA

SUBJECT: **PROJECT ROOMKEY (PRK) ALLOCATIONS AVAILABLE FOR
FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2021-22**

REFERENCE: [SB 129 BUDGET ACT OF 2021](#); [ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER \(ACWDL\) DATED NOVEMBER 18, 2020](#); [ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS LETTER \(ACWDL\) DATED JUNE 1, 2020](#); [WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE \(WIC\) 8255](#); [WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE \(WIC\) 8256](#); [ALL COUNTY LETTER No. 19-114](#)

The purpose of this letter is to notify counties and federally recognized tribal governments operating a Project Roomkey (PRK) initiative of funding available to continue providing Project Roomkey and Rehousing Strategy non congregate shelter and rehousing services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) is seeking responses from County Welfare Departments (CWDs) and Tribal Governments interested in accepting these funds to continue a Project Roomkey and Rehousing Strategy program in FY 2021-22.

BACKGROUND

In March 2020, communities across California began operating locally driven and state supported [PRK initiatives](#) to provide emergency non-congregate shelter (NCS) protective placements (e.g., hotel/motels) for people experiencing homelessness for public health-related reasons associated with COVID-19. The CDSS utilized a \$50 million state general fund (GF) appropriation to provide funds to counties and tribes to secure trailers, motels, and hotels to initiate and operate PRK. CDSS allocated an additional \$59 million in one-time state GF in December 2020 to support continued PRK operations while increasing the focus and resources to transition participants to permanent housing. The need for Project Roomkey and Rehousing remains critical to continue to keep people experiencing homelessness and their communities safe during

the COVID-19 pandemic while providing housing assistance to ensure that participants do not return to homelessness.

FY 2021-22 PRK AND REHOUSING ALLOCATIONS AND ACCEPTANCE OF FUNDS

The Budget Act of 2021 appropriated an additional \$150 million in one-time state GF for continuation of the Project Roomkey and Rehousing Strategy. The CDSS will make \$142.5 million available immediately to counties and tribes to continue to operate PRK sites and to support rehousing activities to support clients moving into permanent housing. Additional funds are set aside for CDSS to implement and administer the program. The continued goal of the PRK and Rehousing Strategy is to ensure the safety of people vulnerable to COVID-19 and those who test positive for or are exposed to COVID-19 while ensuring that all participants have access to permanent housing assistance.

The CDSS determined a FY 2021-22 noncompetitive need-based allocation for counties and tribes operating a PRK based on occupancy reports submitted to CDSS on June 28, 2021, and subsequently certified by the county or tribe. Allocation amounts are calculated proportionate to the statewide number of occupied units as of June 28, 2021, or a base allocation of \$75,000, whichever is greater for operational programs. The FY 2021-22 allocation amounts are displayed in Attachment One. Counties and tribes wishing to accept the FY 2021-22 PRK and Rehousing allocation must review and complete the FY 2021-22 PRK and Rehousing Strategy Director Certification (Attachment Two) and return to housing@dss.ca.gov no later than September 10, 2021.

To support a statewide implementation of PRK and Rehousing Strategy, counties and tribes that stopped their programs prior to June 28, 2021 or did not set up a PRK program originally and wish to resume or establish programs in FY 2021-22 may request a base allocation of \$75,000. Counties and tribes wishing to resume or begin program operations must notify CDSS via email (housing@dss.ca.gov) of their intent to resume or establish a PRK no later than August 20, 2021 to request funds and then submit a signed Director Certification September 10, 2021 that will be provided by CDSS.

All counties and tribes wishing to accept, or request, funds must submit a completed Director Certification no later than September 10, 2021. CDSS will review all requests for funds and issue a County Fiscal Letter (CFL) with final allocation amounts in September 2021. If there are additional funds due to counties and/or tribes determining that funds made available to them are not needed, the CDSS will allocate the additional funds to counties and tribes that indicate they can accept additional funds. The same need-based methods used in the initial allocation methodology will be used to allocate these

additional funds. Any additional funds beyond the allocations displayed in Attachment One will be included in the CFL.

In October 2021, CDSS will release a template PRK rehousing plan and require counties and tribes receiving funds to complete the rehousing plan for existing PRK participants, to be returned to CDSS no later than January 31, 2022. Additional information and assistance to complete these plans will be provided by CDSS and contracted technical assistance providers. Other periodic surveys or requests for information may be required by CDSS on an as-needed basis.

REIMBURSEMENT AND FISCAL CLAIMING

Counties and tribes will continue to utilize an invoice form to request a reimbursement or cash advance, and to document actual expenditures of funds that have previously been advanced. The FY 21-22 invoice form template and instructions for utilizing the template will be made available to counties and tribes via email to the contacts provided in the Director Certification. Invoices submitted for the purposes of requesting a reimbursement or to reconcile expenditures of advanced funds shall report costs incurred in connection to the project (e.g., costs related to non-congregate shelter, rehousing, etc.). Invoicing and grant reimbursement instructions are included in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for all Tribes allocated funds. Tribes without a current MOU must set up this mechanism to begin invoicing. The funds available for the PRK and Rehousing Strategy described in this letter are one-time funds and must be encumbered by June 30, 2022.

PROGRAM SCOPE AND ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDS

Counties and tribes may use funds awarded through this allocation to both continue operating non-congregate shelters as well as support rehousing exits from PRK sites. Refer to the [ACWDL dated November 18, 2020](#) focused on rehousing strategies and the [June 1, 2020 ACWDL](#) focused on non-congregate shelter operations for additional information pertaining to eligible use of funds. By accepting these funds, County Welfare Departments and/or federally recognized Tribal Governments agree to comply with the requirements of the Project Roomkey and Rehousing Strategy outlined within this letter and within the Director Certification (Attachment Two).

LEVERAGING RESOURCES

Local governments are strongly encouraged to continue working with their fiscal counterparts and applicable partners to identify how best to use all available local, state, and federal funding to secure and maintain hotel/motel rooms for NCS and engage in critical rehousing efforts. Key partners include cities, housing and public health agencies, homeless Continuums of Care (CoC), behavioral health, and emergency response agencies. In addition to the PRK and Rehousing Strategy allocations, PRK operators are strongly encouraged to continue to strategically utilize all available local, state, and federal funds to ensure that all PRK and Rehousing Strategy participants

have access to rehousing assistance. Examples of these resources include, but not limited to: the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP), Home Safe, Bringing Families Home (BFH), CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP), and [Emergency Housing Vouchers \(EHVs\)](#) or other affordable housing vouchers or programs provided through the local CoC or Coordinated Entry (CE) system. Key funding sources that may be utilized toward both PRK operations or rehousing services are described in the [Guide to Strategic Uses of Key State and Federal Resources to Reduce Homelessness During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#); in particular, [ESG-CV funds](#) are recommended to be utilized for PRK rehousing costs given the emphasis on emergency response and approaching funding use deadline. CDSS will continue to share resources related to state or federal funding streams that may be available to support continued PRK and Rehousing Strategy programs as they are updated and/or become available.

On January 29, 2021, [Governor Newsom announced that FEMA would reimburse 100% of the costs incurred](#) for eligible Project Roomkey programs dating back to January 2020, and through [at least](#) September 30, 2021. To maximize this funding, CDSS expects that communities will make every effort to recover all eligible NCS costs through FEMA reimbursement. For support relating to FEMA applications, please utilize [the FEMA application resources provided by the Population Change Institute](#), or [contact housing@dss.ca.gov](#). CDSS will continue to share resources related to FEMA reimbursement with PRK leads as information is updated and becomes available.

DATA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Consistent with current reporting requirements, counties and tribes accepting PRK and Rehousing Strategy funds are required to report updates on the progress of meeting goals identified in the Director Certification and related program data elements as determined by CDSS. These requirements are outlined in [ACWDL dated November 18, 2020](#) and build upon the data reporting needs established in the [ACWDL dated June 1, 2020](#). CDSS uses a web-based data portal for PRK that is also used to collect information on rehousing efforts. This system is mobile-friendly, retains historic data, and allows for day-to-day review. In addition to continued, weekly PRK availability and occupancy reporting, counties or tribes who are participating in the PRK and Rehousing Strategy are required to complete reports twice a month on rehousing and outcomes data.

TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Training and technical assistance will continue to be offered to help programs develop, strengthen, and enhance their non-congregate shelter operations and rehousing efforts. CDSS will continue to disseminate pertinent resources and training information through regular statewide newsletters, and ongoing technical assistance calls and meetings as needed. CDSS will connect counties and tribes with technical assistance providers to help bolster local efforts, as needed and when applicable. Counties and tribes will be

All County Welfare Director Letter
Page Five

required to attend regular, statewide calls and may be asked to participate in individual technical assistance meetings, at the discretion of CDSS.

If you have any questions or need additional guidance regarding the information in this letter, contact the Housing and Homelessness Branch at housing@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By

CORRIN BUCHANAN, Assistant Director of Housing and Homelessness
Housing and Homelessness Branch

Attachments:

Attachment One: FY 2021-22 Project Roomkey and Rehousing Allocations

Attachment Two: FY 2021-22 Project Roomkey and Rehousing Director's Certification

ATTACHMENT ONE

**FISCAL YEAR 2021-22 PROJECT ROOMKEY AND REHOUSING STRATEGY
ALLOCATION TABLE**

COUNTY/TRIBE	ALLOCATION
Alameda County	\$11,921,579
Alpine County	\$-
Amador County	\$-
Butte County	\$755,593
Calaveras County	\$117,537
Colusa County	\$-
Contra Costa County	\$4,970,123
Del Norte County	\$75,000
El Dorado County	\$621,265
Fresno County	\$1,662,305
Glenn County	\$-
Humboldt County	\$570,893
Imperial County	\$75,000
Inyo County	\$75,000
Kern County	\$75,000
Kings County	\$1,175,367
Lake County	\$-
Lassen County	\$-
Los Angeles County	\$34,203,178
Madera County	\$75,000
Marin County	\$587,683
Mariposa County	\$-
Mendocino County	\$789,175
Merced County	\$75,000
Modoc County	\$-
Mono County	\$75,000
Monterey County	\$1,796,632
Napa County	\$75,000
Nevada County	\$285,446
Orange County	\$117,537

ATTACHMENT ONE

Placer County	\$906,712
Plumas County	\$-
Riverside County	\$2,417,898
Sacramento County	\$5,339,524
San Benito County	\$75,000
San Bernardino County	\$11,367,478
San Diego County	\$7,270,484
San Francisco	\$32,104,309
San Joaquin County	\$184,701
San Luis Obispo County	\$75,000
San Mateo County	\$335,819
Santa Barbara County	\$772,384
Santa Clara County	\$6,598,846
Santa Cruz County	\$3,744,383
Shasta County	\$419,774
Sierra County	\$-
Siskiyou County	\$75,000
Solano County	\$1,007,457
Sonoma County	\$1,007,457
Stanislaus County	\$83,955
Sutter County	\$184,701
Tehama County	\$-
Trinity County	\$-
Tulare County	\$990,666
Tuolumne County	\$419,774
Ventura County	\$4,315,276
Yolo County	\$2,350,734
Yuba County	\$75,000
Wilton Rancheria Tribe	\$-
Bishop Paiute Tribal Council	\$-
Hopa Valley Tribe	\$201,491
TOTAL	\$142,498,136

**PROJECT ROOMKEY AND REHOUSING STRATEGY FY 2021-22
DIRECTOR'S CERTIFICATION**

County Welfare Directors and Tribal Administrators wishing to accept the FY 2021-22 PRK and Rehousing Strategy funds made available to their county or tribe, reflected in Attachment One, shall complete and return this Directors Certification by **COB on September 10, 2021**. By accepting these funds and signing the certification below, the County Welfare Director or Tribal Administrator agrees to the funding terms and conditions outlined within this letter. This Director's Certification must be completed and signed by the County Welfare Director or Tribal Agency Director operating PRK or the County Welfare Director with whom PRK operators have a formal agreement, i.e. a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Accepting Funds

A county or tribe may accept the amount identified within Attachment One, or a portion of these funds. Counties and tribes may also indicate their ability to accept additional funds (in excess of the allocation outlined in Attachment One) should additional funds be available. *Note: if the county/tribe wishes to decline these funds, skip to page 3.*

To accept funds, check the appropriate box below (select only one) and complete the projected number of individuals the county/tribe will serve with these funds. Refer to Attachment One for allocation amounts.

Section One (complete one option)

- Accept only the total PRK and Rehousing Strategy Allocation amount in Attachment One. Complete the amount the county/tribe is accepting: \$ _____
- Accept the total PRK and Rehousing Strategy Allocation amount AND accept additional funds (if available) beyond current allocation level.
 - Accept any amount of additional funds (no limit)
 - Accept additional funds up to \$ _____
- Accept only a portion of the PRK and Rehousing Strategy Allocation amount in Attachment One. Complete the amount the county/tribe is accepting \$ _____

Section Two (complete all portions)

Note: If county/tribe checks "no limit" to funds in Section One, please indicate the number of individuals the county/tribe will serve on the allocation amount specified in Attachment One. CDSS will expect counties/tribes to increase goals proportionate to the amount of funding allocated if the amount is greater than the allocation specified in Attachment One.

1. Projected number of individuals the county/tribe will continue to serve or newly serve in Project Roomkey Non-Congregate Shelter (NCS) with these funds:

75

2. Projected number of individuals in Project Roomkey NCS that the county/tribe will support with rehousing services and assistance with these funds: 50

Project Roomkey and Rehousing Strategy
Funding Terms and Conditions

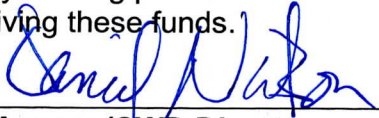
I, Daniel Nielson, County Welfare Director or Tribal Agency Director of Santa Barbara County, certify that I will:

1. Operate PRK and Rehousing Strategy services consistent with all state and federal laws, including Housing First as required by [WIC Section 8256](#), enumerated in [WIC Section 8255](#), and further outlined in [ACL No. 19-114](#), and in accordance with recommended PRK and Rehousing program practices outlined in the ACWDL dated [November 18, 2020](#).
2. To the best extent possible, work with applicable partners, including cities, housing and public health agencies, homeless Continuums of Care (CoC), behavioral health, emergency response, to identify and strategically utilize all available local, state, and federal funding, including FEMA reimbursement, to continue to provide NCS, as applicable, and ensure clients in PRK have access to rehousing services and supports to transition to permanent housing rather than a return to homelessness.
3. Collect and report PRK and Rehousing participant data to CDSS including, but not limited to, weekly non-congregate shelter information and rehousing reports on the first and third Monday of each month through the Project Roomkey portal. Access to the portal and further explanation of reporting requirements is available through guidance documents by emailing housing@dss.ca.gov.
4. Complete a rehousing plan, utilizing the template CDSS will release in October 2021, to be returned in January 2022, and other periodic surveys or requests for information requested by CDSS on an as-needed basis.
5. Actively engage in continuous quality improvement efforts including attending technical assistance trainings, 1-1 meetings, and related activities with CDSS and technical assistance providers, as determined by CDSS.
6. Acknowledge that the CDSS reserves the right to reallocate PRK and Rehousing Strategy funds should the CDSS determine it is appropriate or necessary to maximize program impact throughout the state.
7. Submit written notification at least 30 days in advance of any planned PRK and Rehousing Strategy ramp down or closures.

County/Tribe Name: Santa Barbara County

ATTACHMENT TWO

I certify that County of Santa Barbara will utilize the PRK and Rehousing Strategy funding pursuant to the terms outlined above and understand this is a condition of receiving these funds.



Tribal Agency/CWD Director
Signature

9.7.2021

Date

Local PRK Rehousing Lead Contact Information

Please provide the name(s) and contact for the following areas:

- PRK and Rehousing Strategy program lead(s) (local individual who is leading the rehousing efforts/strategy for PRK participants and an appropriate point of contact for CDSS).
Contact Name: Kimberlee Albers
Title: Homelessness Assistance Program Manager
Email: kalbers@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
Phone: 661-213-7697
- PRK and Rehousing data lead(s)
Contact Name: Kimberlee Albers
Title: Homelessness Assistance Program Manager
Email: kalbers@co.santa-barbara.ca.us
Phone: 661-213-7697

Declining Funds

Counties and tribes that do not wish to accept these funds are asked to notify CDSS by completing and signing the section immediately below and returning it to housing@dss.ca.gov as soon as possible but no later than **September 10, 2021**. CDSS will consider the funds declined if no response is provided to CDSS by the county or tribe by **September 10, 2021**. *Note: counties and tribes accepting funds should not complete this section; refer to page 1.*

To decline the funds, check the box below and complete the name and signature of the County Welfare Director/Tribal Administrator.

- Decline the entire amount of PRK and Rehousing Strategy funds available to county/tribe.

**Tribal Agency/CWD Director
Signature**

Date

**Printed Name of Tribal
Agency/CWD Director**

Date