



**Request for Proposals**

**FY 2024 Emergency Solutions Grants**

**Prepared by Housing for Health Division Staff**

January 2025

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| I. Overview of State ESG NOFA and Program Guidelines .....                       | 1  |
| Introduction.....  | 1  |
| New ESG Program Guidelines.....  | 1  |
| HCD ESG Program Timeline .....   | 1  |
| Eligible Applicants.....   | 1  |
| Method of Distribution.....  | 2  |
| Three-year NOFA cycle .....  | 2  |
| Amendments for Subsequent Annual Funding Cycles.....                             | 2  |
| Multi-Year Standard Agreements and Period of Performance .....                   | 2  |
| Role of the CoC in Project Selection .....                                       | 2  |
| Additional Details on Eligible Activities .....                                  | 3  |
| Approved Policies and Procedures (P&Ps) for all Awarded Activities .....         | 3  |
| Milestones .....   | 4  |
| Selected Additional Key Requirements (detailed in ESG NOFA and guidelines) ..... | 5  |
| II. Overview of Local ESG Project Review and Recommendation Process.....         | 5  |
| Introduction.....  | 5  |
| Eligible Local Applicants .....  | 5  |
| Estimated Funding for Projects in Santa Cruz County .....                        | 5  |
| Number of Projects and Amounts Recommended.....                                  | 5  |
| Maximum and Minimum Grant Requests .....   | 5  |
| Match Requirement and Points.....  | 6  |
| Technical Assistance .....   | 6  |
| Local ESG Timeline.....  | 6  |
| Local Submission Requirements .....  | 6  |
| Local ESG Application Threshold Requirements.....                                | 7  |
| Local ESG Objective Review Criteria .....  | 7  |
| H4HP Policy Board Funding Priorities.....  | 8  |
| H4H Process for Rating and Recommendations.....                                  | 9  |
| III. Application Resources .....   | 10 |

## I. Overview of State ESG NOFA and Program Guidelines

### Introduction

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has released the 2024 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the state-administered, federal Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program. ESG funding is awarded to eligible applicants, including nonprofits and local government entities, recommended by the local Continuum of Care (CoC). ESG funding may be used for the following eligible program types: street outreach, emergency shelter (operations and essential supportive services), homelessness prevention, rapid rehousing (RRH), and Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS). Approximately \$39 million is available through the NOFA, including approximately \$12 million in FY2024 funds, \$12 million in FY2025 funds, \$12 million in FY2026 funds, and \$3 million in disencumbered funds.

The ESG NOFA sets forth the process and requirements for submitting applications for ESG funds, with applications and all required documentation due to HCD no later than **5:00 P.M. PDT on Friday, March 28, 2025**. Further information on the ESG NOFA can be found at: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-and-funding/programs-active/emergency-solutions-grants>. Applications under this NOFA must be completed through the eCivis portal webpage (<https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gnredir/T/vyjsqf2kekyx>).

As detailed below, the maximum funding available for projects in Santa Cruz County is \$299,232 for FY2024. Estimated allocations for FY2025 and FY2026 are \$209,478 each. The estimated allocation over the full three years is \$718,188. The Housing for Health Partnership (H4HP) Policy Board has prioritized new and existing RRH programs that are: (1) high performing, (2) targeted to serving families with children exiting emergency shelters (including youth and DV shelters), and (3) that use at least 50% of ESG funds for rental assistance.

### New ESG Program Guidelines

HCD has recently promulgated new ESG program guidelines (available on the HCD ESG website above) that make substantial changes to the program. Selected key changes include the following:

- New formula method of distribution for CoCs
- Three-year NOFA cycle
- Multi-year Standard Agreements
- CoCs must recommend up to two eligible applicants to submit applications. Applicants will not receive funding without CoC recommendation.

### HCD ESG Program Timeline

|   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 2024 ESG NOFA Release Date                        | December 26, 2024                     |
| Application Release Date Acceptance Period Begins | January 31, 2025                      |
| <b>Application Deadline</b>                       | <b>March 28, 2025 (5:00 P.M. PDT)</b> |
| Award Announcements                               | Approximately July 2025               |
| Standard Agreement Amendment #11 (2025 – 2027)    | Approximately October 2026            |
| Standard Agreement Amendment #22 (2026 – 2028)    | Approximately October 2027            |
| 2027 ESG NOFA Release Date                        | Approximately October 2027            |

### Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations or units of general-purpose local government that provide or contract with nonprofit organizations to provide eligible activities.

**Method of Distribution**

This ESG NOFA’s new method of funding distribution to CoCs reflects the following changes:

- Removal of separate Balance of State (BoS) and CoC NOFAs allocations;
- Removal of BoS competitive and non-competitive funding pools;
- Removal of the three geographic regions (Bay Area, Central and Southern/Imperial)
- Single formula-based allocation to calculate the estimated funding for each of 40 eligible CoCs; and,
- Performance measures will be added to the allocation formula in 2027.

**Three-year NOFA cycle**

HCD plans on issuing one ESG NOFA every three years (2024, 2027, 2030, etc.), capturing all three years of estimated HUD funding in one application and Standard Agreement. Applicants awarded under this 2024 ESG NOFA will enter into one Standard Agreement that identifies the following annual funding cycles:

- 1st annual funding cycle (initial contract) – 2024 – 2026 - the initial Annual Funding Cycle has an expenditure period of 21 months instead of the regular 24 months;
- 2nd annual funding cycle (subsequent amendment) – 2025 – 2027; and,
- 3rd annual funding cycle (subsequent amendment) – 2026 – 2028.

**Amendments for Subsequent Annual Funding Cycles**

Funding for each subsequent annual funding cycle under the Standard Agreement will be completed through a contract amendment process. Subrecipients with active contracts under this NOFA will receive notification from HCD for the updated allocations for the annual funding cycles 2025 – 2027 and 2026 – 2028, once HUD has signed the grant agreement with HCD. Subrecipients may request to change the selected service provider and/or line item changes (must be less than 25% of the awarded budget), which will be captured through a contract amendment process.

**Multi-Year Standard Agreements and Period of Performance**

The Standard Agreement period of performance for each funding year is expected to be 21 months, so the total period-of performance could stretch to five years as show in the table below:

| Multi-Year Contract Example: 12/1/24 – 9/1/28 |                                      |                                      |                                      |                       |                       |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| NTE 3-Year Funding Cycle                      | Contract Year 1: 2024                | Contract Year 2: 2025                | Contract Year 3: 2026                | Contract Year 4: 2027 | Contract Year 5: 2028 |
| Funding Cycle 1 (2024)                        | Award Spending Period 12/1/24-9/1/26 |                                      |                                      |                       |                       |
| Funding Cycle 2 (2025)                        |                                      | Award Spending Period 12/1/25-9/1/27 |                                      |                       |                       |
| Funding Cycle 1 (2026)                        |                                      |                                      | Award Spending Period 12/1/26-9/1/28 |                       |                       |

**Role of the CoC in Project Selection**

Each CoC must recommend up to two eligible applicants to apply for each NOFA through a process that is consistent with the following requirements:

- Is a fair and open competition that avoids conflicts of interest;

- Follows the applicable procurement requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 200;
- Evaluates provider capacity/experience, and the ability to deliver services in non-entitlement areas;
- Evaluates eligibility pursuant to Section 202(b) of the ESG program guidelines;
- Evaluates adherence to Housing First practices detailed in the ESG program guidelines;
- Utilizes data and considers community input to identify unmet needs;
- Prioritizes activities that address the highest unmet need, considering other available funding and system-wide performance measures;
- Considers project-level performance measures when evaluating proposals; and,
- Collaborates with the local CoC.

#### ***Additional Details on Eligible Activities***

- A minimum of 40% of all contract awards must be used for RRH.
- Homelessness prevention is limited to 10% of any contract (cannot be a standalone).
- ESG shelter operation funds may be used for maintenance activities that do not materially add to the value of the building/property; do not appreciably prolong the useful life of the building/property; and do not adapt the building/property to new uses. Minor repairs may fall under the Build America, Buy America Act. (<https://www.hud.gov/baba>).
- Rental assistance payments provided as part of RRH or homelessness prevention cannot exceed HUD fair market rates (FMR) unless HUD grants a waiver. HCD has filed a waiver request for the FMR with HUD. This request is pending and HCD plans to file one each year.

#### ***Approved Policies and Procedures (P&Ps) for all Awarded Activities***

All subrecipients are required to develop, implement, and submit written P&Ps at the time of application. Subrecipient P&Ps must fully detail how the program will be administered. All P&Ps will be reviewed and approved by HCD prior to submission of the first request for funds for reimbursement. Agency P&Ps must also comply with the Housing for Health Partnership ESG policy and procedure manual expectations found here: [County of Santa Cruz ESG Policies and Procedures March 2024.pdf](#).

At minimum, P&Ps must include the following:

- Participant Triage
- Written Standards
- Coverage Area
- Coordinated Entry Integration
- Participant Eligibility
- Suite of Services
- Staffing Patterns
- Housing Problem-Solving
- Diversion (Street Outreach and Emergency Shelter)
- Rapid Exit (Street Outreach and Emergency Shelter)
- Other Requirements
- Termination and Appeals
- General Operations.

HCD manuals are available at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-and-funding/programs-active/emergency-solutions-grants> to help develop compliant P&Ps.

**Milestones**

Subrecipients awarded funding under this NOFA will be required to meet the expenditure milestones detailed in the chart below. These performance milestones will be further outlined in the Standard Agreement. Section 200 of the ESG program guidelines details penalties for failure to meet deadlines, including expenditure deadlines.

| <b>Annual Funding Cycle 2024 - 2026</b>                             |   |
|---|---|
| Commitment of ESG Funds (Standard Agreement Execution)              | Approximately August 2025   |
| Expenditure Deadline (75%)  | August 27, 2026<br>Maximum Recapture (as a percentage of total award) is the difference between 75% of the total award and the amount drawn in IDIS as of August 28, 2026.  |
| Expenditure Deadline (100%)   | September 26, 2026<br>Requests for reimbursement can occur until November 25, 2026.<br>Maximum Recapture (as a percentage of total award) is the difference between 100% of the total award and the amount drawn in IDIS as of November 25, 2026. |
| Contract Deadline   | 5 years from Standard Agreement Execution   |
| <b>Annual Funding Cycle 2025 - 2027</b>                             |   |
| Commitment of ESG Funds (Standard Agreement Amendment #1 Execution) | Approximately 90 days from HUD-Department FY2025 Grant Agreement Execution  |
| Expenditure Deadline (75%)  | TBD (60 days before 100% expenditure deadline)  |
| Expenditure Deadline (100%)   | TBD (24 months from HUD-Department Grant Agreement Execution)   |
| Contract Deadline   | 5 years from Standard Agreement Execution   |
| <b>Annual Funding Cycle 2026 - 2028</b>                             |   |
| Commitment of ESG Funds (Standard Agreement Amendment #2 Execution) | Approximately 90 days from HUD-Department FY2026 Grant Agreement Execution  |
| Expenditure Deadline (75%)  | TBD (60 days before 100% expenditure deadline)  |
| Expenditure Deadline (100%)   | TBD (24 months from HUD-Department Grant Agreement Execution)   |
| Contract Deadline   | 5 years from Standard Agreement Execution   |

**Selected Additional Key Requirements** (detailed in ESG NOFA and guidelines)

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 100% match</li><li>• Advancing racial equity</li><li>• Environmental review</li><li>• Build America, Buy America</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Board Authorizing Resolution</li><li>• Eligible costs</li><li>• Program evaluation</li></ul> |
|--|--|

**II. Overview of Local ESG Project Review and Recommendation Process**

**Introduction**

H4HP (our CoC) is responsible for carrying out the local process for reviewing and recommending projects for ESG funding to HCD. Therefore, ESG applicants in Santa Cruz County **must participate** in the H4HP process. Please review H4HP’s funding policies and standards for the ESG Program. All materials will be available at: <https://housingforhealthpartnership.org/ForProviders/FundingOpportunities.aspx>.

HCD (not H4HP) will provide the Standard Agreement and administer awards. Therefore, in addition to participating in the local process (above), applicants will need to complete the HCD ESG application in eCivis, and must meet all HCD ESG requirements and NOFA timelines, which are separate from this RFP.

**Eligible Local Applicants**

Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations or units of general-purpose local government that provide or contract with nonprofit organizations to provide eligible activities.

**Estimated Funding for Projects in Santa Cruz County**

\$299,232<sup>1</sup> is the FY2024 estimated allocation for projects in Santa Cruz County. Estimated allocations for FY2025 and FY2026 are \$209,478 each. The estimated allocation over the full three years is \$718,188.

**Number of Projects and Amounts Recommended**

H4HP will recommend either one project for all the funds or two projects to receive a portion of the funds. Each applicant must request three years of funding.

**Maximum and Minimum Grant Requests**

The maximum grant request per application is:

- \$299,232 for the first year
  - \$209,478 for the second year
  - \$209,478 for the third year
- (\$718,188 total over all three years).

The minimum grant request per application is:

- \$74,808 for the first year
  - \$52,570 for the second year
  - \$52,570 for the third year
- (\$179,547 total over all three years).

*Applicants should be prepared to adjust their budgets in case H4HP recommends a higher or lower amount.*

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<sup>1</sup> HCD has adjusted the funding in first year, using disencumbered funds to provide a transitional adjustment period for CoCs.

### **Match Requirement and Points**

All projects are subject to a 100% match requirement. That is, for each dollar of ESG funding requested, the project must have at least one dollar of documented matching funds. Matching contributions may be obtained from any source, including any federal source other than the ESG program, as well as state, local, and private sources. Please note that leverage will be a scoring factor this year (see below), so that applicants that exceed the 100% requirement may score higher.

### **Technical Assistance**

If you have questions regarding the local H4HP process or need technical assistance, contact Housing For Health (H4H) Division staff at [Sheryl.norteye@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:Sheryl.norteye@santacruzcountyca.gov) or our consultant at [tonygardnerconsulting@yahoo.com](mailto:tonygardnerconsulting@yahoo.com).

Questions regarding the State ESG NOFA and application can be directed to: [ESG@hcd.ca.gov](mailto:ESG@hcd.ca.gov).

### **Local ESG Timeline**

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. HCD issues ESG NOFA   | Thursday, December 24, 2024   |
| 2. H4HP issues local RFP to agencies for ESG projects  | Friday, January 17, 2025  |
| 3. HCD opens eCivis Grants Network with application materials  | Friday, January 31, 2025  |
| <b>4. Local ESG Applicant Orientation - Online</b>   | <b>Monday, January 27, 2024,<br/>10:30 AM – 12:00 PM, link to be provided</b> |
| <b>5. Deadline for applicants to submit completed Local ESG application to H4H staff for local review/recommendation process</b> | <b>Friday, February 14, 2025, 5 PM</b>  |
| 6. H4HP Funding Review Committee meets to review/recommend ESG application(s) for submission to CA HCD                           | Thursday, February 20, 2025, 3 – 5 PM, location Capitola Library              |
| 7. H4HP Board meeting, includes approval of recommended ESG applications   | Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 3 – 6 PM, location TBD                          |
| <b>8. Deadline for recommended applicant(s) to submit final ESG application to HCD in eCivis</b>                                 | <b>March 28, 2025, 5 PM</b>   |

### **Local Submission Requirements**

Email this completed checklist and the following items listed below to [Sheryl.norteye@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:Sheryl.norteye@santacruzcountyca.gov) AND [tonygardnerconsulting@yahoo.com](mailto:tonygardnerconsulting@yahoo.com) by the deadline of **February 14th, 2025, at 5 PM:**

1. Local ESG Project Application
2. Local ESG 3-Year Project Budget
3. Governing Board Authorizing Resolution (Must use State-approved format. May be a draft but must be fully executed prior to submission to the State)
4. Need Narratives (one page maximum)
5. Supplemental Narrative (only for agencies that received ESG funding in the past 2 years) Indicating:
  - a) Amount of each of your most recent two ESG awards
  - b) Amount expended from each of your most recent two ESG awards
  - c) Number of persons & households served by your most recent two ESG awards
6. HMIS or Comparable Database Report for the project (for 10/1/23-9/30/24 or most recent 12-month period)
7. Program Expenditure Financial Report for the project (for 10/1/23-9/30/24 or most recent 12-month period)



8. Evidence of Leverage and Match Commitment for Funding Year 1
9. Written Policies and Procedures (for all proposed program activities)
10. Evidence of Site Control (only for Emergency Shelter applications)
11. Most recent audit (nonprofits only)
12. IRS 501(c)(3) Evidence of Nonprofit Status (nonprofits only).

Please DO NOT send paper copies of any of the above.

Note: If recommended by the H4HP Policy Board, the applicant must also submit a completed ESG application to HCD in eCivis by the deadline of **March 28, 2025, 5 PM**. The HCD application is separate from the local application, and the applicant is responsible for reviewing and understanding all HCD ESG application requirements, meeting all HCD timelines, and submitting a complete HCD ESG application and all required attachments in eCivis by the deadline.

**Again, complete applications with all attachments are due in the HCD eCivis portal by Monday, March 28, 2025, 5 PM. Please see the State ESG program website for complete details on what you must submit.**

***Local ESG Application Threshold Requirements***

A local application must meet the following threshold requirements to be eligible for consideration:

- The application must be complete and received by the deadline specified in this RFP.
- The applicant must be eligible as described in this RFP, ESG program guidelines, and HCD ESG NOFA.
- Proposed activities must be eligible pursuant to this RFP, ESG program guidelines, and HCD ESG NOFA.
- The ESG funding request must be within the allowable amounts as described in this RFP.
- Emergency shelter applicants must have documented site control (as defined in the ESG program guidelines).
- The application must include a completed Authorizing Resolution (AR) on an acceptable Department-approved resolution template. For purposes of the local review and recommendation process, it may be a draft, but prior to submission to the State it must be approved by the applicant’s governing board and fully executed as described in Section V of the HCD ESG NOFA. Note: Failure to provide this complete AR on an acceptable HCD-approved resolution template by the HCD application due date will result in the immediate disqualification of the application.
- Applicants must have identified the required dollar-for-dollar match (100% of the ESG request) with funds from other public or private sources.
- Applicants must submit written P&Ps as described in this RFP, ESG program guidelines, and HCD ESG NOFA.
- The applicant must agree to utilize the H4H HMIS (or comparable system for domestic violence providers) and Coordinated Entry System (CES).

***Local ESG Objective Review Criteria***

Applications that meet the above threshold requirements will be rated using the following criteria.

|   |  |    |
|---|--|----|
| Applicant Experience<br><i>Application Form I</i> | Points will be provided for length of experience implementing the proposed project activities or activities like the proposed project. Points will be deducted for previous disencumbered ESG grants, unresolved ESG monitoring findings, and late ESG annual reports. | 20 |
|---|--|----|

|   |  |            |
|---|--|------------|
| Program Design<br><i>Application Form II</i>                                  | Quality of the proposed program in delivering activities to participants consistent with HCD and local CoC core practices, such as CES Participation, Housing First Adherence, and Progressive Engagement. Items such as the program P&Ps, staffing patterns, the budget relative to program design, target population, local conditions, and collaboration with community partners will be considered.  | 20         |
| Need for Funds/Local Priority<br><i>Application Form III</i>                  | <u>Need – up to 10 points</u><br>The need is supported by data, including data from HMIS and the most recent PIT count, and analysis provided by the applicant.<br><br><u>Local Priority – up to 20 points</u><br>The project meets H4HP ESG funding priorities (described below).   | 30         |
| Impact & Effectiveness<br><i>Application Form IV</i>                          | <u>Project Performance Data – up to 20 points</u><br>Projects with ESG or other funding for the <i>same activity</i> (e.g., RRH) will be evaluated using data from HMIS or a comparable database (for victim service or legal service providers). Projects will be evaluated for federal fiscal year, 10/1/23-9/30/24, or for those projects not in operation during this entire time, the most recent 12-month period. The performance measures will be: 1) average length of stay for leavers, and 2) percentage of leavers exiting to permanent housing.<br><br><u>Leveraging – up to 10 points</u><br>Scoring will be based upon the total value of written commitments for leverage to be available during the first funding cycle (Year 1) of the ESG grant. Leveraging includes all funds to be used for required dollar-for-dollar match, as well as any additional written commitments to the project of cash or in-kind resources. | 30         |
| Cost Efficiency<br><i>Application Form V</i>                                  | Projects with ESG or other funding for the <i>same activity</i> (e.g., RRH) will be evaluated based on the average cost per exit to permanent housing based on the total project budget, project type, and the number of exits to permanent housing for the federal fiscal year, 10/1/23-9/30/24, or for those projects not in operation during this entire time, the most recent 12-month period.   | 10         |
| Meets Objectives of the Local Homelessness Plan<br><i>Application Form VI</i> | Projects will be evaluated based upon the extent they identify and address specific strategic priorities described in the local Updated 3-Year Homelessness Strategic Plan (Housing for a Healthy Santa Cruz), as well as described in the State-required Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plan. Both documents can be found <a href="#">here</a> .  | 10         |
| <b>Total Points Available</b>   |  | <b>120</b> |

### ***H4HP Policy Board Funding Priorities***

The H4HP Policy Board has established the following priorities for recommending projects for ESG funding.

| <b>Priority Level</b> | <b>Focus Area</b>   |
|-----------------------|---|
| High                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New and existing RRH programs that are: (1) high performing, (2) targeted to serving families with children exiting emergency</li> </ul> |

|        |   |
|--------|---|
|        | shelters (including youth and DV shelters), and (3) that use at least 50% of ESG funds for rental assistance (while leveraging non-ESG sources for essential supportive services).  |
| Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New and existing RRH programs not meeting the above conditions</li> <li>• Existing emergency shelter programs, which are high performing and provide appropriate supportive services and linkages to other community resources.</li> </ul>   |
| Low    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing emergency shelter programs, which are not high performing, only provide night-by-night shelter, or do not provide appropriate supportive services and linkages to other community resources</li> <li>• Street outreach projects</li> <li>• HMIS project</li> <li>• All other projects.</li> </ul> |

***H4H Process for Rating and Recommendations***

The rating and recommendations process will include the following steps:

- The H4HP Policy Board will appoint a local Funding Review Committee including persons with lived experience of homelessness.
- The Funding Review Committee will review and rate projects and approve recommendations of projects to submit to the H4HP Policy Board for final approval.
- Funding Review Committee members will review projects with the best interest of persons experiencing homelessness in mind.
- Funding Review Committee members will sign a statement declaring any conflicts of interest and will recuse themselves as needed.
- H4H Division staff and consultant will verify that the above threshold requirements are met.
- Final recommendations will be put in writing and provided to applicants. No more than 2 projects will be recommended as required by the State ESG NOFA and policy guidelines.
- H4HP staff will submit the *HCD Recommendation Form*, located within a complete application that identifies the CoC’s recommended applicants, requested activities, and amount of funding.
- The H4HP Policy Board will confirm the final recommendations during its 2/26/25 meeting.

### III. Application Resources

- Local ESG application materials and information: <https://housingforhealthpartnership.org/ForProviders/FundingOpportunities.aspx>
- Updated 3-Year Strategic Plan & Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plan: <https://housingforhealthpartnership.org/About/HousingforaHealthySantaCruzCounty.aspx>
- 2024 PIT Count Report: <https://housingforhealthpartnership.org/LearningCenter/Point-in-TimeCounts.aspx>
- Santa Cruz County HMIS: <https://santacruz.bitfocus.com/>
- Santa Cruz County Coordinated Entry System: <https://housingforhealthpartnership.org/GetHelp/CoordinatedEntry.aspx>
- California HCD ESG Application and Program Information: <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-and-funding/programs-active/emergency-solutions-grants>
- California Online ESG Application (eCivis) and Information: [https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gn\\_redir/T/vyjsqf2kekyx](https://gn.ecivis.com/GO/gn_redir/T/vyjsqf2kekyx)
- Federal HUD ESG Program Information: <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/esg/> and [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/esg](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/esg)



Thank you, and if you have questions regarding the local H4HP process or need technical assistance, please contact H4H Division staff at [Sheryl.norteye@santacruzcountyca.gov](mailto:Sheryl.norteye@santacruzcountyca.gov) or our consultant at [tonygardnerconsulting@yahoo.com](mailto:tonygardnerconsulting@yahoo.com).