



Resolving
Homelessness
Together

Homeward Bound Manual (2024)

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Part 1

What is Homeward Bound?

Homeward Bound (HB) is a diversion and housing problem-solving service that helps individuals and families experiencing homelessness to (re)connect with stable housing and support networks located outside of Santa Cruz County by providing transportation to those housing opportunities.

Is Homeward Bound a program?

Homeward Bound is a strategy to use based on information learned through Connector or housing problem-solving conversations with people experiencing homelessness.

It is not a Continuum of Care (CoC) program; it is an approach that diverts participants into stable housing, rather than relying on already heavily impacted resources. People with healthy support networks are far more likely to self-resolve homelessness and stay housed than those without.

The Housing for Health Partnership's Housing Assistance Fund (HAF) may be used to support a Homeward Bound solution if the participant is unable to afford the cost of travel.

Part II: Eligibility

I. Who is Eligible for Homeward Bound HAFs?

Participants requesting HB must meet the following criteria:

- a. Housing Status criteria for HB:
 - i. Experiencing literal homelessness (see HUD definition, Category 1)
 - ii. Imminently homeless (losing housing within 14 days of request for assistance) – see HAF policies for documentation requirements.
 - iii. At-risk of homelessness due to fleeing domestic violence
- b. Currently residing in Santa Cruz County



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- c. Have an arrangement for safe, stable, indefinite housing upon arrival at their intended destination. Service Providers must contact persons identified by the participant who will be supplying housing to confirm arrangements are viable (see Challenges and Things to Consider section).

Eligible housing situation examples include:

- i. Residential unit (including SLEs) paid for by participant: *must show proof of residence or rental agreement.*
- ii. Housing provided by family or friends.
- iii. Employment/school that provides lodging (i.e. some hotels, fishing boats, live-in caregiver/nanny, Disney theme park intern, etc.).
- iv. Long-term residential recovery programs (6 months or longer), provided there is a housing plan after the person completes the program. Sometimes, family members are more likely to accept a participant into their household if they complete such a program.
- v. Transitional Housing (residential programs longer than 6 months that provide support to enter permanent housing).

Note: Homeless shelters, hotels, and hostels in another city do NOT count as housing or transitional housing.

II. Who is Not Eligible for Homeward Bound?

- Participants who are currently housed and not imminently homeless (unless fleeing domestic violence).
- Participants with no housing offer at their place of destination and intend to remain unhoused.
- Participants who intend to stay at their destination only a short time and return to Santa Cruz County; i.e. court appointment, family gathering, short-term recovery program, pleasure cruise, etc.
- Participants who are currently on parole or probation.
- Stranded tourists: Just because their house is not in Santa Cruz County does not make them “homeless.” Help them problem-solve using their internal resources (i.e. call family, travel agency, pawn jewelry, etc)
- Participants who are not in Santa Cruz County, but want to travel here or somewhere else. This includes participants in Monterey or Santa Clara County who reach out because they do not have access to a local Homeward Bound program. [Yes, these requests have been made in the past.]

III. Eligible Methods of Transportation



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- Greyhound bus: Cheap and easy to arrange, but time consuming for the traveler. Some transfer stops can be several hours long. No Greyhound pick-up in Santa Cruz County. Will need to get to Diridon Station in San Jose for pick up. Does not require ID.
- Amtrak Train: Comfortable, but expensive (especially for long journeys). Limited destinations. Usually involves some Amtrak bus travel. Will need to get to Diridon Station in San Jose for pick up. Gov't issued ID required.
- Airplane: Best option for long distance travel. Can be relatively cheap (especially when booking overnight flights) and is quicker than other modes of travel. Encourage participants to feel comfortable asking airport staff for help if confused. Will need transportation to the airport. Gov't issued ID required.
- Fuel: For participants with cars. Use GasBuddy.com to estimate the cost of a trip with year/make/model of car. Gas station gift cards can be purchased online or at Safeway through the HAF.

Part III: Challenges & Things to Consider

- Traveling with animals: Unless the animal is a legitimate service animal specially trained to perform tasks to support a person with a disability, traveling with an animal will be a problem. Note: an emotional support animal (ESA) is NOT considered a service animal.
 1. **Greyhound:** Only legitimate service animals are allowed on Greyhound: <https://www.greyhound.com/help-and-info/customers-with-disabilities>
 2. **Amtrak:** Dogs and cats under 20 lbs can travel on some train routes, but only for rides that are 7 hours or less. Riders must report the intent to travel with a pet when a ticket is purchased and pay a \$29-\$39 fee. Service animals are exempt from fees and restrictions: <https://www.amtrak.com/pets>
 3. **Airplane:** Airlines differ in their policies around traveling with animals. FAA rules no longer recognize ESAs as non-pets. Small animals can be considered carry-on if they are in a carrier and fit under the seat. Larger pets may be transported as checked luggage but several requirements must be met, including carrier size, food & water, and fees. Review airline policies before purchasing a ticket to confirm the participant and their pet can comply.
- Post-arrival plan: Do not just assume that once your participant arrives at their destination, things will all work out. Make it clear that the purpose of Homeward Bound is that they do not need to return to Santa Cruz County. Talk to the participant *and* the person taking them in about what their next steps will be.
 1. How long can the HB participant stay? If they say anything like, "Only for a few days/weeks," and will not negotiate for longer, do not proceed with Homeward Bound.



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2. What are the expectations for them living with their housing provider? Chores, looking for jobs, staying sober, etc. Confirm with the participant that they are willing to comply with identified expectations.
 3. What resources are in the area where they are moving that will help them maintain stability? i.e. mental health/recovery support, work opportunities, housing prices, etc. **Contact these resources for more information about how to access them; as well as what to expect, realistically, when they arrive.**
 4. What is their plan if things do not work out? If their contingency plan is to return to homelessness and come back to Santa Cruz County, do not proceed with the Homeward Bound request until you and the participant can identify reasonable alternatives.
- Reluctant/Hesitant Housing Providers: Sometimes, a potential HB housing provider may be hesitant, on the fence, or concerned about a participant's possible behavior after moving in.
 1. Validate the provider's concerns and that you understand how they want to feel in their own home.
 2. Ask open-ended, change-based questions: "What would you like to see from them for you to feel comfortable having them move in?" "What do you want them to work on when they arrive?" etc. **Remember:** An HB request does not have to be processed on the day of the participant's request. Like most successful solutions to homelessness, it may take time and planning.
 3. To avoid sounding pushy or "guilt-tripping," it's okay to explain to the potential provider that housing services in Santa Cruz County are scarce compared to the number of people in need and it is your job to help participants explore all possible housing pathways to avoid them remaining unhoused for an extended period of time.
 4. Communicate these concerns to the participant to see whether they are willing to meet these expectations.

Note: It is encouraged that you speak to the housing provider on your own, without the participant present, if possible. This will allow the provider to feel they can express their concerns honestly and prevent triggering an emotional reaction from the participant.

- Time Frame: Due to the HAF funds request process, HB requests cannot be fulfilled on the same day as the participant's request. It is advised that requests for travel assistance be made no sooner than 48 hours before the desired date of departure.

Part IV: Process for Request HAF funds for Homeward Bound

Step 1: Create a Clarity HMIS profile for the HB participant.



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- If multiple participants are traveling together, create a Clarity profile for all household members that will be traveling and connect their profiles via the Household Members. Designate a Head of Household.

Step 2: Collect and record contact and location information in Clarity.

- Contact information for HB participant(s) *and the person* providing them housing. Input into Clarity HMIS CONTACT section.
- Full street address of where the participant will be living when they arrive. Input into Clarity HMIS LOCATION section. [Modify date to when the participant will arrive at housing, once known].

Step 3: If participant is not enrolled in a housing program/shelter or requesting provider is not connected to the shelter/program: Enroll participant in Coordinated Entry. [Note: Requesting provider must be signed into the Housing For Health Partnership agency in Clarity to enroll a participant in CE]

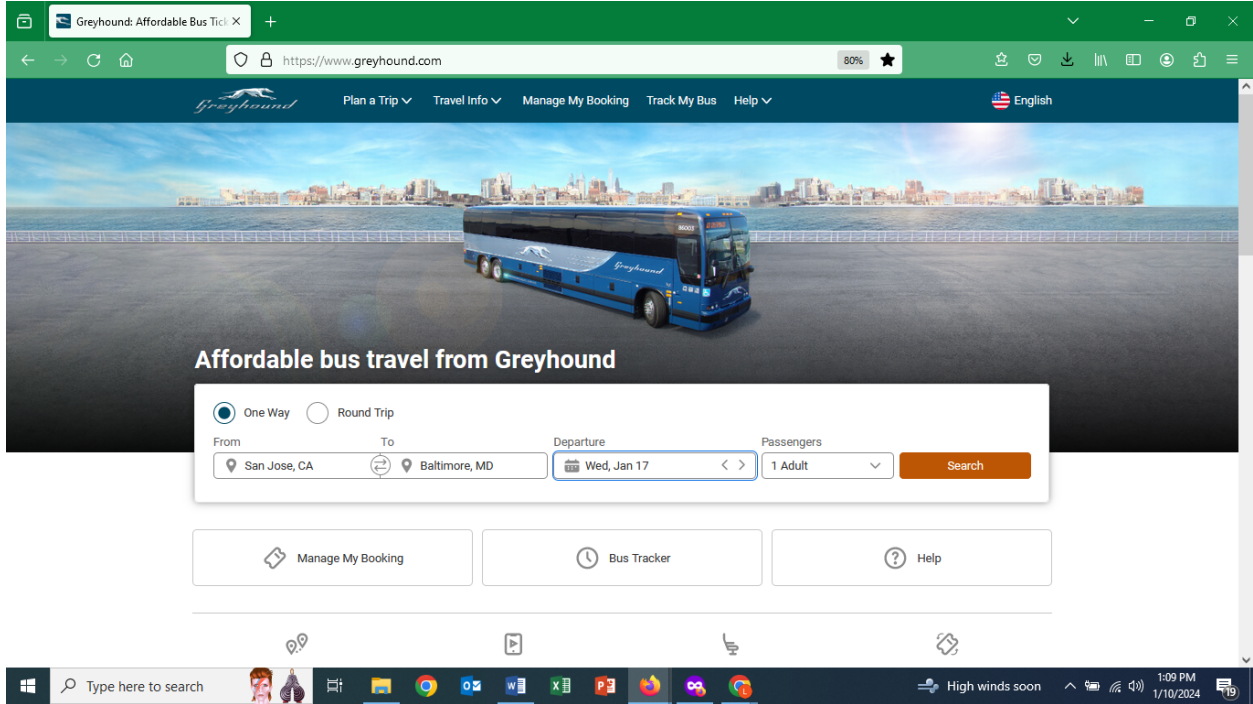
- Unless participant(s) decline to answer, be sure to collect all HUD-required enrollment data. Do not leave anything marked “Data Not Collected.”
- If Homeward Bound is the only service being provided by the connector, do not complete a Housing Needs Assessment or Housing Action Plan.
- If a multi-person household is using Homeward Bound, start the enrollment on the profile of the Head of Household.
Make sure to toggle “switches” under “Include Family Members” to add the other household members to the enrollment.

Step 4: Determine mode of transportation & prices.

- **Greyhound**
 1. Go to <https://www.greyhound.com>
 2. Search One Way routes and day of desired departure. In “From” section, put “San Jose, CA”



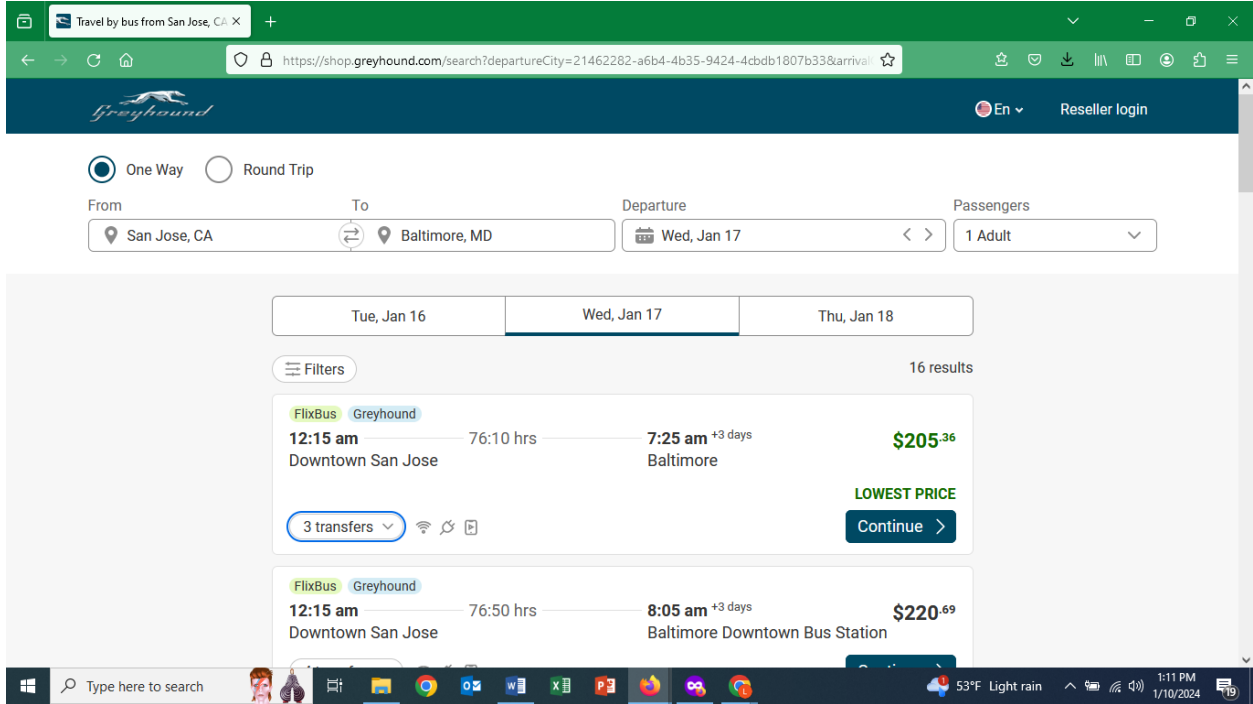
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3. Choose a departure time and route. When determining departure day/time, take into account travel time via Highway 17 bus from Santa Cruz. Also, consider the time of arrival (some will arrive late at night or very early morning) and stop/transfer lengths along the way (can range from 30min to 8hr).



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4. Take and save a screenshot of the Checkout screen (Press “Print Screen” on keyboard, then Paste (Ctrl+V) in image editing software), showing the route and total ticket price.



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checkout.title

https://shop.greyhound.com/checkout

Greyhound

< Back

1 checkout.section.passengers.title

checkout.passengers.firstName.label
(checkout.field.label.required)

John ✓

checkout.passengers.lastName.label
(checkout.field.label.required)

Doe ✓

2 checkout.section.seat_reservation.title

Select your seat
from \$5.99

3 checkout.section.extras.title

checkout.cart.title 09:35

Wed, Jan 17 → Sat, Jan 20

- San Jose Downtown 12:15 AM
- Baltimore (Ponca/Eastern Ave) 07:25 AM

passenger.type.adult.count \$205.36

checkout.cart.product.platformFee \$3.99

checkout.cart.total \$209.35

checkout.cart.total.vat

checkout.voucher.button.enter.text

Pay now

Type here to search

USD/JPY +0.91%

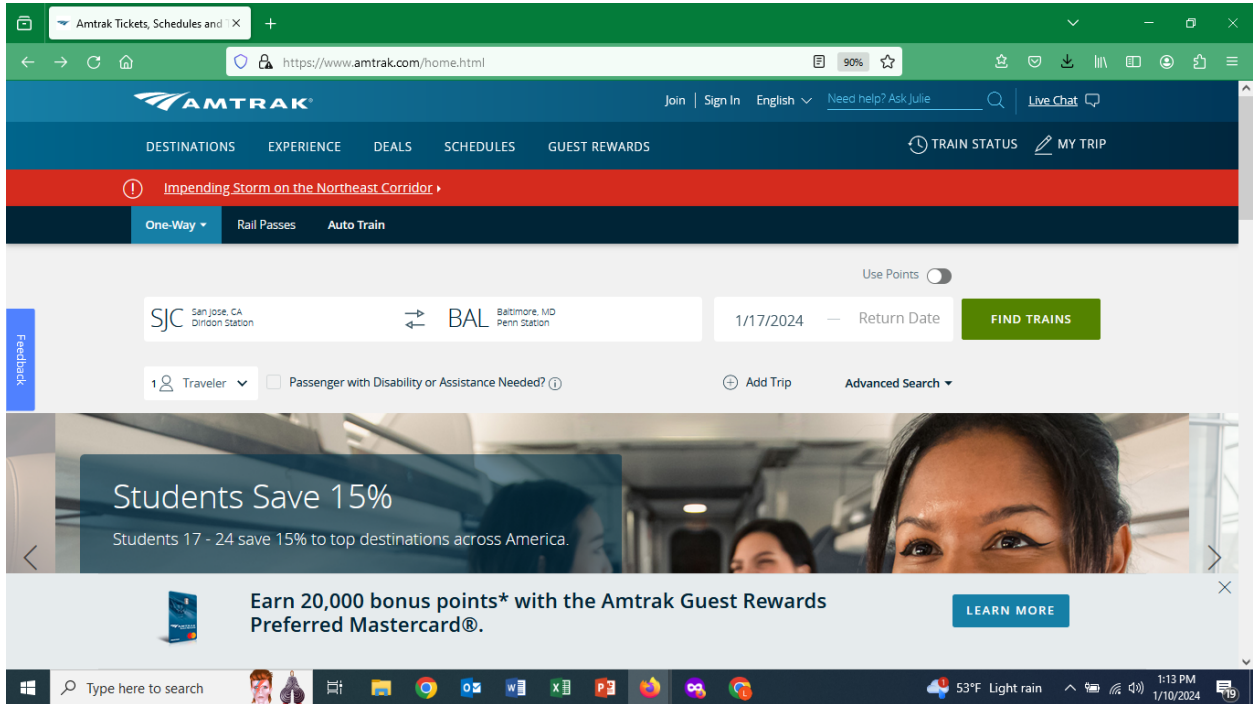
1:12 PM 1/10/2024



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- **Amtrak**

1. Go to <https://www.amtrak.com>
2. Search One Way routes and day of desired departure. In “From” section, put “San Jose, CA”





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3. Choose a departure time and route. When determining departure day/time, take into account travel time via Highway 17 bus from Santa Cruz. Also, consider the time of arrival; some will arrive late at night or very early morning. Depending on route, you may have to purchase multiple tickets for different trains/buses

The screenshot shows the Amtrak website interface for a search from San Jose, CA (Diridon Station) to Baltimore, MD (Penn Station) on Wednesday, January 17. The page displays two main options: 'Multiple Trains' and 'Mixed Service'. The 'Multiple Trains' option departs at 6:18 a.m. and arrives at 4:06 p.m. on Saturday, January 20, with a 78h 48m travel time across 4 segments. The fare for this option is \$460 for Coach, \$438 for Business, and \$1,318 for Private Rooms. The 'Mixed Service' option departs at 6:10 a.m. and arrives at 3:17 p.m. on Saturday, January 20, with a 78h 7m travel time across 5 segments. A detailed segment view for the 'Mixed Service' option shows 'Segment 1 of 4 | 1h 16m' from San Jose, CA - Diridon Station to Emeryville, CA, with a note that the user will be traveling by 524 Capitol Corridor. The website header includes navigation links for DESTINATIONS, EXPERIENCE, DEALS, SCHEDULES, GUEST REWARDS, TRAIN STATUS, and MY TRIP. The browser address bar shows the URL https://www.amtrak.com/tickets/departure.html.



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4. Take and save a screenshot of the Trip/Price Summary screen w/ the Trip Summary details showing (Click 'v' symbol under Trip Summary) (Press "Print Screen" on keyboard, then Paste (Ctrl+V) in image editing software)

The screenshot shows the Amtrak website's payment page. The browser address bar displays "https://www.amtrak.com/tickets/payment.html". The Amtrak logo is at the top left, with navigation links for "Join", "Sign In", "English", "Need help? Ask Julie", and "Live Chat". A secondary navigation bar includes "DESTINATIONS", "EXPERIENCE", "DEALS", "SCHEDULES", "GUEST REWARDS", "TRAIN STATUS", and "MY TRIP".

The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column, titled "Trip Summary", shows a train route from SJC to BAL, departing at 6:18a on Wednesday, Jan 17, and arriving at 4:06p on Saturday, Jan 20. Below this are tabs for "Payment", "Voucher", and "Gift Card". A "New Credit Card" section offers the Amtrak Guest Rewards Mastercard, with a note that it is required. Below this are input fields for "Card Number", "Exp. (mm/yy)", "Security Code", "Name on Card", "Billing Address 1", "Billing Address 2", "City", and "State/Province". A "Back" button is located below the "State/Province" field.

The right column, titled "Price Summary", shows a "Fare" of \$460.00 and a "Balance Due" of \$460.00. Below this is a checkbox for terms and conditions: "I have read and agree to the terms and conditions, including the binding arbitration agreement and Amtrak's baggage policy, which includes fees for excess or oversize baggage. The privacy policy applies."

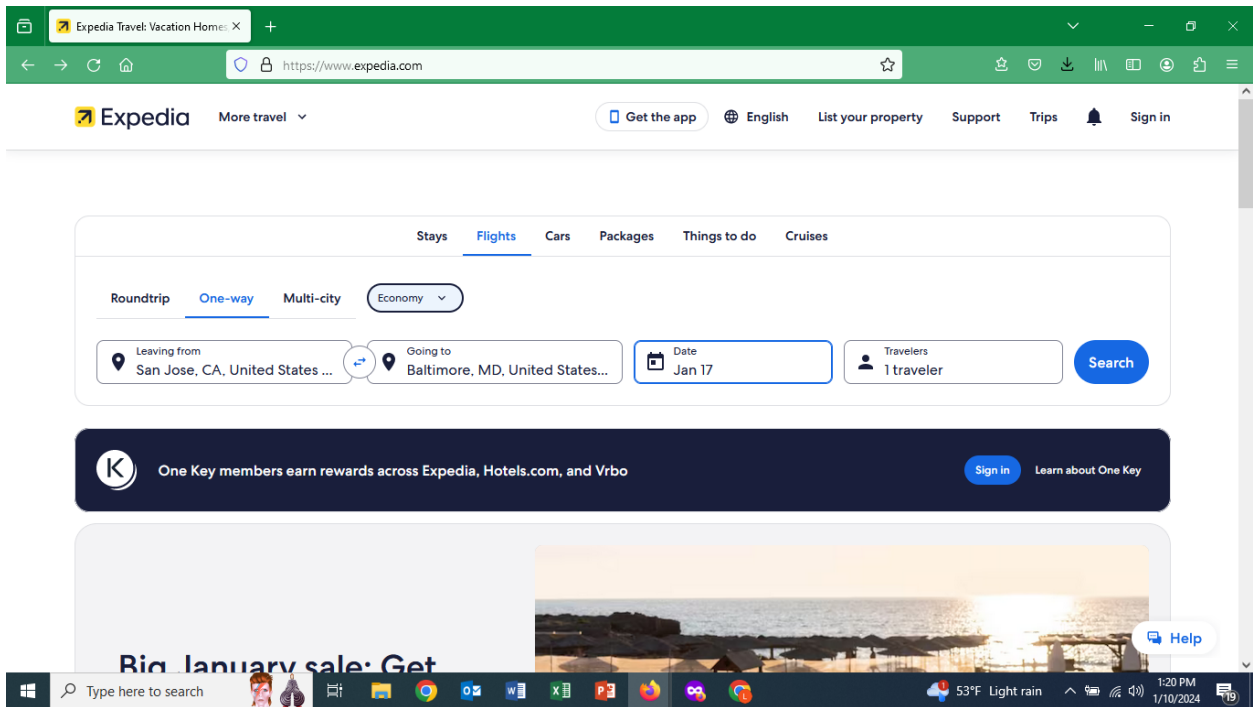
At the bottom of the page, there is a "PURCHASE" button. The Windows taskbar is visible at the very bottom, showing the search bar, taskbar icons, and system tray with a temperature of 53°F and a date of 1/10/2024.



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- **Air Travel**

1. Go to travel planning site, such as Expedia or Travelocity.
2. Search One-Way flights and day of desired departure. In “From” section, put “San Jose” and choose Norman Y. Mineta San Jose Intl”





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3. Choose a departure time and route. When determining departure day/time, take into account travel time from Santa Cruz and the airport. Make plan for participant to arrive at airport at least 2 hours before flight departure to allow room for possible delays and going through TSA.

The screenshot shows the Expedia website interface for a flight search from San Jose, CA (SJC) to Baltimore, MD (BWI). The search parameters are set to "One way", "1 traveler", and "Economy". The departure date is "Jan 17". The search results are sorted by "Price (Lowest)".

Price Tracking: Watch prices. Get email notifications if prices go up or down.

Filter by:

- Stops: 1 Stop (7), 2+ Stops (9)
- Airlines: Delta (10), Alaska Airlines (8), United (4), American Airlines (2), Spirit Airlines (1)

Choose departing flight > Review your trip

Day	Price
Sun, Jan 14	\$314
Mon, Jan 15	\$314
Tue, Jan 16	\$377
Wed, Jan 17	\$317
Thu, Jan 18	\$426
Fri, Jan 19	\$246
Sat, Jan 20	\$271

Prices may change based on availability and are not final until you complete your purchase. You can review any additional fees before checkout.

Sort by: Price (Lowest)

From \$426

7:00am - 12:30am ¹
San Jose (SJC) - Baltimore (BWI)
- Spirit Airlines

14h 30m (2 stops)
4h 45m in Las Vegas (LAS) • 1h 8m in Fort Lauderdale (F...)

\$317
One way per traveler

12:35pm - 10:39pm
San Jose (SJC) - Baltimore (BWI)
- Delta

7h 4m (1 stop)
42m in Atlanta (ATL)

\$426
One way per traveler

No change fees • Seat choice included

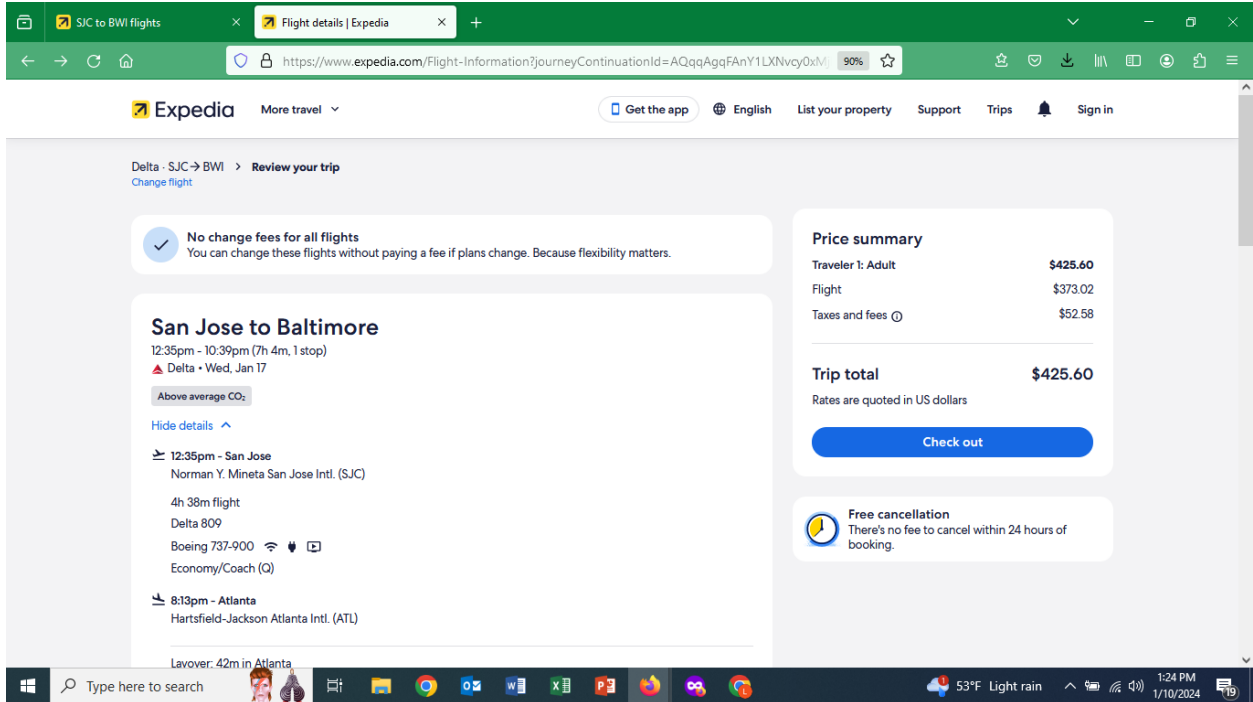
SAVE 12% ON SELECT HOTELS WITH COUPON CODE * "OURDR12"
*Book by 11:59pm PT, 3/31/2024. Stay by 6/30/2024. Terms Apply.
BOOK NOW

Dominican Republic



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4. Take and save a screenshot of the Trip/Price Summary screen w/ the flight details showing. (Press “Print Screen” on keyboard, then Paste (Ctrl+V) in image editing software)



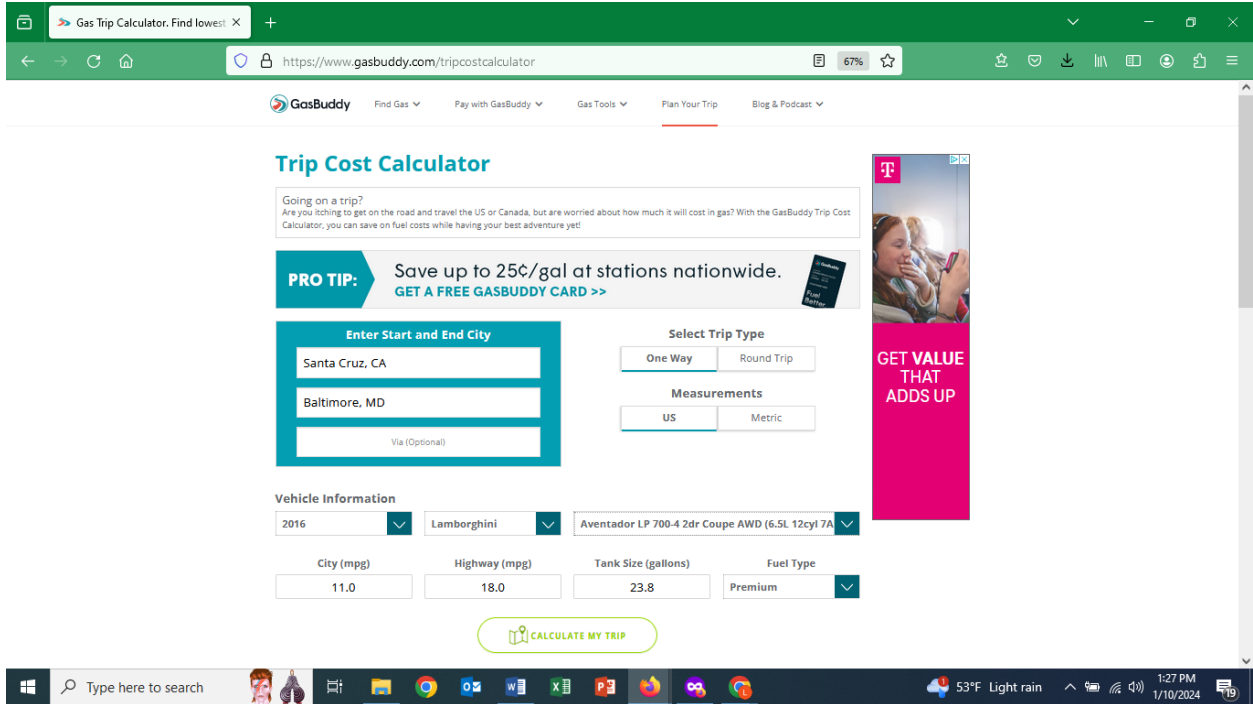
● Car Fuel

1. Determine the year/make/model of the car. If in doubt, look up the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) in the driver's side doorframe or under windshield on driver's side. Go to <https://vpic.nhtsa.dot.gov/decoder/> and enter VIN to get vehicle info.
2. Go to GasBuddy.com. Click on “Plan Your Trip” along top of page.



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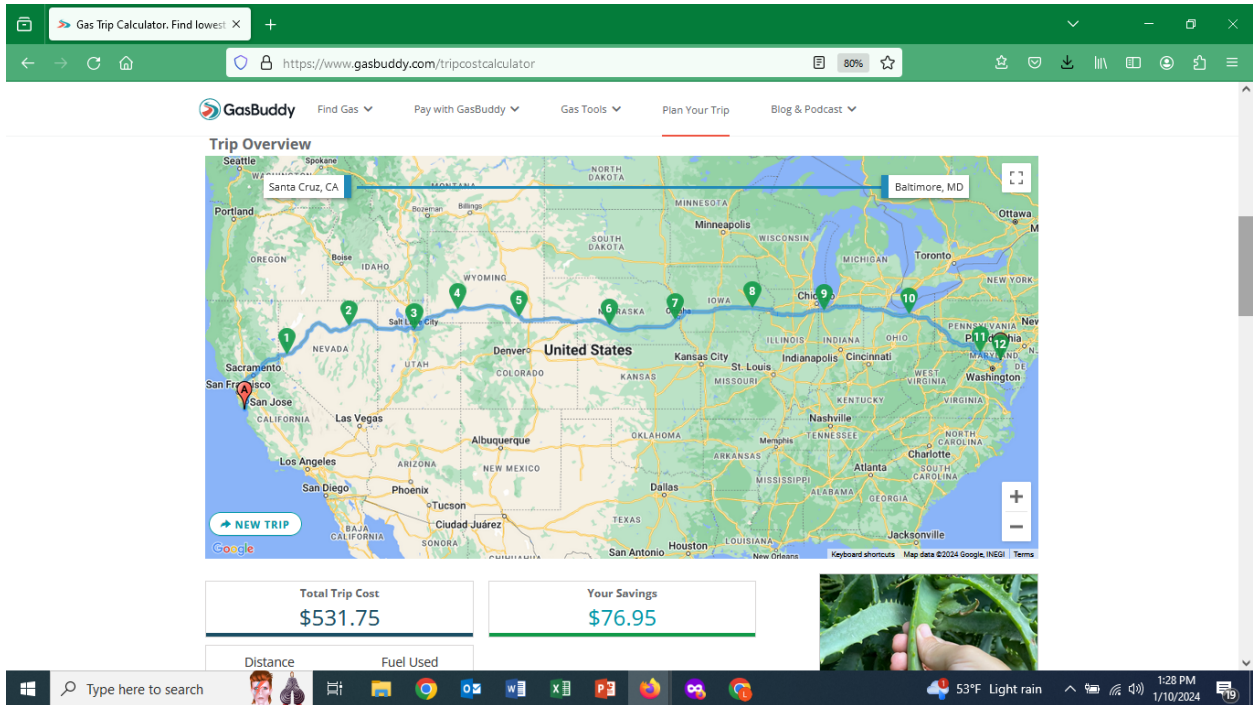
3. Choose “One Way,” enter year/make/model, and enter starting location and Destination; then click “Calculate Your Trip.”





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4. Take and save a screenshot of the Trip Overview showing the Total Trip Cost. You may also press Ctrl + P (Print); under Destination, select “Save to PDF;” save file to desired location.



Note: Due to traffic and fluctuating gas prices, it may be necessary to request more than what is listed as the “Total Trip Cost;” especially, if the participant is pulling a trailer.

Another Note: Depending on the distance of the drive, and especially if there are children in the household, it may also be necessary to explore requesting funds to pay for motel stays and food. Daily food needs not to exceed USGSA Per Diem rates as reflected by location of travel here: <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>



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Part V: Clarity HMIS Documentation

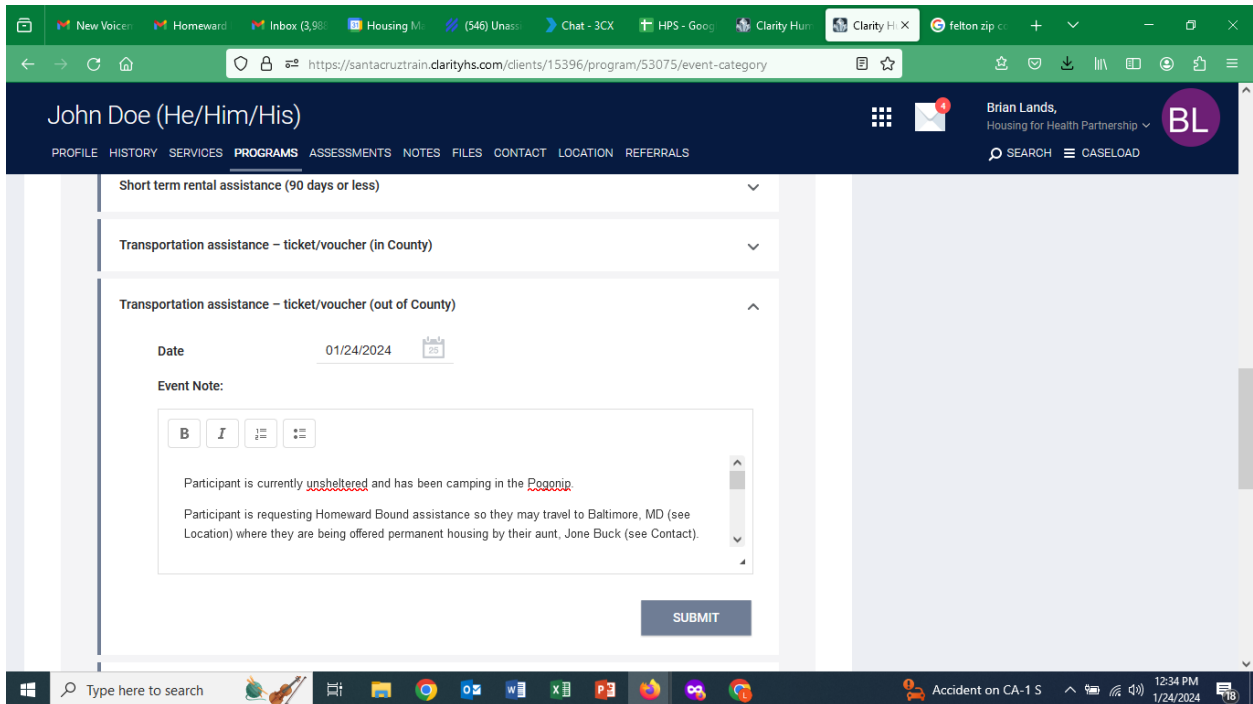
- For participants enrolled in a program/shelter & provider for program is submitting HB request:
From participant's main Clarity profile page, go to: Programs > [Program Name] > Provide Services > Housing Transition Navigation Services > Transportation Assistance/Advocacy/Coordination

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Clarity HMIS system. The user is logged in as Brian Lands, Housing Matters. The main navigation bar includes PROFILE, HISTORY, SERVICES, PROGRAMS, ASSESSMENTS, NOTES, CONTACT, LOCATION, FILES, and REFERRALS. The current view is the 'PROGRAMS' section for a client named John Doe. The 'TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE/ADVOCACY/COORDINATION' program is selected, and the 'Event Date' is set to 01/24/2024. The 'Service Note' field contains the following text: "Participant is currently unsheltered and has been camping in the Pogonip. Participant is requesting Homeward Bound assistance so they may travel to Baltimore, MD (see Location) where they are being offered permanent housing by their aunt, Jone Buck (see Contact)." A 'SUBMIT' button is visible at the bottom of the form.



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- For participants enrolled in Coordinated Entry (CE) and the Connector is submitting HB request:
Make sure you are signed into Housing For Health Partnership agency. From participant's main Clarity profile, go to: Programs > Coordinated Entry > Events > Referral to emergency assistance/flex fund/furniture assistance > Transportation Assistance – ticket/voucher (out of County)



Note: For CE participants: When recording an engagement with a participant related to mediation, problem-solving, and planning for a Homeward Bound housing solution, but *not* submitting a request for HAF funds, enter notes under Programs > Coordinated Entry > Events > *Problem Solving/Diversion/Rapid Resolution intervention or service > Transportation Assistance/Advocacy/Coordination*



What to include in HAF request note for Homeward Bound:

- Participant's current housing status
- Requested destination and person who will be providing the housing (Name and relationship to requester)
- What you are requesting. i.e. Greyhound/Amtrak/Airline ticket, gas card, etc)
- Total amount of funds requested (if multiple purchases need to be made, include cost of each separate purchase)
- Estimated dates/times of departure and move-in.

Sample HAF/HB Note:

Participant is currently unsheltered and has been camping in the Pogonip.

Participant is requesting Homeward Bound assistance so they may travel to Baltimore, MD (see Location) where they are being offered permanent housing by their aunt, Jone Buck (see Contact).

This writer has contacted John's Aunt Jone and confirmed the offer of permanent housing. She says that John may stay with her as long as he is sober and working on recovery. John agreed to this and we identified recovery services for him to seek out when he arrives.

This writer will submit a request for HAF funds to purchase an American Airlines ticket, via Expedia.com, from San Jose, CA to Baltimore, MD. The desired flight will depart on 1/17/24 at 12:07pm and arrive in Baltimore, MD on 1/18/24 at 11:34pm for \$426.00. Participant has 1 piece of luggage that will need to be checked for a \$60 fee. Funds request total will be for \$486.00.

After submitting the note, take and save a screenshot of the note. (Press "Print Screen" on keyboard, then Paste (Ctrl+V) in image editing software and save to your device)

Complete Housing Assistance Funds request form

1. Go to URL:
<https://homelessactionpartnership.org/ForProviders/HousingAssistanceFund.aspx>. Click on "H4H Flexible Spending Fund Check Request Form" and sign in to DocuSign with name and email address.
2. Complete Housing Assistance Fund Application. All sections outlined in red must be completed.
3. Under "Request Details," it's easiest to Copy (Ctrl + C) and Paste (Ctrl +V) the text from the HMIS event/service record.



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4. Under “Payable to,” enter the name of the vendor the HB resource will be purchased from (i.e. Greyhound, Amtrak, Travelocity, American Airlines, Safeway, etc).
For HB purposes, choose “Payment will be picked up by.” Digital bus/train/plane tickets purchased by CAB w/ HAF funds may be emailed to the requesting service provider to be printed out and given to the participant. Gas cards may have to be picked up by the service provider at a North County Human Services Dept’s 1000 Emeline office or CAB’s office in Watsonville. Enter details into “Other Notes” box.
5. Under “Payment Documentation,” attach the screenshots of the Trip/Price Summary from the ticket vendor, Gas Buddy, or other documentation showing the price of travel (see Step 3) as well as the screenshot of the Clarity note describing the request (see Step 4). Attach these to “Other Documentation Type Attached”.
6. Under “Payment Documentation Notes,” list the payment documentation that was attached.
7. Click “Finish” at the bottom of the page.

Part VI: H4HP HAF Request Review

H4HP staff will review the HAF request to determine if the Homeward Bound plan meets eligibility requirements and all necessary documentation has been submitted. An email will be sent to the requesting party letting them know whether the request was approved or denied and why.

If request is Approved, it will be sent to the Community Action Board, who will complete the purchase(s) and follow up with the requester to arrange ticket/gas card retrieval.

After giving the ticket/gas card to the participant, enter a note confirming delivery in the appropriate area of Clarity (see HMIS Section).

Follow-up

1. 1-3 days after the expected date of arrival at the participant’s HB destination, contact the participant and/or their housing provider in order to confirm that they have arrived safely and are housed.
2. Enter a note into the appropriate area of Clarity (see Step 4) indicating whether or not they have arrived. **If recording an Event in Coordinated Entry,** choose “Yes” as the Result and enter the date the participant moved into housing.
3. For CE and shelter program participants, Exit participant from the program in Clarity, choosing the appropriate housing situation they are entering under “Destination” and updating any other information as needed. If moving in with family or friends, the provider must select “Staying with family/friends, permanent tenure” destination



option. If “temporary tenure” option is selected, this is not considered Homeward Bound.

[Future Section: International Homeward Bound]