



County of Santa Cruz

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Housing for Health Division

Robert Ratner, Director

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Dear Housing for Health Partnership Members and Partner Agencies,

I am pleased to announce that the County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department (HSD) has been allocated, and will be accepting, \$203,725 from the California Department of Social Services' (DSS) fiscal year (FY) 2024-25 Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP). HDAP provides housing supports and disability benefit advocacy for people experiencing homelessness who are likely eligible for disability benefits but are not yet receiving them. HSD has contracted with Housing Matters and Senior Legal Services to provide HDAP services to eligible participants on its behalf. All referrals to the program come through the local [Coordinated Entry System](#).

In fiscal years 2021-22 and 2022-23, the County received significantly increased HDAP one-time funding awards; this year these amounts were subsequently reduced due to statewide funding redistribution and in alignment with the reductions made in the state Budget Act of 2024 (see table below). Based on the state's new annual, ongoing HDAP appropriation, last year the County experienced a significant drop in HDAP funds; the County received the same allocation this fiscal year. In anticipation of the funding drop, the County planned to utilize FY 2021-22 and FY 2022-23 allocations over multiple years to prevent a steep decline in service capacity. If state funding remains at the FY 23/24 level, program capacity will decline significantly in future years. The program currently has capacity to serve 34 households each year and expects to serve that same number in the County's next fiscal year.

	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25
Type of Funding	One-time	One-time	On-going	On-going
Amount Awarded	\$1,502,142	\$1,507,436	\$203,725	\$203,725
Revised Award Amount	\$1,458,624	\$636,048	NA	NA
Revised Expenditure Deadline	6/30/2025	6/30/2026	6/30/2025	6/30/2025

Per DSS HDAP funding requirements, this letter summarizes HDAP related benefits, eligibility, and program related requirements with regards to HMIS and the local Coordinated Entry System, as described in the October 4, 2024, Letter to All County Welfare Directors in California regarding the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program ([HDAP All County Welfare Directors Letter October 2024](#)).

Program Eligibility:

Individuals, youth, and families are eligible for HDAP if they are likely eligible for disability benefits and are: A) Chronically homeless; B) Homeless; or C) At risk of homelessness. Consistent with established practice, programs should evaluate funding and program capacity to prioritize serving people with the highest needs and vulnerabilities, which should include individuals experiencing chronic homelessness or with severe health conditions.

Program Design and Benefits:

HDAP is intended to support participants in meeting two important program goals: securing disability benefits and stabilizing in permanent housing. Grantees and their contracted service providers must offer all four of HDAP's core components concurrently:

- **Outreach:** Activities geared at identifying need, targeting resources, and/or connecting likely eligible individuals to HDAP services, including screening and assessment activities.
- **Case management:** These activities include the provision of care coordination intended to help clients navigate and address barriers to housing and disability benefits, including connections to Medi-Cal, CalFresh, behavioral health agencies, and legal aid.
- **Disability benefits advocacy:** Activities shall include seeking all disability benefits the client may be eligible to receive as appropriate, including Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Social Security Retirement or Survivors Benefits, Veterans' Disability Compensation benefits, and the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI)
- **Housing assistance:** HDAP can assist participants in finding and securing interim and permanent housing, maintaining current housing, and stabilizing in new housing.

Collaboration and Integration Requirements:

CDSS requires HDAP grantees to actively collaborate with local, state, and federal housing and health systems to make the best use of available funding and link clients to needed services. This includes collaborating on the implementation of HDAP with Continuums of Care (CoC) and

Coordinated Entry Systems, behavioral health systems, medical institutions and emergency response systems, housing authorities, public benefit agencies, and legal aid and benefit advocacy providers.

HDAP grantees should collaborate with local housing, health, benefits advocacy, and social service networks, public benefit advocacy agencies and their broader housing services systems on the development and implementation of HDAP. This includes establishing or continuing to support meaningful partnerships with the local HUD CoC, tribal housing authorities, health and behavioral health systems, and other local housing service providers, as appropriate.

Effective July 1, 2020, all grantees operating an HDAP are required to ensure participants served by HDAP are entered into their local HMIS. In Santa Cruz County, referrals for available HDAP assistance will come through the Housing for Health Partnership Coordinated Entry System. HDAP service providers work closely with the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Cruz and other permanent supportive housing subsidy resources to link HDAP clients with ongoing housing resources when available.

I look forward to working with you as we continue implementation of the local HDAP. If you have any questions, please contact Jessica Scheiner, Housing for Health Manager at jessica.scheiner@santacruzcounty.us or 831-454-4088.

Thank you,

Robert Ratner

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County of Santa Cruz Human Services Department