

KERN COUNTY HOMELESS COLLABORATIVE 2015 HUD CONTINUUM OF CARE FUNDING

The Kern County Homeless Collaborative serves as the Continuum of Care for Bakersfield/Kern County. Functioning as a Housing First community, housing is prioritized for people with the longest histories of homelessness and greatest need. Priority is established by administering the VI-SPDAT, an interview prioritization tool to identify those most vulnerable. Participants are matched to appropriate housing resources through a community wide system, disbursing vouchers as available each week.

Eight of the Collaborative's 28 members were awarded housing and services project funding for a 2016-2017 fiscal year, through the US the Housing and Urban Development Department's Continuum of Care program, as well as two administrative grants for the 2015 NOFA (2016-2017FY) in the amount of \$4,790,096.

Project grants serve all of Kern County and include:

Alliance Transitional Housing Project, \$133,139 - A two-unit, four-bedroom, and 16-bed facility is designed to meet the long-term needs (up to 24 months) for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault and their children. Transitional Housing includes: food, clothing and supportive services with a focus on permanent housing and employment skills development. Achieving financial independence is vital to adults who enter the Alliance TH program since many do so with little or no financial support, are mono-lingual, and/or have limited education/work experience. The grant aims to serve up to 70 individuals.

Bakersfield Homeless Center, \$760,148 - "A Way Home" Project moves Bakersfield Homeless Center (BHC) homeless clients from emergency shelter to self-sufficiency and sustainable community living. Utilizing case management and social services, job development and housing programs reduce lengths of homelessness. The project aims to serve 750 homeless single adults and families with children.

Three "Casa Nueva Placement and Supportive Services Projects", in partnership with the Housing Authority of the County of Kern who provides Shelter Plus Care vouchers, assist people with disabilities and homeless (BHC) adult clients. Case management promotes client success in maintaining housing, provides a framework to coordinate and provide social services (for those with complex care needs beyond permanent housing) includes housing and job search training and placement, education, and GED classes, licensed childcare services (ages 0-5), and a clothing and household item donations center as well as information and referrals to other community services.

Rapid Re-housing (RRH) projects focus on homeless families with children on-site at BHC and include: client intake and comprehensive case management (through six months after housing); includes client budget review, referrals to community partners for food, furniture, and low cost programs; landlord outreach and recruitment to advocate on behalf of clients; housing search and transportation assistance (as needed); and housing health and safety requirement assistance. BHC anticipates serving nearly 60 RRH households.

California Veteran's Assistance Foundation, \$120,332 - The Rally Point project is a 10-unit, permanent supportive housing project for homeless veterans (who have a disabling condition and low income) and their families. The project is service-center based with scattered housing units. Rally Point has six project phases: outreach and referrals, intake and case management, permanent housing placement, service assessment, stabilization, tracking and follow up, and family support for those with children.

Clinica Sierra Vista, \$460,350 - Griffin's Gate serves as a bridge in supporting homeless individuals to become self-sufficient within 24 months and transition into permanent housing. Referrals are received from hospitals, community agencies and/or self-referrals for low-barrier transitional housing in a sober environment. The project assists individuals based on need and homelessness, serving a minimum of 34 homeless adults, reducing barriers of care whenever possible (e.g. substance abuse and nursing services). Transitional housing and includes: utilities, food, hygiene products and household supplies.

Two “Homeless Most Vulnerable” permanent supportive housing programs aim at prioritizing and housing at least 71 individuals of the most vulnerable, chronically homeless population. By utilizing mainstream Housing Choice vouchers, through the Housing Authority, Clinica helps connect individuals to housing, providing intensive case management to ensure stable housing, and often links to mainstream benefits and/or employment services. No service participation requirements or preconditions, such as sobriety or a minimum income threshold are required.

Sebastian House HIV/AIDS homeless project utilizes a master leasing model providing permanent housing opportunities to 10-12 chronically homeless individuals and families where at least one of the household individuals lives with the disability of HIV/AIDS. The Sebastian House project, in coordination with the Kern Life-line Project, connects people to: HIV medical care, the AIDS Drug Assistance Program, case management services, mental health services, oral and vision health, transportation, food assistance, support groups and treatment including: psychiatric, substance abuse, nutritional and medication adherence.

Flood Bakersfield Ministries, \$94,263 - Flood’s street outreach workers operate throughout the county to identify those most in need. Participants are assessed to identify potential barriers, steps to resolution and associated timeliness. Flood creates a housing stability plan with each client. Project HOME and Project HOME 2, Flood’s permanent housing projects, provide housing placement, case management and supportive services to families and chronically homeless persons. Flood works to retain permanent housing exclusively through tenant-based rental assistance vouchers for Housing Authority housing projects. An estimated 210 households will transition from homelessness through the projects. After housing case management monitors progress and compliance with the housing stability plan. The project assists clients in accessing mainstream benefits (as eligible) and various life skills support training is available.

Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance (GBLA), \$117,643 - The Community Homeless Law Center Project of GBLA’s project attorney, legal case manager and outreach coordinator provide legal assistance to eligible homeless persons, eliminating legal barriers and obtaining and maintaining permanent housing and income. CHLCP facilitates civil legal assistance and/or participation in Homeless Court, through bi-monthly Superior Court misdemeanor and traffic sessions. Serving people who are homeless and wrongfully denied access to housing and/or other services the project links them to or help them maintain housing. Targeted outreach throughout Kern links 100 of the most vulnerable participants to an offer of housing through a “Legal Plan of Action” promoting permanent housing and self-sufficiency. GBLA coordinates a minimum of one SOAR (SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery) training for homelessness stakeholders, a proven effective strategy for homeless individuals with disabling conditions to access income and housing. At least 50 homeless people are connected to permanent housing

Housing Authority of the County of Kern, \$2,743,899 - Casa Nueva Permanent Supportive Housing and Casa Nueva Bonus programs are first time renewal rental assistance projects (formally Shelter Plus Care) providing permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families with disabilities. The Housing Authority provides rental assistance vouchers to clients who are referred by partner agencies.

Rental assistance is based on the household income and is paid to the landlord. Security deposit assistance can be provided and rental assistance can continue indefinitely. Casa Nueva programs’ participants receive assistance from the referring agencies in finding a suitable home anywhere in the community. The Housing Authority inspects the unit prior to move-in and again annually to insure safety. Referring agencies provide ongoing case management to help individuals remain in housing and increase income.

Casa Bella is a rental assistance project that provides permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals and families through rental assistance vouchers to eligible homeless individuals and families with disabilities. Rental assistance is based upon the household income and is paid directly to the landlord. Security deposit assistance can be provided as needed and the rental assistance can continue indefinitely.

El Programa Dulce Hogar is a renewal rental assistance project providing permanent supportive housing for homeless individuals and families with disabilities, providing rental assistance vouchers to eligible homeless individuals and families who have a family member with a disability. Rental assistance is based on the income of the household and is paid directly to the landlord. Security deposit assistance can be provided as needed and the rental assistance can continue indefinitely. Participants receive assistance from the referring agencies to find a suitable home. The Housing Authority inspects prior to move-in and annually to insure safety. Referring agencies provide ongoing case management to help people remain in the housing and increase their income.

Women’s Center-High Desert, \$116,606 - Project HOPE, (Housing Opportunities for a Peaceful Environment) is a transitional housing program based in Ridgecrest, providing a vital service to homeless domestic violence victims (single adults and families with children). With other shelter/transitional services 120 miles away, services can be impossible to access at due to inclement weather and lack of public transportation. Project HOPE does sometimes provide shelter to clients from Bakersfield and Taft shelters when those facilities are at capacity or when safety is a concern for higher risk clients.

Participants are provided with daily case management and advocacy to assist with: counseling (emotional and financial); and social, life and parenting skills; education (to support a healthy living environment) and increasing income and gaining resources to obtain and sustain permanent housing (whether through obtaining employment or mainstream benefits such as social security).

Administrative grants

Kern County Mental Health (KCMH), \$80,409 - KCMH administers the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a data base system tracking and reporting numbers of unduplicated homeless persons identified by agencies involved in the Kern County Homeless Collaborative. The countywide HMIS system for homeless service providers is designed to share data (“county wide homelessness data” rather than “agency data”), establishing unduplicated numbers, characteristics, service activities and outcomes of the local homeless population and the processes and systems established to end homelessness. Local homeless programs require intricate data management through user licenses, MOU’s, training, HIPPA compliant data sharing, and more.

A Collaborative **Planning Grant, \$163, 307** - was awarded to the Kern County Homeless Collaborative and is administered by United Way of Kern County, the fiscal agent of the Collaborative and Collaborative Applicant for the consolidated HUD application. The grant includes funding for salaries, a landlord symposium, residential inspector training, a community wide cost benefit analysis, public relations efforts to provide education and awareness to the community, and training opportunities for staff to research other communities who have been successful with ending homelessness.