



Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care

Tuesday, July 14, 2020

3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Zoom Virtual Meeting Hosted by Butte County Employment & Social Services

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86019597053?pwd=RGZ1c1B4dVQyY1k4YzFuNWdCbFdkQT09>

Join by Phone: +1 669 900 9128

Zoom Meeting ID: 860 1959 7053, **Password:** 514169

COC COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Alex Brown	Eric Smith	Marin Hambley	Tami Ritter
Anastacia Snyder	Joy Amaro	Megan Meloy	Thomas Tenorio
Don Taylor	Larry Hayden	Melissa Frohrip	
Ed Mayer	Lisa Currier	Sarah Frohock	
Emily Bateman	Marie Demers	Scott Huber	

CoC Coordinator: Briana Harvey-Butterfield

Recording: Staci Parisi

AGENDA

1. Convene Meeting *-A. Snyder*
 - A) Virtual Meeting Format. Recording Meeting.
2. Introductions *-Council*
3. Emergency Solutions Grants Program - Coronavirus (ESG-CV) – ***ACTION*** *-Council*
4. Reminder: Next Regular Council Meeting – Monday, July 20, 2020
Butte County Department of Employment & Social Services to host Zoom Virtual Meeting

ADJOURN



Butte Countywide Homeless Continuum of Care

DATE: July 13, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR: CoC Council, Members and participating Agencies

FROM: Don Taylor
Housing and Homeless Administrator
Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services
Butte Homeless CoC Lead Agency

SUBJECT: Emergency Solutions Grants Program (ESG) -Coronavirus

Background

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stimulus (CARES) Act was enacted on March 27, 2020 and made available approximately \$42 million in federal funds for the State Emergency Solutions Grant Program. This is referred to as ESG-CV. The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) eliminated the separate Administrative Entity (AE) and Balance of State (BoS) allocations and moved to a single direct-allocation method in an effort to issue awards in the most efficient and timely manner. This method of distribution was approved in the Executive Order N-66-20 issued May 29, 2020, which provides for partial waiver of the California State ESG Regulations. HCD released a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) on June 1, 2020 with funds allocated to eligible Continuum of Care (CoC) Service Areas. The ESG-CV NOFA provides funding for the following objectives:

- Prevent, prepare for and respond to coronavirus among individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness or receiving homeless assistance
- Support additional homeless assistance and homeless prevention activities to mitigate the impacts created by the coronavirus

The ESG-CV NOFA provides information related to the application and all required documentation has to be submitted to HCD by 5:00p.m. on July 20,2020. The County of Butte, as the AE for the Butte County CoC (CA-519) will complete the application. The Housing and Homeless Branch of the Butte County Department of Employment and Social Services will be responsible for administering ESG-CV funds in collaboration with local CoC CA-519 for their respective CoC Service Area. The allocation for our local CoC is \$921,500 with 5.25% of the allocation available for grant administration. This allocation has also been referred to as ESG-CV Round 1 with the expectation of Rounds 2, 3, and 4 to follow. Rounds 1 and 2 were allocated under the CARES Act. The total Appropriations for the CARES Act ESG-CV was \$4,000,000,000. Round 1 allocations were based on the release of \$1,000,000,000 Round 2 allocations will be based on the release of \$2,960,000,000. Based on a similar formula for allocation Butte County CoC expects the Round 2 allocation for ESG-CV to be approximately \$2,727,640.

For the ESG-CV NOFA, all activities permitted under the Federal ESG regulations shall be eligible under 24 CFR Part 576.100. The activities include emergency shelter (ES), rapid re-housing (RRH), street outreach (SO), homeless prevention (HP), and support for HMIS activities. This would include the Project Room Key non-congregate shelter (NCS) activities currently provided by the CoC partners in the countywide response to the

coronavirus. The maximum allocation cap on ES and SO established pursuant to section 415(b)(1) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act shall not apply to amounts provided under the CARES Act. In addition, Federal habitability and environmental review standards and requirements shall not apply to the use of such ESG-CV funding amounts for temporary emergency that have been determined necessary to prevent, prepare for and respond to coronavirus. Most importantly, no match requirements apply to the ESG-CV funding allocation.

It should be noted the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued guidance related to funding priorities with the release of a notice on June 23, 2020 entitled “Federal Funding Priority Order for Non-Congregate Shelter During COVID-19”. This document details the orders of assistance. FEMA reimbursement under Category B is limited to costs that are reasonable and necessary and **that all other options and funding have been exhausted**. This document sets the precedence for the State’s interpretation that ESG-CV must be expended for the costs associated with the NCS COVID-19 response before submitting for FEMA reimbursement. Eligible CDBG-CV funds, were also noted as a funding source.

Status of Project Room Key

Part of the collaborative CoC countywide response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been Project Room Key. This has been the implementation of an Emergency NCS intervention for those who are COVID-19 positive but their symptoms do not require hospitalization and the individual needs to isolate, those who have been exposed or are awaiting test results due to exposure and need to quarantine, and finally for those who are in a high risk category (age 65 and above or have underlying health conditions) to reduce their risk of infection from coronavirus. The County has partnered with multiple CoC agencies and through its Emergency Operations Center has set up a system for acquiring hotel rooms to increase the isolation capacity countywide for the FEMA Public Assistance qualified individuals and families. Wraparound supportive services and provision of meals has been included to address the needs of those engaged in the project. Currently, Project Room Key has 195 individuals residing in hotel rooms and has served a total of 361 individuals. This total includes FEMA qualified individuals, their caretakers and family members who have isolated with them in hotels.

The County has contracted with multiple CoC agencies to assist in the goal of providing NCS options for people experiencing homelessness, to protect human life and to minimize strain on health care system capacity. Those agencies include True North Housing Alliance, Oroville Rescue Mission, Jesus Center, Catalyst, Oroville Southside Community Improvement Association and the Community Action Agency of Butte County. This response has truly been a collective approach by CoC member organizations.

The County is currently using General Fund dollars to cover the cost of expenses incurred for the coronavirus response. The County has also secured \$473,000 in HHAP COVID-19 emergency funds and \$300,000 from CDSS. The current cost estimate for the procurement of hotel rooms, meals, supportive services and other associated supports is \$1,375,000 through May. Estimates for hotel rooms alone are \$1,228,500 for June, July and August. Estimated expenses through August is \$2,603,500.

COVID Rehousing Team (CRT)

The communication from several agencies providing direct wraparound services to those people who were unsheltered but now have been sheltered through Project Room Key is these individuals are making personal advances in their situation. Many have voiced having a roof over their head and regular meals has allowed them to focus on the next steps in their housing recovery. The County would like to facilitate the forward movement into the next steps from Project Room Key. Primarily, this being a planned housing surge which could be defined as an organized, concentrated, time-limited effort to accelerate rehousing efforts in response to COVID-19. The County will be setting up a meeting in two weeks and inviting CoC partners to engage in this herculean rapid rehousing effort. It is anticipated the timeframe for operating this project is 60-90 days.

Recommendations

There are several considerations to take into account when responding to the ESG-CV NOFA.

- The Federal and State governments have enacted changes and waived typical requirements in order to expedite the use of the ESG-CV funds
- Members of the CoC have collectively worked together in a county-wide response to the coronavirus
- The interventions put into place have been effective
- Project Room Key will need continued support as the COVID Rehousing Team operation is implemented
- Many CoC agencies are at or near capacity trying to maintain organizational operations and engage actively in the coronavirus response
- It is anticipated the HUD Homeless CoC NOFA will be released soon.
- It is anticipated the HHAP RFP will be released soon.

The recommendation of the CoC Lead Agency is to direct the Round 1 ESG-CV funds to the CoC's Administrative Entity to support the continued operations of Project Room Key. This would serve several purposes. One, this would be the quickest manner in which to put the funds into use. Secondly, it would continue the efforts the CoC collective group has put forward without interruption. In addition, this would save many agencies currently being funded for Project Room Key from having to invest time and energy in submitting applications to continue to receive funding. There is a very real concern of application burn-out for the CoC agencies who may be responding to several different NOFAs/RFPs.

It should be noted there are clearly additional funds needed in many areas of our CoC's homeless services delivery system. This would include the previously listed ESG activities. There are funds that have been secured for some of these activities (HHAP and disencumbered ESG), are in the process of being put in place (CESH I, CESH II, County-operated TBRA) and have been allocated (ESG-CV Round 2 and HHAP 2.0). It would benefit the Butte County CoC to hold planning meetings to maximize the use of these funds in our collective efforts.