



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors

Luis A. Alejo, District 1
Glenn Church, District 2
Chris M. Lopez, Chair, District 3
Wendy Root Askew, Vice Chair, District 4
Kate Daniels, District 5

Clerk of the Board
168 West Alisal St. 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901
831 755 5066
cob@co.monterey.ca.us

April 14, 2025

Honorable Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson, Chair
Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
1021 O Street, Suite 7310
Sacramento, CA 95814

Honorable Dr. Corey A. Jackson
Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
1021 O Street, Suite 6120
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Vulnerable Populations to Lose Access to Key Housing & Homelessness Programs

Dear Chair Dr. Akilah Weber Pierson and Chair Dr. Corey A. Jackson:

The County of Monterey respectfully requests your support to maintain funding for critical county-administered housing and homelessness programs, including Bringing Families Home (BFH), Home Safe, the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Housing Support Program (HSP), and the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP). These programs have a proven track record of success stabilizing, rapidly rehousing, and transitioning vulnerable populations at risk of homelessness into permanent housing while concomitantly advancing safety, permanency, and economic security for families in the child welfare system, low-income families receiving cash assistance through CalWORKs, older adults experiencing elder abuse, and people with disabilities.

To maintain core statewide access to services across these impactful housing and homelessness programs, the County of Monterey seeks a targeted investment of \$309 million General Fund annually beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025–26 with multi-year availability. We note to meet the needs of our populations across all four programs and avoid any service reductions, an investment nearing \$472 million General Fund is required, however the County of Monterey is aware of the challenging budget situation expected at the May Revision and we see opportunities to invest wisely despite fiscal uncertainty, while continuing to support vulnerable populations.

Compared to other local homeless response systems which exit 35% of overall participants into permanent housing,¹ Home Safe exits 62%, CalWORKs HSP exits 53%, BFH exits 54%, and HDAP exits 50% of clients into permanent housing.² Despite their demonstrated effectiveness, two of these programs—Home Safe and BFH—will cease to exist, while CalWORKs HSP and HDAP will face up to a 67% and 86% reduction, respectively, if no additional funding is included in the FY 2025-26 Budget. Funding cuts of this magnitude will jeopardize family reunifications, economic stability, and the overall health and welfare of our older adult populations. These reductions will result in longer stays in foster care for foster children, deepening their existing trauma; increased likelihood of institutionalization or premature death for older adults; and undermining of efforts to lift children and their families out of poverty in the CalWORKs program.

Given the uncertainty around continued funding and some counties' depletion of funds to-date, counties have been forced to scale back the number of individuals and families who receive housing assistance in order to keep the programs operational and prevent the loss of critical infrastructure, including contracts with community-based organizations

¹ Across Continuums of Care in California in 2023, just 35 percent of exits in the Homeless Management Information System were to permanent housing. See data source: [Housing and Urban Development, National Summary – CoC System Performance Measures since 2019](#).

² Per California Department of Social Services, percent of clients who exited to permanent housing in FY 2023-24.

specializing in housing and homelessness services. This impact has been acutely felt by our community-based providers, who partner with our agencies to provide direct services and supports, including legal assistance such as eviction protection, home modification and hazard abatement for older adults, and concrete items such as beds and other furniture that makes a house a home.

Most other housing programs have stringent eligibility requirements and/or limited flexibility to meet individual needs. BFH, Home Safe, HSP, and HDAP reach populations often untouched by the broader housing and homelessness system, bridging effectively to permanent housing solutions, while promoting health, safety, and well-being. These programs also help California to be in compliance with federal and state laws and requirements with respect to meeting various outcome requirements and are highly cost-effective. For example, paying for an Adult Protective Services client's home back taxes (often less than \$10,000) through Home Safe can yield significant cost savings from avoiding repeated hospitalizations and nursing home care, and securing Social Security benefits for homeless adults through HDAP reduces the costs to law enforcement and other continuums of care.

In Monterey County, HSP, HDAP, Bringing Families Home, and Home Safe play a critical role in housing our most vulnerable residents and connecting them to supports that promote ongoing family stability and improved quality life. Monterey County Social Services has had enormous success housing families, seniors, and adults with disabilities through these programs

In FY 23-24, 66% of 206 households served by the CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP) exited into permanent housing, which included 268 adults and 447 children. To date, in FY 24-25, 170 new households have been, or are currently being served by HSP, which includes 236 adults and 374 children. Through HDAP, 86 of 196 households served in the program, or 44% of households, exited into permanent housing, while 73 individuals secured disability benefits through SSI and SSDI. And, since Bringing Families Home's inception two years ago, Monterey County has housed 50% of the households served through the program, which included 90 children and 60 adults. Lastly, 85% of clients in the county's Home Safe program exited into permanent housing. Just as impressively, 100% of the permanently housed clients surveyed 6 and 12 months after exiting program have maintained their permanent housing. Home Safe has assisted 60 seniors and disabled adults with housing navigation, homeless prevention, enhanced case management, and over \$540,000 in direct financial assistance for temporary housing, rent, security deposits, home repairs, utilities, hoarding cleanups, and moving costs. Support from the Home Safe program helped prevent 44 elder/disabled clients from becoming homeless and assisted 9 elder/disabled clients experiencing homelessness to achieve permanent housing.

One local success story of the Home Safe Program is illustrated by an 87-year-old female resident with advancing dementia and blindness who had been living on the streets in South Monterey County. Police and city staff reached out to the Department of Social Services. This senior was not only successfully housed via the Home Safe program, but was also assisted in obtaining required documents, Medi-Cal, In-Home Supportive Services, and transportation to doctor appointments. Her connection to Aging and Adult Services through Home Safe has ensured ongoing support. Staff is currently assisting in securing conservatorship to ensure her ability to maintain safe housing, medical appointments, and ongoing needs for food and shelter. Without Home Safe funding, this senior would still be living on the streets and may not have even survived given her significant cognitive and medical issues.

These outcomes and stories reveal just how life-altering these programs are for some of our most vulnerable Californians, and how devastating the impacts will be absent continued investment or augmented funding in these programs.

Continued investment is critical to California's goal of eradicating homelessness and building a comprehensive and coordinated approach that protects our most vulnerable Californians from experiencing homelessness. These housing programs have led to expanded networks and leveraging of resources with local Coordinated Entry Systems and Continuums of Care to serve as a bridge to permanent housing options. Continued funding will preserve the existing infrastructure, capacity, and relationships with community-based providers—partnerships that have taken years for counties to establish and maintain.

We urgently encourage the Administration and the Legislature to invest in preserving critical funding for these programs. These housing and homelessness programs are integral to achieving positive program outcomes by helping vulnerable populations remain safe and achieve their housing goals and economic stability.

For these reasons, the County of Monterey urges your support.

Sincerely,

DRAFT

Chris M. Lopez, Chair
Board of Supervisors

cc: Members and Staff of the Senate Budget Subcommittee No. 3
Members and Staff of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee No. 2
The Honorable John Laird, 17th Senate District
The Honorable Robert Rivas, 29th Assembly District
The Honorable Dawn Addis, 30th Assembly District
County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)
Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)

