



County of Monterey

Item No.

Board Report

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

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- a. Receive a presentation from the County of Monterey Health Department's Environmental Health Bureau regarding Healthy Housing Services; and
- b. Provide direction, as appropriate, regarding development of a proactive healthy housing inspection and intervention program in Monterey County.

Presenters: Ric Encarnacion, Bureau Chief, Environmental Health Bureau, and Marni Flagg, Assistant Bureau Chief, Environmental Health Bureau.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Health, Housing, Homelessness and Human Services (HHHHS) Committee of the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Receive a presentation from the County of Monterey Health Department's Environmental Health Bureau regarding Healthy Housing Services; and
- b. Provide direction, as appropriate, regarding development of a proactive healthy housing inspection and intervention program in Monterey County.

SUMMARY:

The Environmental Health Bureau (EHB) will provide an overview of the Healthy Housing Services (HHS) initiative, including the program's background, public health purpose, current activities, and long-term vision for implementation of a proactive healthy housing program in Monterey County. The presentation will discuss environmental health hazards commonly associated with substandard housing conditions, populations disproportionately impacted by unhealthy housing conditions, and opportunities for prevention-focused interventions that improve housing quality, community health outcomes, and health equity.

The proposed (HHS) framework would transition from a primarily complaint-driven approach to a more proactive, risk-based, and data-informed strategy emphasizing education, partnerships, outreach, inspections, and early intervention.

DISCUSSION:

Healthy housing is foundational public health infrastructure. Poor housing conditions can contribute to a variety of adverse health outcomes, including asthma, communicable disease transmission, childhood lead exposure, pest infestations, mold-related illness, sewage exposure, unsafe drinking water conditions, and other environmental health hazards. Vulnerable populations, including low-income households, farmworker communities, seniors, children, medically vulnerable individuals, and residents in disadvantaged communities, are often disproportionately impacted by unhealthy housing conditions.

Historically, housing-related environmental health investigations in Monterey County have

largely been complaint-driven and reactive in nature. In response to ongoing housing and environmental health concerns, the EHB established the HHS team through Future of Public Health funding. The current HHS team includes a Senior Registered Environmental Health Specialist and an Environmental Health Technician focused on proactively identifying and addressing environmental health hazards in housing settings through education, partnerships, outreach, and enforcement coordination when necessary.

The HHS initiative draws upon successful healthy homes and healthy housing models implemented in jurisdictions such as San Diego County, King County, Boston, and national Healthy Homes programs supported by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The initiative seeks to advance prevention-focused environmental health strategies that improve housing conditions, strengthen community resilience, and support health equity across Monterey County.

The presentation will also outline a phased implementation concept for future program development, including:

Phase 1 - Planning and Pilot Activities

Phase 2 - Program Launch and Expansion

Phase 3 - Countywide Integration and Long-Term Evaluation

Potential future program components may include proactive rental housing inspections, risk-based targeting, outreach and education, interagency collaboration, community referrals, data tracking, and development of sustainable program funding mechanisms.

This work supports the County of Monterey Health Department 2025-28 Strategic Plan Goal: 1. Build Community Power and Partners' Capacity to Increase Equity and Improve Health. It also supports the following of the ten essential public health services, specifically: 2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community, 3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues, 4. Mobilize community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems, 5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts, and 6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety, and 7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

EHB has coordinated internally within the Health Department regarding development of the HHS concept and implementation planning. The item is being presented to the Health, Housing, Homelessness and Human Services Committee for informational purposes and discussion.

FINANCING:

There is no fiscal impact associated with receipt of this presentation and discussion item. Future program development and implementation activities may require additional staffing, program development resources, fee-supported mechanisms, grants, or other funding considerations, which would be brought before the Board for future consideration as appropriate.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

This recommendation supports the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors Strategic Plan

goals by promoting healthy and safe housing conditions, improving environmental health protections, supporting vulnerable populations, and strengthening community resilience through prevention-focused public health strategies. This item supports efforts to improve public health outcomes and housing conditions for Monterey County residents through prevention-focused environmental health services. This item supports safer and healthier communities by addressing environmental health hazards in housing and promoting community resilience.

Mark a check next to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Plan Goals:

- Well-Being and Quality of Life
- Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future
- Safe and Resilient Communities
- Diverse and Thriving Economy
- Dynamic Organization and Employer of Choice

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Attachments:
Board Report
Presentation