



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

File #: 20-485

Board Meeting Date: 6/30/2020

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Ken Cole, Director, Human Services Agency

Subject: Agreement with Samaritan House for Housing Location and Financial Empowerment Services

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing an agreement with Samaritan House to provide housing location specialist services and financial empowerment services for Safe Harbor Shelter residents for the term of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 in an amount not to exceed \$124,796.

BACKGROUND:

In close collaboration with many County and community partners, the Human Services Agency (HSA) coordinates homeless services throughout the County of San Mateo. HSA also serves as the lead agency in the County for the Homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) and is the administrative entity for Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP), which is a one-time block grant program funded by the State of California.

On March 29, 2019 HSA was awarded a HEAP grant in the amount of \$4,933,138.71 by the State of California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) to address the emergency needs of homeless individuals and individuals at imminent risk of homelessness by providing services such as rapid re-housing, rental assistance or subsidies, capital improvement to shelter facilities, and services for youth experiencing homelessness.

On June 19, 2019, guided by the priorities of the County's strategic plan on homelessness and with opportunities to fund new or enhanced services with the awarded HEAP funding, HSA released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for homeless services, including services to enhance homeless shelter services to support more shelter residents with identifying and moving into housing.

Samaritan House was chosen as the vendor that would best meet the need to provide housing location and financial empowerment services to Safe Harbor Shelter residents.

DISCUSSION:

Shelters, including Samaritan House’s Safe Harbor Shelter, are a critical part of the homeless crisis response system. Shelters provide a safe temporary location where homeless individuals can reside while working on their housing plan to return to permanent housing. Shelters provide housing-focused case management to clients; but given the many challenges that some shelter clients face and given the challenging housing market, many shelter clients still struggle with locating housing. Under this Agreement, Samaritan House will provide housing location services and financial empowerment services to Safe Harbor Shelter clients, with the goal of helping more clients to move into housing as quickly as possible. When shelter clients are able to move into permanent housing more quickly, those individuals are able to be safely and stably housed, and that also enables the shelter to serve more unsheltered individuals.

Under this Agreement, a housing location specialist will assist the clients with locating and applying for rental housing opportunities, and will also assist clients with increasing their housing search skills, including how to complete renter’s applications and effective landlord communication skills. In addition, a financial empowerment specialist will help clients increase their financial skills, such as budgeting and developing savings, with the goal of assisting clients with being able to obtain and maintain stable housing. These services can continue after the clients moves out of the shelter, in order to support the clients as they stabilize in their new housing.

The resolution has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form.

The resolution contains the County’s standard provision allowing amendment of the County’s fiscal obligation by a maximum of \$25,000 in the aggregate.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE:

Measure	FY 2020-21 Target
Number of individuals who receive housing location specialist services	50
Number of individuals who receive financial empowerment specialist services	60
Number of individuals who move into permanent housing while enrolled in the program	25

FISCAL IMPACT:

The term of this agreement is from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. This agreement is funded using 100% of the Homeless Emergency Aid Program State of California grant. Budgetary appropriation for this Agreement is included in the FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21 recommended budgets.