

CALIFORNIA CONTINUES AWARDING NEARLY \$1 BILLION IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS FOR COUNTIES

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) today announced the second batch of awards for their first round of Behavioral Health Bridge Housing (BHBH) Program funding: \$119,495,976 to 12 counties. This brings the total awards under the BHBH Program to \$897,094,850. These investments will help address housing instability and homelessness for individuals with serious behavioral health conditions, including serious mental illness (SMI) and/or a substance use disorder (SUD), by providing support through various “bridge” housing settings, including tiny homes, interim housing, rental assistance models, and assisted living settings.

SACRAMENTO – DHCS today continued to make awards for the nearly [\\$907 million](#) made available in the first round of funding for the BHBH Program. First round funding was awarded to county behavioral health agencies across California. This second batch of round one funding awards 12 additional counties with a total of \$119,495,976. These investments continue Governor Newsom’s efforts to address Californians’ behavioral health needs.

The BHBH Program addresses the housing needs of Californians with serious behavioral health conditions. Other programs, such as the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program (BHCIP), will build additional behavioral health facilities to fill current gaps and make sure Californians’ needs can be met for years to come. Governor Newsom’s efforts also include the proposed reform of the Mental Health Services Act and accompanying \$4.68 billion bond to build more behavioral health beds and units.

“Serious behavioral health conditions can pose a significant obstacle to exiting homelessness and establishing housing stability. The BHBH Program represents a major investment that will meaningfully contribute to California’s advances toward ending homelessness,” **said DHCS Director Michelle Baass.**

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT: The primary focus of the BHBH Program is to address the immediate housing and treatment needs of people experiencing homelessness with serious behavioral health conditions. The BHBH Program covers necessary housing operational costs (e.g., facility rent, utilities and maintenance, onsite staffing, food, hygiene products, pet support) as well as the costs for additional services to support participants’ housing stability, retention, and wellness.

Additionally, bridge housing settings include voluntary supportive services to help program participants obtain and maintain housing, manage symptoms of serious behavioral health conditions, and support recovery and wellness.

HOW WE GOT HERE: On June 23, DHCS [announced initial round one awards](#) to 39 counties totaling \$777,598,874 in funding. To date, DHCS has awarded \$897,094,850 of the total \$907 million available in BHBH Program round one funding. The remaining round one awards are being finalized and will be announced accordingly. Please see the [BHBH Program website](#) for a complete list of county behavioral health agency awardees. In total, the BHBH Program will make available \$1.5 billion in funding.

TRIBAL ENTITIES: On June 19, DHCS released a Request for Application ([RFA](#)) to tribal entities as part of the BHBH Program. The RFA will make available \$50 million to tribal entities for the planning and implementation of bridge housing and bridge housing services for historically underserved client populations most in need of services. Applications will be accepted through September 15, 2023. A final competitive RFA making available \$265 million to tribal entities and county behavioral health agencies will be released this coming winter.

RELATED PROGRAM: The BHBH Program prioritizes serving the needs of individuals who participate in the Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Act, a new and compassionate civil court process that provides care to the most severely ill and untreated based on evidence that many people can stabilize, begin healing, and exit homelessness in less restrictive, community-based care that prevents more restrictive conservatorships or incarceration. The CARE Act moves care and support upstream, providing the most vulnerable Californians with access to critical behavioral health services, housing, and support. The petition [form](#) for people seeking to use the newly implemented CARE Act became available on September 1.

BIGGER PICTURE: While DHCS is working to increase capacity for housing and SUD treatment in communities through the BHBH Program and [BHCIP](#), DHCS is also addressing workforce gaps through health care workforce investments and the forthcoming [Behavioral Health Community-Based Organized Networks of Equitable Care and Treatment](#) demonstration. Additionally, DHCS is expanding nonprofit partners through the California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) [Providing Access and Transforming Health](#), and the [Mental Health Services Act reform proposal](#) will expand both SUD services and provide transparency on SUD needs, services, and outcomes.

The BHBH Program builds upon the California Health & Human Services Agency's [Guiding Principles and Strategic Priorities](#), and enables DHCS and grantees to meaningfully contribute to the implementation of the California Interagency Council on Homelessness' [Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness in California](#).

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