

Flexible Housing Subsidy Pools ("Flex Pools") Webinar

February 11, 2025

Today's Agenda

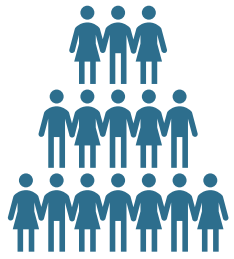
- » Welcome and Introductions
- » DHCS Initiatives to Address Homelessness & Partnerships to Build a Bridge to Permanency
- » Overview of Flex Pools
- » Upcoming Technical Assistance (TA) for Flex Pools
- » Q&A

DHCS Initiatives to Address Homelessness & Partnerships to Build a Bridge to Permanency



Homelessness in California

California accounts for more than a quarter of all homeless people in the U.S., with more than 180,000 Californians facing homelessness each night.¹



Who is Experiencing Homelessness in California (2023)¹

39% of all people experiencing homelessness are chronically homeless

68% are unsheltered homeless

37% identify as Latino/x

Higher proportions of people identifying as Black or Native American are homeless compared to the overall California population



Common Health Characteristics of People Experiencing Homelessness in California²

35% are individuals experiencing chronic substance use

66% are individuals experiencing untreated mental health conditions, including serious depression, anxiety, memory problems, and hallucinations

60% have at least one chronic condition, like hypertension, asthma or COPD

Experience more **frequent and longer hospital stays**

State and County Housing-Related Programs

California is investing billions of dollars and has undertaken a multi-agency effort to address housing and homelessness across the state. Below is a non-exhaustive list of state-funded housing-related programs.



California State Agency

Housing-Related Programs



Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH)

Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention (HHAP)



Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)

Homekey, Housing for a Healthy CA, No Place like Home Program, Veterans Housing



Department of Social Services (CDSS)

CalWORKS Housing Support Program, Housing and Disability Advocacy Program, Home Safe



Department of Health Care Services (DHCS)

ECM, Community Supports, HHIP, BH Bridge Housing, **Transitional Rent**, **BHSA Housing Interventions**, Housing Data Sharing Toolkit

Upcoming Housing-Related Services

DHCS will soon broaden its housing-related services and supports, both within Medi-Cal (Transitional Rent), and beyond Medi-Cal (BH Transformation).

Medi-Cal Community Supports

- » Housing Transition Navigation Services
- » Housing Tenancy and Sustaining Services
- » Housing Deposits
- » Recuperative Care*
- » Short-Term Post-Hospitalization Housing*
- » Day Rehabilitation

Optional for Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans (MCPs) to provide for select populations.



Transitional Rent*

- » Includes coverage of up to six months of rent for members who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and meet certain additional eligibility criteria.
- » **7/1/25** Optional for MCPs to provide.
- » **1/1/26** Mandatory for MCPs to provide for select populations.

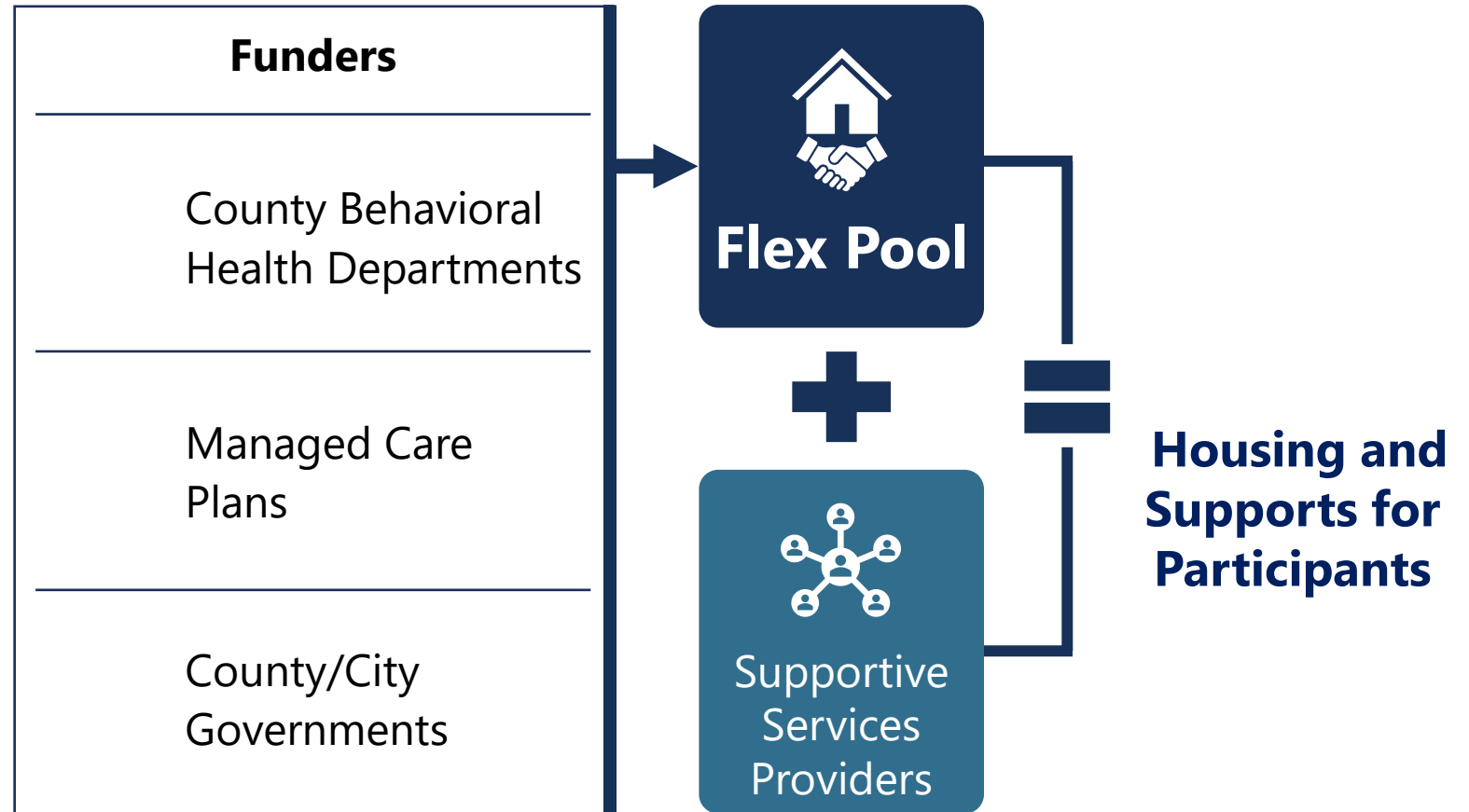
Behavioral Health Service Act (BHSA) Housing Interventions*

- » Counties will receive funding for Housing Interventions which will place and sustain individuals with significant BH needs in permanent and interim housing settings, including permanent supportive housing.
- » **7/1/26** Required for County Behavioral Health (BH) Departments.

*Can be used to cover room and board.

Encouragement of Flexible Housing Subsidy Pools (“Flex Pools”)

DHCS is promoting Flex Pools as an effective model to streamline and simplify administering rental assistance and related housing supports.



Overview of Flex Pools

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Introducing Flex Pool Faculty



Alison Klurfeld

Health Care and Housing
Consultant, Klurfeld Consulting,
LLC

Previously: Director of Safety
Net Programs and Partnerships,
L.A. Care Health Plan



Whitney Lawrence

Housing and Health Care
Consultant

Previously: Director of Policy
and Planning for Housing for
Health, L.A. County Department
of Health Services



Marc Trotz

Housing and Health Care
Consultant

Previously: Director for Housing
for Health, L.A. County
Department of Health Services

What is a Flex Pool?

A Flex Pool helps people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness by:

- 1 Coordinating and braiding** funding streams, facilitating compliance and required reporting
- 2** Acting as a **fiscal intermediary** between funders and landlords, on behalf of participants
- 3** Identifying, securing, and supporting a **portfolio of units** for participants
- 4 Coordinating with providers of housing supportive services** to support participants

What is a Flex Pool?

Core Principles of Flex Pools:



Coordination and centralization maximize efficiency and outcomes



Housing-focused

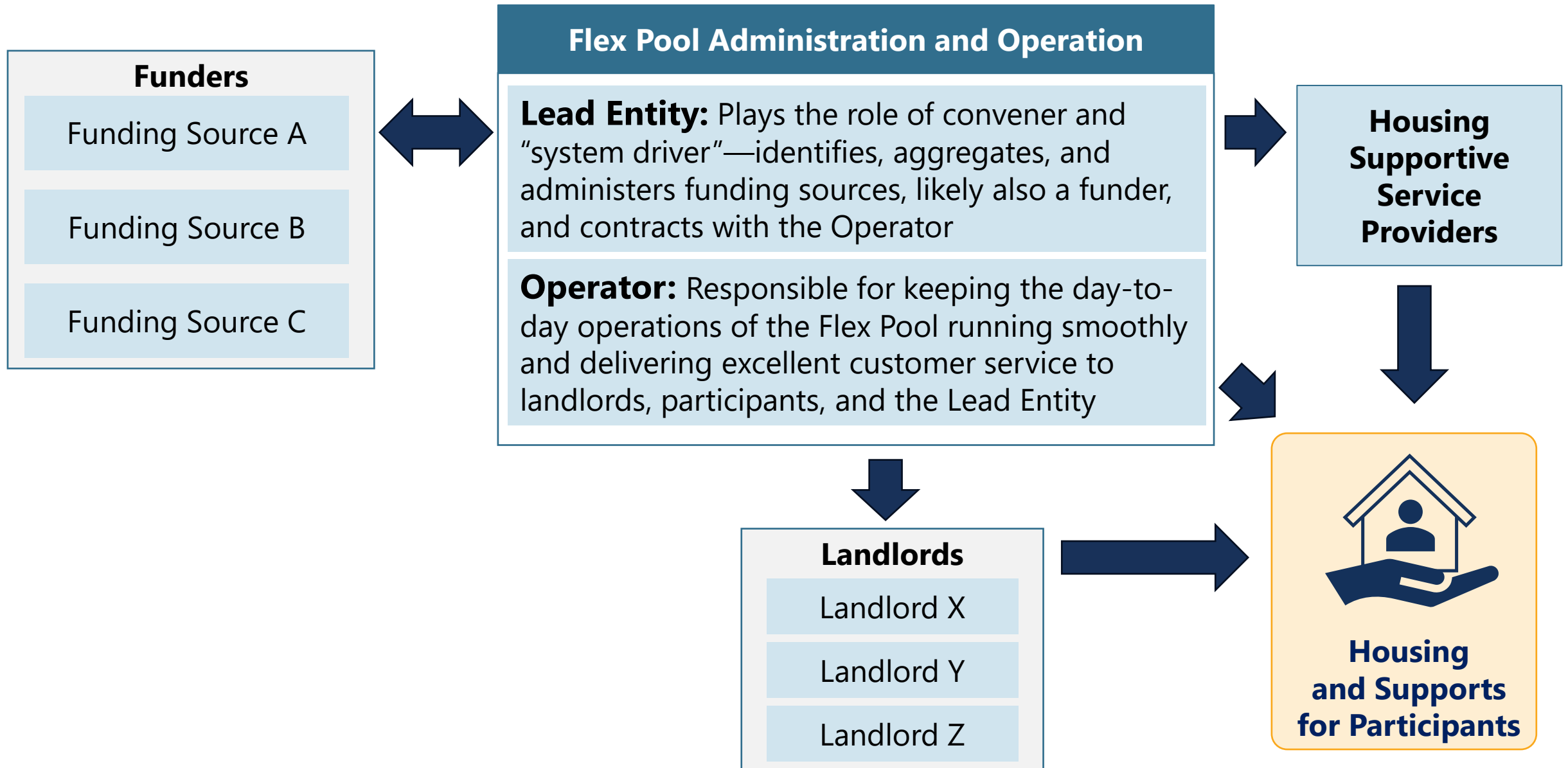


Help is person-centered and honors choice



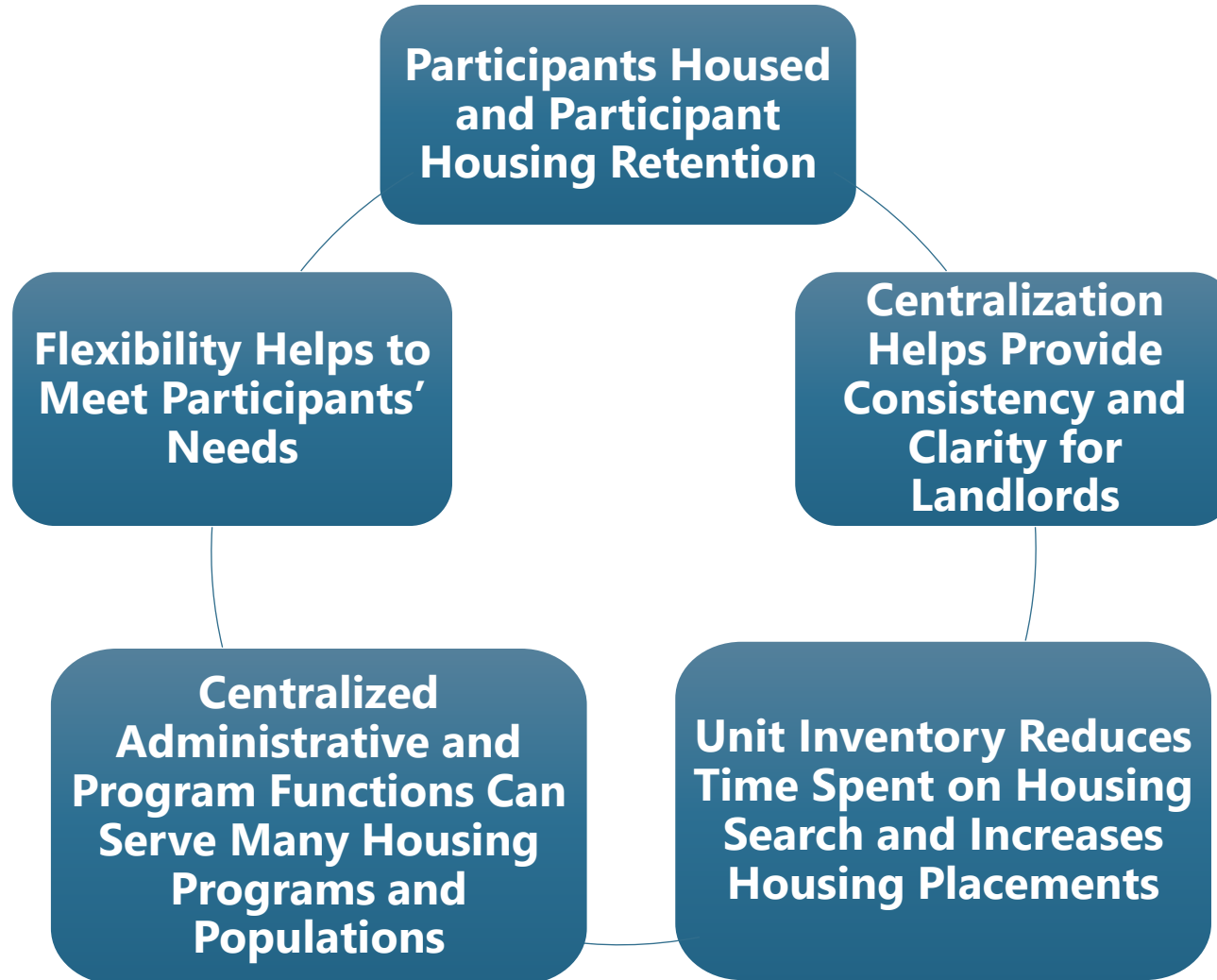
Deep collaboration and trust among key partners

Flex Pool Model and Key Roles



Value of a Flex Pool

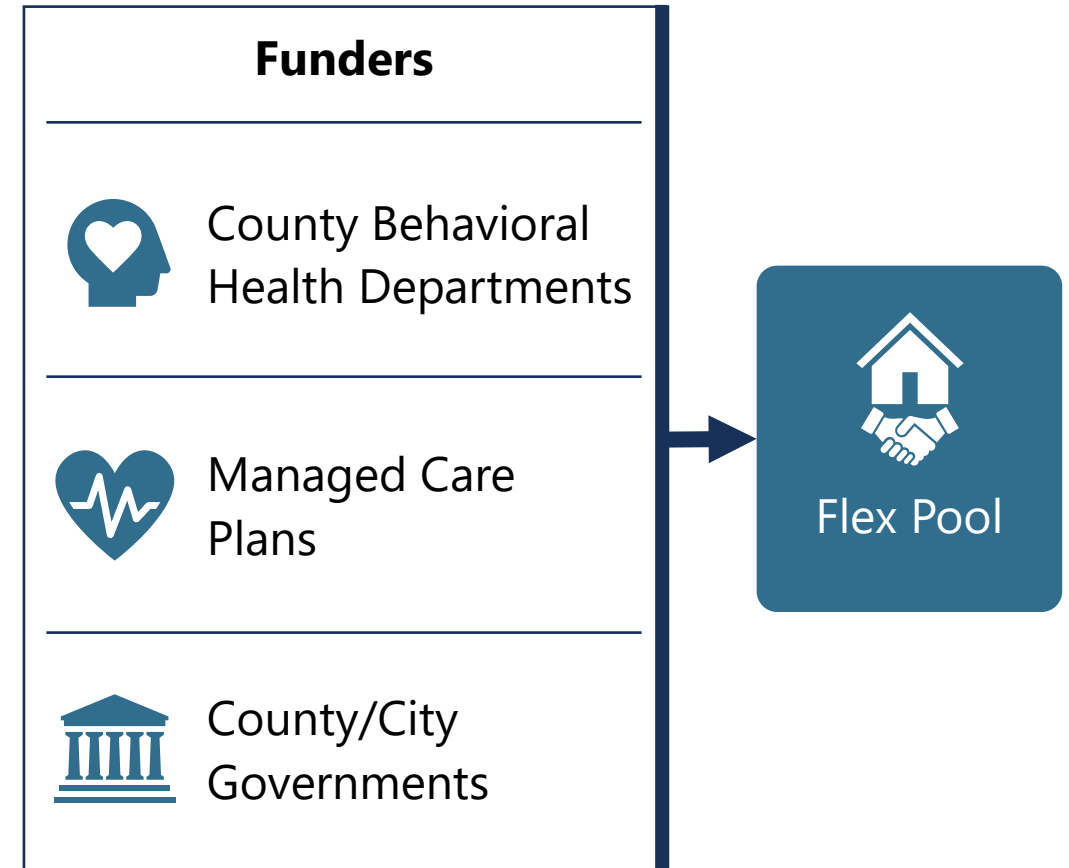
A Flex Pool Efficiently and effectively administers rental subsidies and creates a seamless experience for landlords, participants being served, and housing supportive services provider



Benefits of Flex Pools for Counties and MCPs

Flex Pools can help county behavioral health departments and MCPs maximize coverage for eligible services. When pooled with other resources, Transitional Rent and BHSA Housing Interventions can be more effective than when they stand alone.

- » BHSA can create new, locally-controlled permanent rental subsidy slots
- » BHSA Housing Interventions funds can cover:
 - Expenses to support unit acquisition & landlord relations
 - Some administrative costs
 - Services not covered by other funding streams
- » MCPs can more easily connect members eligible for Transitional Rent with long-term subsidies through other Flex Pool funders
- » County/City Governments can utilize Flex Pools to administer state-funded programs like HHAP, DSS Housing Programs, and for support for the use of federal vouchers



Landscape Scan

TRINITY

*Lead Entity/Operator:
County HHS*

SOLANO

*Lead Entity: County BH
Operator: Abode Services*

SAN FRANCISCO

*Lead Entity: County HSH; Operator:
Multiple housing providers*

SACRAMENTO

*Lead Entity: County HSH
Operator: BACS*

ALAMEDA

*Lead Entity: County H&H
Operator: Multiple
housing providers*




LOS ANGELES

*Lead Entity: County DHS
Operator: Brilliant Corners*

SAN DIEGO

*Lead Entity: CoC Lead Agency (Regional Task Force
on Homelessness); Operator: Brilliant Corners*

KEY

-  Fully operational Flex Pool
-  Flex Pool-like system
-  No Flex Pool or no info known

DHCS conducted a landscape scan of Flex Pools across California.

To date, at least seven Flex Pool or Flex Pool-like systems are operating in the state.

(Flex Pool-like system is one that has some but not all of the four core functions.)

Example of San Diego's Flex Pool

- » San Diego's Flex Pool is **led by the local CoC lead agency—Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH)**.
- » **RTFH also contracts with Brilliant Corners** to focus on the landlord- and participant-facing activities.
- » To date, San Diego's Flex Pool primarily contracts with providers with unused federal housing vouchers to support placement into permanent housing.

In the first year, San Diego County's Flex Pool placed 239 households in permanent housing, which exceeded their goal of 140 households.

The retention rate from launch in October 2020 through June 30, 2022 was 92%.¹



Example of LA County's Flex Pool

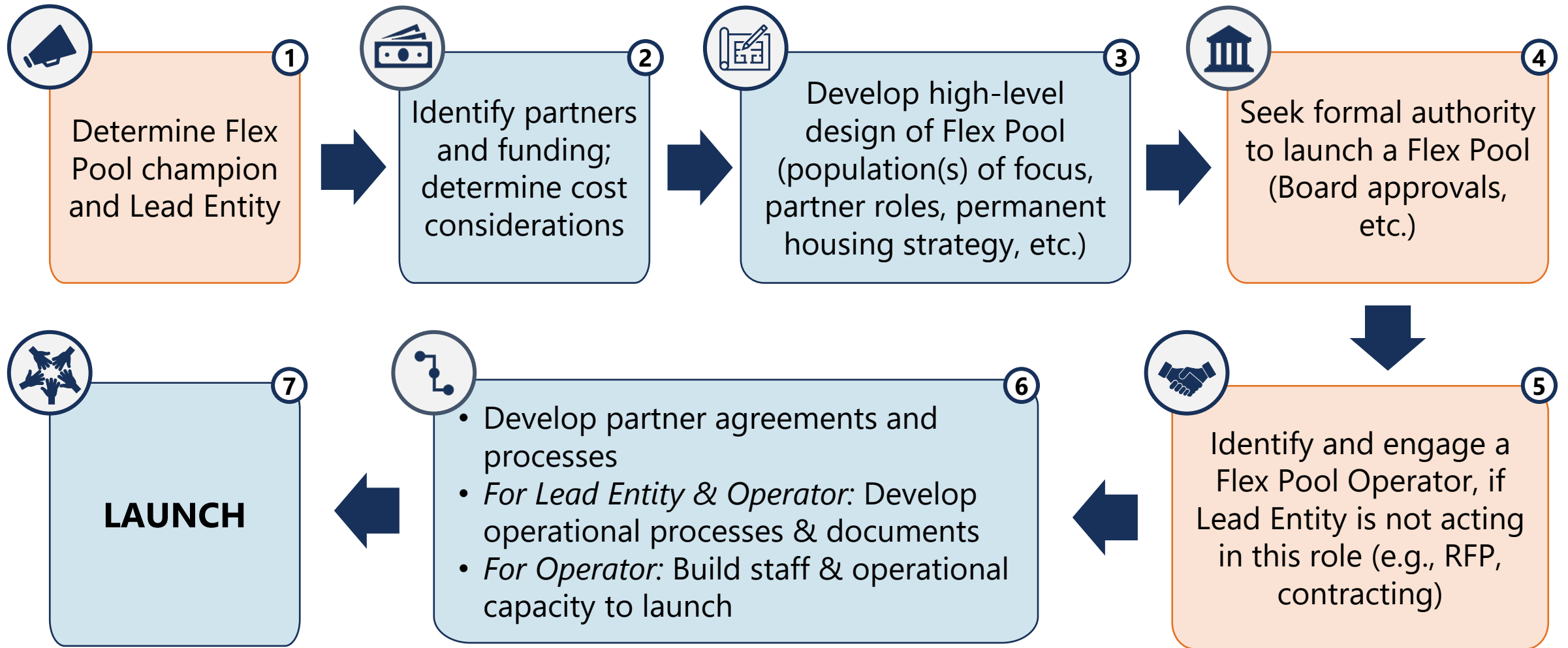
- » LA County's Flex Pool is **led by the Department of Health Services' Housing for Health (HFH)** Division, which coordinates and braids funding streams.
- » **HFH contracts with Brilliant Corners** to focus on the landlord- and participant-facing activities, like engaging landlords and tenants, identifying and securing units, and acting as a fiscal intermediary.
- » Funders of LA County's Flex Pool include:
 - LA County departments—DHS, DMH, others
 - Revenue from LA's Measure H
 - MCPs for Housing Deposits (and soon Transitional Rent); MCPs also contract with DHS' HFH for other housing-related Community Supports that are coordinated with the Flex Pool

In the first year (2015), the LA County Flex Pool housed 171 individuals.

In 2023, the LA County Flex Pool housed 12,419 individuals.¹



Strategic Steps for Launching a Flex Pool



Responsibility: Orange = Lead Entity, Teal = All core partners

Upcoming Technical Assistance (TA) for Flex Pools

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Upcoming Flex Pool TA Opportunities

DHCS is committed to supporting the advancement of the Flex Pool model through targeted, local TA.

Goals

Assist organizations to **launch or expand** a sustainable Flex Pool model in their locality

Help communities **identify resources and partners** to establish or further develop their Flex Pool

Provide strategic guidance to navigate local challenges and **develop tailored solutions**

TA will be facilitated by the team of Flex Pool faculty who brings deep statewide expertise in housing, health care, and Flex Pools: **Alison Klurfeld, Whitney Lawrence, and Marc Trotz**

Receive TA via the Flex Pool Academy

Interested organizations can apply to receive tailored coaching through the Flex Pool Academy.

Who should apply?

- » Any organization interested in **serving as the Flex Pool Lead Entity** in their community, such as:
 - County departments
 - MCPs
 - CoC lead agencies
- » Interested organizations should have **identified potential partners** to support the Flex Pool model (e.g., Lead Entity, funders)

What support will be provided?

- » Each organization, and their partners, selected for TA via the Flex Pool Academy will receive tailored TA, which may include:
 - Support to host a **local community kickoff** for visioning and relationship building
 - Ongoing support through **personal coaching sessions with the Flex Pool faculty** to facilitate local progress
 - **DHCS-hosted community convenings** to build relationships and learnings within and across communities

How to Apply for the Flex Pool Academy

- » DHCS will release an **application for the Flex Pool Academy** in spring 2025. Organizations will be selected by June, and tailored TA will begin in July.
- » Applicants will need to demonstrate **leadership support** from their own organization, as well as **support from key partners**, such as potential funders and other stakeholders.

Additional information on the Flex Pool Academy application will be posted to <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/Pages/Housing-for-Health.aspx>.

Getting Started

Flex Pool Faculty are available now (February – June 2025) for initial conversations with potentially interested organizations. Reach out if:

- » You have questions about the Flex Pool model and how it might work in your region.
- » You need a little TA support right away to get started.
- » You aren't sure if the TA Academy is right for your organization and want to discuss options.
- » You aren't likely a Lead Entity but want to be a main Funder of a Flex Pool.

For immediate questions or to learn more about the TA opportunity,
contact FlexPools@dhcs.ca.gov.

Would your organization be interested in learning more about, or receiving, TA on Flex Pools?

- ☐ Yes, my organization **has identified partners** and we would like to **launch a Flex Pool**
- ☐ Yes, my organization **does not have identified partners** and we **need support** to launch a Flex Pool
- ☐ Yes, my organization would like TA and we **already have an operating Flex Pool** (or elements of a Flex Pool)
- ☐ Maybe, I am interested to learn more but **not sure** if we would be the right fit for the Flex Pool Academy
- ☐ No thank you



Questions? Comments?



Thank you!