

San Bernardino County COVID-19 Homeless Emergency Hotel/Motel Response Planning		Current Version:	1
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1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this document is to describe the Unsheltered Homeless Emergency Response Plan by the County of San Bernardino in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) statewide epidemic and to define the interactions, roles, and responsibilities of the Human Services Planning Division with respect to coordination of services between county departments, hotel/motel operators, and homeless service providers.

In response to Executive Order (E.O.) N-32-20, the State of California has authorized new funding and has identified current funding to respond to the threat of COVID-19 among our homeless population. The E.O. identifies the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) funding and the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program funding as resources intended to provide programs and facilities to combat homelessness. As part of the order, emergency legislation created additional funding and resources to protect the safety of homeless populations, reduce the spread of COVID-19 among the homeless populations, and provide safe beds as the virus continues to spread.

The E.O. provides suspension to Health & Safety Code section 50214, to allow local jurisdictions to expend HEAP and HHAP funds to prepare and address the impacts of COVID-19, which includes the expansion of shelter and housing services capacity. The order also suspends Division 13, commencing with section 21000, of the Public Resources Code and Regulations in relation to the previous directed funding.

2. References

The Human Services Planning Division is responsible for ensuring compliance with a number of orders, guidance, standards, and best practices, including but not limited to those listed below.

2.1. Regulations

2.1.1. Federal Guidance

- CDC – Interim Guidance for Homeless Shelters
- CDC – Interim Guidance for Homeless Service Providers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019
- CDC – Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations
- CDC – Environmental Cleaning and Disinfection Recommendations
- CDC – People Experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness
- EPA – Information on Disinfectants and Water/Wastewater

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- HUD – Eligible ESG Program Costs for Infectious Disease Preparedness
- HUD – Infectious Disease Toolkit for Continuums of Care: Preventing & Managing the Spread of Infectious Disease for People Experiencing Homelessness
- HUD – Infectious Disease Toolkit for Continuums of Care: Preventing & Managing the Spread of Infectious Disease with Encampments
- HUD – Specific Considerations for Public Health Authorities to Limit Infection Risk Among People Experiencing Homelessness
- NIDA – COVID-19 Advice for SA Disorders

2.1.2. State Guidance

- State of California Executive Order N-32-20
- State of California Executive Order N-33-20
- State of California Health & Safety Code section 50214
- State of California Public Resources Code and Regulations, Division 13, Section 21000
- BCSA – Guidance for Homeless Assistance Providers on Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- CDPH – Guidance Documents: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- CDPH – Use of Personal Protective during COVID-19 Outbreak

2.1.3. Local Guidance

- SBCDPH – Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
- LACDPH – Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Assessment Tool for Homeless Shelters
- LACDPH – Guidance for Homeless Shelters
- LACDPH – Infection Prevention Basics for Homeless Shelters
- LACDPH – People Experiencing Homelessness FAQ

2.2. Other Emergency Operation Plans

2.2.1. 2018/2019 DEOP Essential Functions

3. Definitions

- Emergency Operations Center (EOC) - Coordinates with the county’s disaster response expenses for recovery from state and federal governments.
- Office of Emergency Services (OES) – Division of the San Bernardino County Fire Department responsible for countywide emergency planning, mitigation, response

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and recovery activities. The OES works with all county departments and 24 cities, and many non-government organizations.

- Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) – Established by statute to provide localities with flexible block grant funds to address their immediate homelessness challenges, such as emergency housing vouchers, rapid rehousing, emergency shelter construction, and the provision of temporary shelter, among other activities.
- Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) - One-time block grant that provides local jurisdictions with funds to support regional coordination and expand or develop local capacity to address their immediate homelessness challenges.

4. Concept of Operations

The County of San Bernardino and the regional homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) are working together to address the needs of homeless individuals affected by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

COVID-19 is particularly dangerous for those experiencing homelessness. Individuals without stable housing not only face greater difficulty taking preventative actions, but they are often in poorer health than other residents. For the past several years, the County, cities and members of the CoC have been working tirelessly to reduce and prevent homelessness; however despite targeted efforts the number of homeless persons continues to rise throughout the region.

The goal of this plan is to identify at minimum 300 hotel/motel rooms throughout the region in multiple jurisdictions as quickly as possible to contain the spread of COVID-19 in the unsheltered community. The purpose of these facilities is to protect the community by limiting the community’s exposure to populations that are generally at higher risk of transmitting the virus, not to put the community at risk.

One of the County’s and CoC’s top priorities since the COVID-19 outbreak has been to identify sites to house unsheltered homeless persons meeting high risk priorities and quarantine unsheltered homeless persons who are well but have been identified by medical doctors as being extremely at-risk, vulnerable to the virus or COVID-19 positive. This model aims to keep these individuals out of shelters and encampments and lower the risk of exposure to other members of the homeless population to slow the virus’ spread.

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Units have been prioritized for individuals/households who meet multiple of the following criteria:

- Unsheltered persons who are non-symptomatic and present healthy that meet the following high-risk criteria:
 - Persons aged 65 years and older
 - Persons of any age who have an underlying health condition such as:
 - Heart disease
 - Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - Immunocompromised
 - Underlying medical conditions that are not well controlled: diabetes, renal failure, or liver disease
 - Pregnant women
- Unsheltered persons meeting the above criteria who are exposed, but asymptomatic requiring isolation
- Unsheltered persons meeting the criteria under section 1 who are symptomatic awaiting test results requiring isolation
- Unsheltered persons meeting the criteria under section 1 who are positive for COVID-19 but do not require hospitalization
- Special accommodations will be made for members of unsheltered families meeting the criteria under section 1

5. Engagement of Services

High-risk unsheltered persons will be identified in part through the Homeless Coordinated Entry System (CES) and through the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach and Proactive Enforcement (HOPE) team. CES will provide referrals from community partners and the HOPE team will make contact with the unsheltered persons. In addition, the HOPE team will identify previously contacted high-risk unsheltered persons and navigate them to the appropriate location.

All referrals will have completed the CES assessment forms and appropriate documentation. Each client entered into a hotel/motel room will be connected with a case manager through one of our current HEAP or Homeless Partnership homeless service providers. On site food and security will be engaged to ensure comfort during the duration of their stay. Clients will be notified to not allow access to their rooms by others during their stay.

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Persons meeting the requirements of the hotel/motel use, may contact CES through Inland Empire United Way at 2-1-1 or the Sheriff's HOPE team at 1-844-811-HOPE(4673).

6. Admission Agreement

Unsheltered homeless persons referred to the hotel/motel will be told to remain in their rooms during the duration of the COVID-19 stay in place order from the State. Each person will sign an admission agreement noting the following:

- They will take care of their room (no damages) & keep it clean
- Alcohol, substance use, weapons, or other illegal activity on the property is not permitted
- Unregistered guests in the room are not allowed
- They acknowledge that they will be a good neighbor and avoid upsetting their neighbors by engaging in loud or disruptive activities (loud TV/music, late night loud noise, etc.)
- They will maintain a clean room and allow housekeeping staff access as needed
- They will allow the County of San Bernardino and partnering homeless services provider staff and partners to meet them onsite or in their room
- They will remove all their personal items from their room prior to check out and agree to vacate the premises voluntarily upon the ending of the stay period or upon the rescinding of the Governor's Executive Order

7. Case Management Plan

Homeless Individuals in lodging may have access to or may receive assistance in the following service areas:

- Checking in / out of lodging; aid in completing necessary paper work
- Resource packets that may contain the following information:
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Instructions on preventing the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19),
 - Contact Information for a Case Manager, and others, e.g., security
 - Instructions on how to access medical services from their Managed Care Plan
 - How to access mental health services
 - A crisis and support line
- When appropriate, linkages to benefits as needed

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- Daily wellness telephone checks by health care or other industry professionals,
- Regularly scheduled onsite visits by participating providers
- When appropriate, assistance in storing, organizing, disposing of personal belongings
- Assistance in arranging for onsite, offsite, fostering of personal pets
- If not provided with lodging, assistance with procuring, ordering, or arranging for delivery of food items, meals, or other nutrition
- Some managed care plans may offer/coordinate pharmacy services; assistance in procuring, ordering, or arranging for delivery of prescription medications
- Homeless requiring treatment for mental health issues or substance abuse will be assessed to determine specialized offsite services and housing
- Hygiene kits and/or supplies needed to maintain stability

8. Outreach Plan

The Sheriff's HOPE Team received comprehensive training on best practice to keep themselves safe and to ensure that people they encounter with flu-like symptoms get the right medical care. The County of San Bernardino Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) Homeless Outreach Support Team (HOST) has also received similar training.

Outreach teams that are currently working with the HOPE and HOST teams will continue to support those teams. In addition, they will pass along information regarding COVID-19 and how to reduce the chances of contracting the virus to the unsheltered homelessness that they come across.

Other homeless service providers outside of HOPE and HOST are referring unsheltered homeless they engage through the Coordinated Entry System to ensure they receive information about COVID-19 and how to reduce their chances of catching the virus.

9. Staffing Plan

- Off-Site Homeless Services Providers and County DBH staff will call each person placed in the hotel/motel rooms for daily wellness checks.
- Rotating staff will be on site 1-2 times per week to follow-up on client needs, such as access to mainstream services.
- The Sheriff HOPE team will screen and transport homeless individual to lodging location.
- The DBH staff will assist in the transport of homeless individuals requiring medical isolation or quarantine services.

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- Homeless Services Providers and/or DBH staff will meet individuals and assist them in checking in, completing paperwork and settling in their rooms.
- Staff will follow CDC safety guidelines.

10. Food Services

Meal services are being organized through the County of San Bernardino Human Services in conjunction with Inland Empire Health Plan (IEHP) and Molina Healthcare. IEHP and Molina Healthcare will provide meals for persons identified as members and the County of San Bernardino will cover the cost for non-members.

Provision of Food Services:

- Up to a 14 day food package can be sent out in two separate deliveries (7 days of food in each delivery)
- Food order for each client may be able to be extended past 14 days or cancelled upon request as needed
- Food packages come in two forms:
 - Packages needing refrigeration (If the hotel/motel has a refrigerator this option will be utilized)
 - Packages of non-perishables (it is anticipated that these will be utilized at a faster rate than the refrigeration packages)
- Food packages may be customized if needed:
 - Diabetic
 - Low sodium
 - Vegetarian

11. Decommission Plan

The use of this facility for the unsheltered homeless and medically stable COVID-19 patients will be secured for three (3) months and will terminate upon the rescinding of the order. Once the State order has been lifted, those homeless individuals that have not been connected to permanent housing will be diverted to the appropriate homeless services provider and returned to where they were originally staying as identified by the outreach team.

Homeless relocation plan:

- The Sheriff's HOPE team will coordinate transportation services with the HOST team
- Transportation will be provided through groups or cohorts to the appropriate destinations

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- It is anticipated that up to 50 persons will be transported per day with a scaling back of hotel/motel services

The rooms will be professionally cleaned prior to assuming regular business use and the hotel property will be returned to its previous condition at the end of the occupancy agreement term.

Tenancy rights will be waived by the client upon the admission agreement and language will be entered into the occupancy agreement noting weekly stays for tenants that will be renewable on an as needed basis. In addition, it will be expected that the hotel/motel in conjunction with County services and support will meet the following criteria which affords exception to the 30 day rule:

- The hotel/motel keeps a right of access and control of the room; and
- The hotel/motel has facilities to safeguard personal property; and
- The hotel/motel provides central telephone service; and
- The hotel/motel provides maid, mail, and room services; and
- Food service is in or adjacent to the premises of the hotel/motel.

12. Security Plan

Security will be provided 24/7 at the hotel/motel and on premises of the facility. Security will be designated to the lobby and will be continuously roaming the grounds of the facility. All food will be brought into the hotel/motel regularly and personnel will be isolated. The temporary residents will be encouraged to remain in their room and avoid accessing any of the residential or commercial service areas.

13. Informing Providers and Community

The County of San Bernardino, through the Department of Public Health (DPH), has notified all its employees, partners, and providers about best practices to prevent and prepare for a COVID-19 outbreak. The County of San Bernardino has worked with the DPH to develop and administer training specifically for support providers providing housekeeping services at these isolation locations.

The County of San Bernardino DPH has launched a robust, comprehensive COVID-19 web portal (sbccovid19.com) aimed at providing key guidance for the residents of the county. It includes program guidance and tools from the DPH and CDC, as well as infectious disease preparedness guidance for different communities/agencies.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

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Human Services Planning Division is responsible for:

- I. Preparing Housing Inventory – EDD primary point of contact (POC)
 - a) Develop an inventory of motel/hotel providers
 - i) Locations, number of rooms, cost, etc.
 - ii) Communicate intent to cities
 - iii) Engage the motel/hotel providers for potential leasing/contract development
 - iv) Develop motel/hotel provider messaging
- II. COVID-19 Education – HS and OHS
 - a) Prepare educational materials for motel/hotel providers
 - i) Information and precautionary measures needed for employees in engaging the homeless
 - ii) Appropriate sanitation
 - iii) Develop of materials and printing
- III. Communication with Local Jurisdictions – DEO and Government and Legislative Affairs
 - a) Develop messaging plan
 - b) Determine main POC
 - c) Provide CEO and AEO with details of city/town concerns
- IV. Public Health Response
 - a) Actions needed to secure the health and safety of the homeless population and/or priority populations
 - b) Personal Protective Equipment
- V. Provider Care Coordination – KEYS, DBH, and OHS
 - a) Develop strategy for public health response with homeless service
- VI. Engaging in an Immediate Response
 - a) Engage a motel/hotel provider to acquire at minimum 50 rooms to start moving unsheltered individuals or families into rooms to shelter in place
 - b) Engage a homeless service provider to provide case management for each client and provide access to mainstream resources, if available, food, hygiene products, etc.