

October 22, 2018

Dear CoC Executive Committee,

The Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB) is pleased to submit the following recommendations for new state homelessness funding through the Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). The HEAP funding provides a unique opportunity to invest one-time funds into programs that can quickly address the most pressing needs for people experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County. The recommendations below reflect the LEAB's priorities to fund programs and services that will maximize the impact of the funding for people experiencing homelessness and help to remove barriers to accessing existing services and meeting basic needs:

- **Increase Shelter Capacity** – The LEAB recommends that the CoC invest in additional year-round shelter capacity to address the immediate needs of people living on the streets in Santa Clara County. In particular, the need for additional shelter for survivors of domestic violence, women and families, couples, seniors, and pet-friendly shelters should be prioritized for funding. This could take the form of purchasing or master leasing properties, such as hotels, for temporary housing; purchasing houses for use as shelter for DV survivors; or providing short-term shelter through motel vouchers for 30 to 60 days that cover the whole cost of a night in a hotel in Santa Clara County.
- **Create a Day Center/Resource Hub** – Currently, there are limited places that people experiencing homelessness can access during the daytime that provide a safe location for respite, relief from inclement weather, and access to resources and services. The LEAB recommends investing funding to create space for one or more day centers where people experiencing homelessness can find resources in a centralized location, access services such as case management, do laundry, use a computer, have a meal, or simply have a safe place to rest. Having a facility accessible throughout the day will maximize the number of people who are able to benefit from the center's services.
- **Provide Transportation Options** – Travelling across the county to access services, get to appointments, or to obtain necessary documentation or identification is a time-consuming and overwhelming process for many people experiencing homelessness who lack access to adequate transportation. The LEAB recommends investing funding to provide various forms of transportation, including: offering more UPLIFT passes; providing a free shuttle service to get to necessary locations (e.g., DMV, county social services offices); purchasing or leasing accessible vans for agencies to provide transportation for clients (with funding for maintenance); or creating a community account to provide Uber or Lyft rides to appointments.
- **Increased Access to Emergency Mental Health Services** – The LEAB recommends utilizing funding to provide additional mental health services, through programs or outreach, for people experiencing homelessness to better meet the immediate need.
- **Preventing Homelessness** – The LEAB recommends utilizing funding to provide emergency financial assistance to households who are at risk of losing their housing, in order to prevent people from entering or returning to homelessness.

Along with these recommendations, the LEAB urges the CoC Executive Committee to involve people who are currently or formerly homeless throughout the process, including program selection, planning, and implementation. The LEAB appreciates the opportunity to submit the above recommendations for utilizing the HEAP funding and looks forward to providing input for future funding opportunities.

Sincerely,

The Members of the Lived Experience Advisory Board

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*Elan King*  
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