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INCREASED FEDERAL FUNDS FOR HOMELESSNESS ANNOUNCED

The Homeless Action Partnership of Santa Cruz County is pleased to announce \$3,449,500 in federal grants to address local homelessness, a 31 percent increase over the prior year.

The annual grants support numerous programs including permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals, family housing, behavioral health services, rapid re-housing and improvements to increase the efficiency of local services to address homelessness. Issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the grants are the Homeless Action Partnership's share of more than \$2 billion in grants announced nationwide.

"This represents an unprecedented level of investment by our federal partners in addressing homelessness in Santa Cruz County," Homeless Services Coordinator Rayne Perez said. "With recent state investments, these funds will make a difference in the lives of local homeless families and individuals."

The grants will fund a dozen programs and services benefitting a variety of populations, including youth, families and chronically homeless individuals. Included is added funding for Smart Path to Housing and Health, Santa Cruz County's coordinated entry system, which streamlines access to housing assistance and services for people experiencing homelessness.

At \$924,178, the largest award was to the Housing Authority of Santa Cruz County for continuing its Shelter Plus Care Program, representing a 24 percent increase over the prior year. The program provides 40 units of permanent supportive housing including wraparound services from the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency to vulnerable, chronically homeless individuals with disabilities.

"The larger award is a direct result of our community's efforts to fund a study on fair market rents, which led to a 24 percent increase in funds available to help people struggling with housing. The county and each city are to be commended for their investment in making sure HUD provides full funding for our programs," Housing Authority of Santa Cruz County Executive Director Jenny Panetta said.

The county's Homeless Persons Health Project (HPHP) received \$807,019 to continue its MATCH Program, a collaboration between HPHP and Front Street Housing, Inc. to provide 41 units of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals who co-occurring behavioral health and mental health conditions, as well as intensive case management services.

Watsonville-based Families in Transition was awarded \$473,900 for First Step-Housing for Families With Children, a rapid-rehousing program providing 12 homeless families with security deposits and phased rental subsidies for up to 12 months to help them to secure their own rental housing, as well as an array of supportive services to assist them on the path to long-term stability.

Full list of awards: <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2019-california-coc-grants.pdf>.

About the Homeless Action Partnership

The Homeless Action Partnership is a collaboration of the County and each city within Santa Cruz County, along with local homelessness service providers. It acts as the federally-designated continuum of care for Santa Cruz County and helps allocate State and federal funding to address homelessness. The County of Santa Cruz serves as lead agency for the HAP.