

**Homeless Emergency Aid Program:
5% Homeless Youth Set-Aside (\$25 million)**

The Homeless Emergency Aid Program was established on June 27, 2018 with the passage of [Senate Bill 850](#). The program was established to provide localities with \$500 million in one-time funding to address homelessness. The program is administered by the [Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council](#) (HCFC) within the California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency. Provided below are frequently asked questions related to the requirement that 5% of the total of each applicant's allocation be used to "establish or expand services meeting the needs of homeless youth or youth at risk of homelessness."

How much funding is available?

The Homeless Emergency Aid Program is granting a total of \$500 million, which consists of three categories of funding:

1. \$250 million available based on total number of homeless individuals based on the [2017 point-in-time count](#).
2. \$100 million available based on the administrative entity's share of the total homeless population based on the 2017 point-in-time count.
3. \$150 million available to cities with a population of 330,000 or more as of January 1, 2018 based on the proportionate share of the homeless population.

Who applies for this funding?

The applicant to the Homeless Emergency Aid Program is an "administrative entity," which is a local government agency or nonprofit that has previously administered federal Department of Housing and Urban Development Continuum of Care funds. To find the list of administrative entities in California, follow this [LINK](#).

When is the application due?

Applications are due on or before December 31, 2018 and awards will be made on a continuous basis no later than January 31, 2018. If funding remains after the first round, applications for a second round are by April 30, 2019. SB 850 requires the second-round awards be made by May 31, 2019. If there are remaining funds as of June 15, 2019, the Department of Finance will identify a methodology to distribute or the funds will revert to the state General Fund.

Is the 5% homeless youth requirement the maximum an administrative entity can spend on homeless youth or a minimum?

It is a minimum. There is no stated maximum. Given the historic underinvestment in youth homelessness in California, local stakeholders should advocate for additional funding. Use the 2017 point in time figures, which show that homeless youth are more than five percent of the total homeless population and as whole, are sheltered at a lower rate than any other homeless population.

How is homelessness defined?

The definition of homelessness is the same one used by the federal McKinney Vento Act. According to [this definition](#), homeless means:

- an individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence,
- an individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence,
- unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but meets certain qualifications

- any individual or family who is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence; Has no other residence; and lacks the resources or support networks.

How is youth homelessness defined?

SB 850 requires that 5% of the administrative entity's total allocation be used to establish or expand services meeting the needs of homeless youth *or youth at risk of homelessness*. There is no definition of at risk of homelessness included or referenced in the legislation. The definition of homelessness referenced in SB 850 includes homeless youth. Under this definition, homelessness means:

(3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as [homeless](#) under this definition, but who:

(i) Are defined as [homeless](#) under section 387 of the Runaway and [Homeless Youth Act](#) ([42 U.S.C. 5732a](#)), section 637 of the Head Start [Act](#) ([42 U.S.C. 9832](#)), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women [Act](#) of 1994 ([42 U.S.C. 14043e-2](#)), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service [Act](#) ([42 U.S.C. 254b\(h\)](#)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition [Act](#) of 2008 ([7 U.S.C. 2012](#)), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition [Act](#) of 1966 ([42 U.S.C. 1786\(b\)](#)), or section 725 of the McKinney-Vento [Homeless Assistance Act](#) ([42 U.S.C. 11434a](#));

(ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in [permanent housing](#) at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for [homeless](#) assistance;

(iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for [homeless](#) assistance; and

(iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities; chronic physical health or mental health conditions; substance addiction; histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect); the presence of a child or youth with a disability; or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment

Can the funding be used to pay for existing housing or services for homeless youth?

No, the language of SB 850 requires administrative entities to “*establish or expand* services meeting the needs of homeless youth or youth at-risk of homelessness.”

Can projects serve youth at-risk of homelessness, or only those who are literally homeless?

They may serve youth at-risk of homelessness.

Will the applications need to list the specific projects for which funds will be used?

That is unknown at this time; the website of the [Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council](#) states that a [Notice of Funding Availability](#) (NOFA) will be released in the summer of 2018 which may include this information.

Does an administrative entity need to use the 5% for housing that is specifically designed for youth, or can it be used to serve youth in projects that serve adults of all ages?

There is no requirement in SB 850 that addresses this. The intent language of SB 850 emphasizes the flexibility of the funding. This may be addressed in the NOFA, to be issued in the summer of 2018.

Are there other restrictions or requirements on funding (e.g. leverage or match requirements, project sponsor experience, using a housing first model, coordinated entry in place)?

There is no match requirement, sponsor experience requirement, or requirement related to coordinated entry stated in SB 850. The HCFC was established with the passage of [SB 1380](#) (Mitchell) in 2016. It requires housing programs funded by the State of California to “to adopt guidelines and regulations to incorporate core components of Housing First.” HCFC is the state entity charged with implementing that requirement by January 1, 2019. Any information about this requirement will likely be included in the NOFA, to be issued in summer of 2018.

Does the SB 1380 Housing First requirement apply to youth? What resources are available to inform me about Housing First for youth?

Yes, SB 1380 states that the Housing First model is intended for all programs receiving state funding. Additionally, it addresses the question of whether Housing First applies to transitional housing, which is more commonly used by youth providers: “For time-limited, supportive services programs serving homeless youth, programs should use a positive youth development model and be culturally competent to serve unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age. Providers should work with the youth to engage in family reunification efforts, where appropriate and when in the best interest of the youth. In the event of an eviction, programs shall make every effort, which shall be documented, to link tenants to other stable, safe, decent housing options. Exit to homelessness should be extremely rare, and only after a tenant refuses assistance with housing search, location, and move-in assistance.”

Learn more about Housing First for youth [here](#).

Can an administrative entity apply a second time if there is funding available after the first round?

No direction is provided in SB 850 about this; the HCFC will likely address this question in the NOFA.

The third category of funding (\$150 million) is for cities with a population over 330,000 as of January 1, 2018. What are those cities?

Santa Ana, Anaheim, Bakersfield, Oakland, Long Beach, Sacramento, Fresno, San Francisco, San Jose, San Diego and Los Angeles.

The funding is one-time. How is a provider supposed to operate a program with one-time funding?

The funding is one-time, but it does not specify that the funding must be spent in one year. The requirement in SB 850 is that the administrative entity must “contractually obligate” 50% of the funding by January 1, 2020. Give this, the administrative entity could enter into a contract with a housing provider that last more than one year. Ideally, this would be the case, so that programs can be funded that last two to three years.

I am a homeless youth provider and I would like to apply to the Homeless Emergency Aid Program to expand services for homeless youth in my community. What should I do?

- **Step 1:** Make contact with your local Continuum of Care: You may already know about this group and be involved in their work. If not, the first step is identifying what entity coordinates your Continuum of Care. Most Continuums of Care meet on a monthly basis. Find out when yours meets, go to the next meeting, and raise the topic of the Homeless Emergency Aid Program and the 5% homeless youth requirement. Find the contact [here](#).
- **Step 2:** Find out how many youth were homeless in your 2017 Point in Time Count. This will be important information to have when determining how to use the funding. Find that figure [here](#).

- **Step 3:** Consider partnering with organizations that are active in your Continuum of Care. For example, there may be a housing provider that receives HUD funding to operate a Rapid Rehousing model for adults. Consider using funding from the Homeless Emergency Aid Program to subcontract with them to provide Rapid Rehousing services for homeless youth.
- **Step 4:** Find out how much money your administrative entity has for homeless youth. Again, the requirement is that the administrative entity use no less than 5% on homeless youth. Advocate for more, if possible. Encourage your administrative entity to make a large request, which will increase the amount of the homeless youth set-aside. The exact amount of funding will be based on how many administrative entities apply, but you can find an estimate [here](#).
- **Step 5:** Watch for the NOFA to be issued by HCFC by the end of the summer. SB 850 requires applications to be submitted by December 31, 2018, but there is nothing preventing them from being required earlier. You can make sure not to miss the NOFA release by signing up for the [HCFC listserv](#).
- **Step 6:** Check to see how much was issued and whether your jurisdiction can apply again. If allowable, be ready to submit another application.
- **Step 7:** Stay on top of this process and establish accountability mechanisms to ensure that 5% of the Homeless Emergency Aid Program is going to homeless youth. The law requires it, but the accountability mechanism in SB 850 is not strong. To ensure these funds serve homeless youth will require local advocates playing an active role.

What are the reporting and spending requirements?

Recipients are required to submit a report by January 1, 2020 on the number of homeless individuals served and progress towards state and local homelessness goals. As for spending requirements: 50% of the program funds are required to be contractually obligated by January 1, 2020 and 100% of the program funds are required to be contractually obligated by June 30, 1, 2021. SB 850 specifies that any funds not expended by that date must be revert to the General Fund. The agency may monitor activities to ensure compliance and request repayment of funds for failure to comply with program requirements.