



Health and Human Services Department
Mental Health Division

Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) in Alameda County Supportive Housing Resources

updated 8/3/2007

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), formerly known as Proposition 63, went into effect January 1, 2005. The MHSA imposes a 1% tax on personal incomes in excess of \$1 million in order to increase mental health services for children/youth, adults, and older adults who have a serious mental illness. A portion of MHSA funds has been set aside for developing and operating supportive housing linked with supportive services, and MHSA services are intended to support access to and retention of housing. Funds are administered by the California Department of Mental Health (DMH). Generally, MHSA funds are allocated to County mental health departments, including Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS). Berkeley Mental Health (BMH) also has an allocation.

How can a housing organization get involved with the new MHSA housing resources?

The first and most important step for those interested in these opportunities is to identify a "Full Service Partnership" or equivalent service program interested in partnering with a housing owner and/or property manager. All of the MHSA housing-related funding requires this type of linkage. FSPs are described on the next page. All capital funding housing expenditures require the participation and approval of BMH or BHCS. BMH and BHCS are deeply committed to increasing the availability of affordable supportive housing for people with serious mental health issues. Both BMH and BHCS are active participants in the EveryOne Home campaign to end homelessness in Alameda County (www.everyonehome.org). For more information or to explore a potential partnership, please contact BHCS or BMH using the contact information on the next page.

What MHSA supportive housing resources are available in Alameda County?

There are four separate sources of funding:

(1) California MHSA Housing Program.

What is it? The statewide MHSA Housing Program includes \$75 million per year for the capital costs of *permanent supportive housing* for people with serious mental illness and their families, and \$40 million per year for operating subsidies in these developments. Capital funds will be available in the form of loans from the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) to qualified housing developers. To be eligible, projects must be linked with MHSA or MHSA-equivalent services.

How much funding is available locally? DMH has allocated funds for the first 3½ years of the program using a formula. For this initial period, BHCS has been allocated about \$14.7 million. Of this, up to \$4.9 million may be used to capitalize 20-year operating subsidy reserves. BMH has an initial allocation of nearly \$1.3 million, of which up to \$419,500 may be used for operating subsidy reserves. Funding will be made available on an on-going basis, at a level determined by DMH.

What is the application process? DMH and CalHFA will issue a request for proposals (RFP) for these funds in Summer 2007. BHCS and BMH will review applications and submit those approved to DMH and CalHFA. For complete details, visit: www.dmh.ca.gov/mhsa/Housing.asp.

(2) BHCS Housing Program. BHCS, in partnership with Alameda County Housing and Community Development (HCD) established a \$4 million fund of local MHSA dollars for housing capital costs. HCD issued the initial RFP in January 2007. Nearly \$2 million will be allocated to specific projects in the fall of 2007, and more than \$2 million remains. BHCS and HCD will make these funds available using a process coordinated with the state MHSA Housing Program.

(3) BMH Housing Trust Fund. BMH has set aside approximately \$300,000 to be used for housing development. The process for allocating these funds is to be determined.

(4) Full Service Partnership (FSP) Housing Subsidies. Each of the new service programs created by the MHSA—called “Full Service Partnerships”—includes funding to subsidize housing costs for participants. Some programs also have dedicated Shelter Plus Care certificates. Housing providers that partner with the FSPs may be able to negotiate with the service providing agencies for ongoing housing subsidies. See below for more information about Full Service Partnerships.

What is a Full Service Partnership?

“Full Service Partnerships” (FSPs) are a key component of MHSA services. They are new intensive, long-term, stably-funded, supportive service programs for **unserved and underserved people with serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance**. All MHSA capital funds require the involvement of an FSP or equivalent provider in partnership with a housing owners/developers and property managers and targeting toward individuals that are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Currently, the FSPs in Alameda County and the agencies providing the services are:

- 1) *BMH’s Full Service Partnership*. BMH Adult Services. Targets youth, adults, and older adults.
- 2) BHCS has created seven Full Service Partnership or equivalent programs:
 - *Homeless Outreach and Stabilization Team (HOST)*. Bonita House, Inc. Targets the chronically homeless in northern and central Alameda County.
 - *Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT)*. East Bay Community Recovery Project. Targets adults with frequent criminal justice mental health contacts.
 - *Greater HOPE*. Tri-City Homeless Coalition. For the chronically homeless in south and east Alameda County.
 - *Supportive Housing for Transition Age Youth (STAY)*. Fred Finch Youth Center (services) & Tri-City Homeless Coalition (housing). For transition age youth.
 - *North County Older Adult*. Bay Area Community Services. For older adults in northern Alameda County.
 - *Transition to Independence Process (TIP)*. BMH Family, Youth, and Children’s Services. For transition age youth living with family but unstably housed.
 - *Creating Homes*. BHCS. For BHCS service participants who are interested in employment and in exiting more institutional housing settings.

For more information on any of these programs or for the FSP contacts, please contact:

Robert Ratner, Housing Services Director
Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services
2000 Embarcadero Cove, STE 400
Oakland, CA 94606
(510) 567-8124
rratner@acbhcs.org

Amy Davidson, Mental Health Housing Development Coordinator
City of Berkeley Housing Department
2180 Milvia St, 2nd Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 981-5406
adavidson@ci.berkeley.ca.us