



MARIPOSA COUNTY

Health and Human Services · (209) 966-2000



RESOLUTION - ACTION REQUESTED 2019-85

MEETING: February 12, 2019
TO: The Board of Supervisors
FROM: Chevon Kothari, Health and Human Services Director
RE: Approval to Adopt Scattered Site Homeless Model for HHSA

RECOMMENDATION AND JUSTIFICATION:

Approve the Scattered Site Homeless Model for the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA); and Authorize the HHSA Director to Adopt the Model and to Initiate the Rental of Properties to Support the Project.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

In November 2018, the Mariposa County Board of Supervisors directed HHSA to operate an emergency homeless shelter. In order to stand up a shelter in a timely way, it was important to set up a temporary structure which combined large, durable tents and spaces for individual personal tents, with access to portable restrooms. This location was meant to be temporary while searching for a longer term solution. In January of 2019, the Board approved the submission of an application through the HCD CDBG funding to construct and operate a permanent Homeless Shelter. Knowing that, if funded through CDBG, a permanent homeless shelter will take approximately 1.5 years to complete. For this reason, HHSA, along with our Homeless Task Force, is exploring other homeless shelter models to ensure community members are getting their needs met, while HHSA can appropriately manage the program.

HHSA is currently proposing migrating towards a scattered site housing model for the interim period of February, 2018 through CDBG Project completion.

Scattered site housing is defined as “assisted housing dispersed through the community and usually rented from a private landlord,” according to the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Scattered site housing has been implemented all over the United States since the 1950’s. In a supportive housing model based on scattered site leasing, houses are identified and secured across a community. A master lease is signed between the service agency, in this case HHSA, and the owner/landlord, and participant contracts are signed between the service agency and each individual or family moving into a site. There is typically no contractual relationship between the site owner and individual site participants.

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Several advantages have been documented with regards to implementation of scattered site housing over more traditional congregate shelter housing. Unlike many typical congregate shelter model, homeless individuals are allowed to bring their pets, partners and personal items to encourage them to stay in housing rather than seek independence on the streets. Furthermore, shelter participants learn to navigate the smaller, shared living experience and can receive the services necessary to stabilize in a setting that mirrors future permanent housing solutions and teaches them the life skills necessary for house management. Scattered site models allow for residents to have greater access to preparation of their own food, better sleep and better hygiene. These factors all pave the way to more successes in obtaining employment for residents. Also importantly, scattered sites have been demonstrated to reduce overall system and staffing costs.

Scattered site housing does not come without its challenges. Certain participants may not be able to function well within this kind of shared living environment. Appropriate and thorough screenings are required to ensure “best fit” into suitable shared housing. Additionally, shelters are short term in duration by definition, and sometimes a home environment does not give participants the same sense of urgency to move to work on moving to their next goal or housing situation. To be successful, programs must be developed to provide intensive case management, not only helping clients develop living skills and house management skills, but also working with them towards more permanent solutions. Finally, rental houses are embedded in communities and there can be a concern by community members or neighbors. These must be addressed by HHSA staff who will invite feedback and be responsive to solving any problems that may arise.

Board support is being requested to begin to secure sites and begin operating this model in February of 2019. There will be a transition time between building our scattered site model and closing our current tent model; both will remain in effect until enough appropriate properties have been secured to address the current need.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

The Board could choose not to adopt the scattered site model and continue with the current tent model. This will meet the need, but will continue to pose some challenges until a permanent shelter site is built.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

It is anticipated that moving to the scattered site model will slightly reduce both overall facility/utility costs and staffing costs. Not all homes require 24/7 staffing in this model. Funding is being utilized from existing HHSA sources and there will be no impact on the County General Fund.



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RESULT: ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER: Marshall Long, District III Supervisor
SECONDER: Kevin Cann, District IV Supervisor
AYES: Smallcombe, Jones, Long, Cann, Menetrey