



CDSS

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Bringing Families Home (BFH) Program FACT SHEET

Background

BFH is a state-funded, locally administered program in which participating counties and tribes provide housing-related support to eligible families experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness in the child welfare system. The BFH Program was created by [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 1603 \(Committee on Budget, Chapter 25, Statutes of 2016\)](#) and updated by [Senate Bill \(SB\) 80 \(Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review, Chapter 27, Statutes 2019\)](#) and [AB 135 \(Committee on Budget, Chapter 85, Statutes of 2021\)](#) to reduce the number of families in the child welfare system experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, increase the number of families reunifying, and prevent foster care placement.

Overview

BFH offers financial assistance and housing-related wraparound supportive services including but not limited to, rental assistance, housing navigation, case management, security deposits, utility payments, moving costs, hotel and motel vouchers, legal services, and credit repair. Grantees are required to coordinate with their local homelessness response system and to participate in the homeless Continuum of Care (CoC) and Coordinated Entry System (CES). BFH follows the Housing First model and incorporates evidence-based housing interventions, including Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing.

The CDSS Housing and Homelessness Division provides regular and targeted technical assistance to BFH grantees in partnership with [the Change Well Project](#) including, but not limited to:

- Individualized support including regular teleconferences and email correspondences, as well as meetings to problem-solve grantee-level challenges and compile lessons learned.
- Learning Forums, webinars and trainings featuring national, state, and local experts in housing and homelessness, which support adoption of evidence-based practices and interventions, including a Housing First approach and Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing. Topics include assessment and prioritization, landlord navigation and recruitment, program budgeting and strategic use of funding, collaboration with local homelessness systems, and more.

Implementation and Accomplishments

As of Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22, a total of 51 counties and 1 tribe operate BFH statewide. BFH has had continual growth and expansion since the program's inception in 2016, with only 12 counties operating BFH in FY 2016-17. No tribes operated BFH in the first round of funding.

November 2022

Since the program launch through June 2022:

- Over 3,900 families have been served by BFH and
- Over 2,000 families have been permanently housed

BFH supports and coordinates systems change within communities through partnerships between child welfare systems and the greater homelessness response system in each community, resulting in:

- Improved leveraging of federal, state, and local resources for more integrated and cost-effective services, including greater utilization of federally funded Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers.
- Increased coordination between child welfare services and housing and homelessness programs.
- Increased tracking of homelessness data through the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) and collaboration with the local homelessness CES.

The Children's Data Network (CDN) and California Policy Lab (CPL) are conducting a formal evaluation of the program with results planned for publication in early 2023.

Funding History

- The program was established in FY 2016-17 by [AB 1603 \(Committee on Budget, Chapter 25, Statutes of 2016\)](#) with a \$10 million appropriation available over 3 years. The program required a dollar-for-dollar grantee match.
- The [Budget Act of 2019](#) appropriated an additional \$25 million available over 3 years (July 2019 through June 2022). The program required a dollar-for-dollar grantee match.
- The [Budget Act of 2021](#) appropriated a total of \$92.5 million in match-exempt General Funds (GF) for BFH for FY 2021-22, available for expenditure July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2024.
- Through the [Budget Act of 2022](#), BFH received an additional allocation of \$92.5 million in match-exempt GF available for encumbrance or expenditure July 1, 2022, through June 20, 2025.
- On September 21, 2022, CDSS released an [All County Welfare Director's Letter \(ACWDL\)](#) notifying all 58 counties and continuing tribal grantees of the additional BFH funds in FY 22-23, which will be available over multiple years, to further establish and expand housing and homelessness assistance through BFH.

Learn More: For more information, please visit the [Bringing Families Home website](#).