



SAN DIEGO  
HOUSING  
COMMISSION

**News Release**

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**SAN DIEGO HOUSING COMMISSION IS ASSISTING  
ORGANIZATIONS SERVING DOWNTOWN HOMELESS WITH  
150 HOUSING VOUCHERS**

*Program uses authority granted to SDHC by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban  
Development to test innovative local programs*

**San Diego, CA**—By the end of the year, 150 homeless downtown San Diegans may find a place to call home as the San Diego Housing Commission (SDHC) prepares to distribute rental-assistance vouchers to non-profit organizations that provide services and housing.

The program is SDHC's largest-ever release of Sponsor-based housing vouchers and is funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

“We know from HUD’s experience elsewhere in the country and our own recent experience that these housing vouchers can make a profound difference in helping people rebuild their lives,” said SDHC President & CEO Richard C. Gentry. “We saw this same effort in our partnership with the United Way Project 25, which stabilized lives and reduced the costs of public resources by millions.”

Non-profit organizations selected for the housing vouchers must serve participants who are homeless within downtown San Diego. Agencies and organizations providing supportive services to the homeless are eligible to apply for the housing vouchers, which allow them to rent units for their clients.

The Request for Proposals’ (RFP) weighted rating system includes incentives for organizations assisting the chronically homeless, ensuring this vulnerable population is served.

The San Diego County Regional Task Force on the Homeless, in its annual homeless count and survey this year, identified 1,122 homeless persons in Central San Diego, mostly in the downtown area. The countywide total of 9,641 was up 6.9 percent from 2011.

SDHC is able to provide the vouchers as one of 35 Moving to Work (MTW) agencies designated by HUD. The designation provides flexibility to test innovative programs that address San Diego’s unique housing needs.

SDHC previously has provided 25 Sponsor-based vouchers to Project 25, a United Way of San Diego County partnership with St. Vincent de Paul Village to assist homeless individuals downtown who account for some of the costliest demands on public services, such as emergency medical treatment and law enforcement.

(MORE)

After one year of a three-year pilot program, United Way found compelling results from the combination of long-term housing and supportive services in Project 25. Costs of public resources attributable to participants in the program were reduced to \$3.4 million in 2011 from more than \$11 million in 2010.

In the case of one of those participants, James, who had been living on the streets since 1998, 54 ambulance rides in 2010 were reduced to one in 2011, and 51 emergency room visits in 2010 went to one in 2011.

SDHC also contributed 50 Sponsor-based vouchers for the Campaign to End Homelessness, a project of the Downtown San Diego Partnership and the former Centre City Development Corporation. These vouchers assisted high-risk individuals identified as vulnerable during “Registry Week,” survey of downtown homeless San Diegans conducted September 19-23, 2010. Community Research Foundation, Inc., and Mental Health Systems, Inc., which help mentally ill chronically homeless individuals, assisted with the program.

Proposals are being sought through 2 p.m. August 27<sup>th</sup> and applications can be delivered to SDHC’s main office at 1122 Broadway, Suite 300, San Diego, CA 92101. Mail must be postmarked to meet the same deadline.

Selections are tentatively scheduled to be announced next month.

For more information about SDHC’s programs, please visit [www.sdhc.org](http://www.sdhc.org)

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