HOMELESSNESS

California's services and resources continue to be impacted due to the state's growing homeless population. Despite increased state and local investments, federal data have shown an increase in California's homeless population over recent years as more individuals are losing housing, due in large part to skyrocketing housing costs.

The Budget includes significant one-time investments in both housing and homelessness—$1.75 billion for housing and $1 billion for homelessness—to support local governments in developing an integrated approach to tackle their homelessness issues. Homelessness investments are described below and Housing investments can be found in the Housing and Local Government Chapter.

HOMELESS EMERGENCY AID

The Budget includes $650 million one-time General Fund for the construction and expansion of emergency shelters and navigation centers, rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, job programs, and for innovative projects like hotel/motel conversions. California's largest cities will receive $275 million, counties will receive $175 million, and Continuums of Care will receive $190 million, based on the 2019 federal point-in-time homeless count. The remaining $10 million will be scheduled later this legislative session. Regional coordination is a priority and local jurisdictions must include how dollars will be spent with the goal to move individuals into permanent housing.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INVESTMENTS

In addition to the aid provided above, the Budget includes investments in wraparound services to assist individuals with their housing needs and to mitigate the factors that may be contributing to individuals' homelessness, or to keep people from becoming homeless. Specifically, as described in the Health and Human Services Chapter, the Budget provides:

- $331.5 million one-time General Fund and federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families block grants in the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids Program to assist low-income families with paying for housing, food and other necessities.

- $120 million one-time General Fund for expanded Whole Person Care pilots.

- $25 million ongoing for the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program, to assist homeless, disabled individuals apply for disability benefit programs.

- $25 million one-time General Fund, available over three years, for the Bringing Families Home Program to provide housing-related support to eligible families served by county child welfare agencies.

- $14.7 million General Fund in 2019-20 and $27.6 million ongoing General Fund for the CalWORKs Homeless Assistance Program to eliminate the requirement that the 16 allowable days of temporary homeless assistance be used consecutively in a year-long period.

STUDENT RAPID REHOUSING

The Budget also includes investments, as described in the Higher Education Chapter, to address student food and housing insecurity. $3.9 million one-time Proposition 98 General Fund settle-up is provided to the California Community Colleges (CCCs), $15 million one-time General Fund for the California State University (CSU), and $15 million ongoing General Fund for the University of California (UC). Additionally, the Budget includes funds to support rapid rehousing of homeless and housing insecure students. Ongoing Proposition 98 General Fund of $9 million is set aside for the CCCs, $6.5 million ongoing General Fund for the CSUs, and $3.5 million ongoing General Fund for the UCs.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires state and local government agencies to inform the public and the Legislature about potential environmental impacts of proposed projects. This review process can take a significant amount of time and poses a barrier to building navigation centers. The Budget includes statutory amendments to help mitigate California's homelessness crisis by exempting low barrier navigation centers built on public land from CEQA review.

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