



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER



PRESS RELEASE

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COUNTY LAUNCHES REHOUSING WAVE

For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, the County of Santa Cruz provided safe shelter, food and critical services to more than 800 local residents who lack housing. As we emerge from the pandemic, the County is asking for the community's help in finding and supporting transitions to permanent housing for individuals who may otherwise experience a return to homelessness.

The County is launching Rehousing Wave to support temporarily sheltered individuals and families in securing permanent housing. Funded primarily through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and approved by the Board of Supervisors, the Rehousing Wave represents the largest effort to rehouse formerly homeless individuals in County history and helps meet the objectives of the County's three-year strategic framework for addressing homelessness.

Just as efforts to house and protect individuals during the pandemic was a collaboration with community partners including 260 local residents employed throughout the sheltering system, Rehousing Wave also builds on the spirit of collaboration. Housing Matters, Abode Services (Abode), the Community Action Board (CAB), the Santa Cruz County Veterans Memorial Building Board of Trustees, the Housing Authority of the County of Santa Cruz and especially local property owners and managers will play vital roles in this effort.

"Our efforts to protect individuals experiencing homelessness during the pandemic were successful, but we face a new potential crisis – the loss of federal funding to support COVID-related sheltering efforts," said Robert Ratner, director of the County's new Housing for Health Division. "As we transition out of the pandemic, it is imperative that our community come together to support these individuals so that they may continue their journeys toward wellness, stability, and dignity."



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This effort will not be successful without the support and commitment of local landlords, who have a chance to reduce local homelessness while providing local families and individuals a foundation to improve their lives.

"My experience as a landlord has only been positive and rewarding. I'm helping families find a place they can call home," said Jana Rinaldi, a landlord who has helped provide housing for individuals exiting homelessness. "The fact that both tenant and landlord are supported in the process is a win win for both. "

The Rehousing Wave needs property owners and housing providers who can help those who need a home. To ensure a smooth and mutually beneficial housing partnership, Rehousing Wave offers financial security and personalized support, as well as assuring individuals and families seeking housing are provided the supportive services necessary to become optimal tenants.

Benefits of the Rehousing Wave include:

- Housing providers are guaranteed, on-time monthly payments from a local non-profit organization
- Financial incentives will be available for property owners/housing providers
- A single point of contact will be assigned to property owners/housing providers to help resolve any tenant concerns
- Resident support services will be provided and tenants will be offered a case manager to support their long-term success as tenants

The Rehousing Wave is looking forward to partnering with housing providers to secure homes for individuals and families in need in Santa Cruz County. Interested property owners/housing providers can contact Shiri Gradek at sgradek@abodeservices.org or call 510-435-8881. More information is available at <http://homelessactionpartnership.org/RehousingWave.aspx>.

The Rehousing Wave is also collecting monetary and supply donations to support households with transitioning to permanent housing. The Santa Cruz Veterans Hall Board of Trustees is coordinating this effort. Individuals interested in making a donation can visit veteranshall.org for more information, or contact Chris Cottingham at director@vetshall.org or call 650-303-8221.

The Santa Cruz County Housing for Health Division oversees the county's housing crisis services system and is responsible for implementing the county's plan to reduce homelessness, "Housing for a Healthy Santa Cruz: A Strategic Framework for Addressing Homelessness in Santa Cruz County."