

# THE QUARTERLY UPDATE

January - March 2021

We have faced unprecedented challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic and I greatly appreciate the efforts and unwavering dedication of our community in response to the crisis. We have made incredible progress over the past year and the Office of Care Coordination is proud to be able to share important updates, including the opening of our new Yale Navigation Center and the launch of Orange County's Emergency Rental Assistance program. We look forward to continuing our work together to develop effective solutions to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

- Jason Austin, Director, Office of Care Coordination



## Yale Navigation Center Opening

The Yale Navigation Center is a new shelter for those experiencing homelessness, replacing the Courtyard Transitional Center, to provide wraparound shelter and supportive services to 425 adults. People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) is the operator of Yale and it incorporates the services previously delivered by the Midnight Mission at the Courtyard Transitional Center, WisePlaces SafePlace for Women and Washington Place.

Yale Navigation Center Entrance



Yale Dining Facilities



*"PATH is excited to welcome our new guests into the Yale Navigation Center Program. Our dedicated team and community partners will work to ensure that each guest has a safe, stable, and healing environment that leads to a permanent home. This will be a community where people can access a wide array of services they need to move forward in their lives. We will provide physical and mental health services, employment and educational services, substance use services, and emotional well-being services that help people heal and grow. PATH truly appreciates the County of Orange for their leadership and partnership in getting people off the streets and into homes as quickly as possible."*

**Tescia Uribe, LCSW**  
Chief Program Officer, PATH

# The County's Homeless Covid Response

## PROJECT ROOMKEY

The County of Orange continues to operate:

- Temporary isolation shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness who are COVID-19 sick or symptomatic
- Congregate shelter site for individuals experiencing homelessness who are COVID-19 positive

The total capacity being served under Project Roomkey is 275 individuals. Referrals into the program are made by Public Health Services, hospitals, shelters, street outreach teams and law enforcement.

## PROJECT TOOLBELT

The County's COVID-19 Homelessness Response System provided a unique opportunity to engage, assess and facilitate housing placement for many individuals experiencing homelessness who were not previously engaged with the Homeless System of Care. Project Toolbelt builds on this and works to engage and transition individuals experiencing homelessness into appropriate housing opportunities using the "every tool in the tool belt" approach. City Net is the contracted provider for the North and Central Service Planning Area, while Friendship Shelter is the contracted provider in the South Service Planning Area. Both contracted providers have identified bridge housing options and long-term housing resources in their region to meet the needs of those individuals enrolled in Project Toolbelt. As of the start of February 2021, 136 permanent placements have been made.

## PROJECT HOMEKEY

Project Homekey was the next phase in the state's response to serve people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness and whom are also at risk of serious illness from COVID-19. Funding was made available by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) to purchase and rehabilitate housing, including hotels, motels and vacant apartment buildings. The County, in partnership with Jamboree Housing, submitted an application for the 60-unit Tahiti Motel and 72-unit Stanton Inn Suites. The State awarded the County \$26,100,000 on October 9, 2020, to move forward with these housing projects, delivering 132 units across the two sites.

# County of Orange Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program

## OVERVIEW OF ERA PROGRAM

- The County of Orange was allocated \$65,576,556 from the U.S. Department of Treasury (Treasury) for the implementation of the Emergency Rental Assistance (ERA) Program.
- The ERA Program provides funding to assist households that have been unable to pay rent and utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The ERA Program must be used for unpaid rent and utility bills for rental households only. Eligible utilities are: electricity, gas, water and home energy costs only.
- The cities of Anaheim, Santa Ana and Irvine received direct allocations from Treasury and will have their own programs. Individuals in rental households located in one of those three cities will be encouraged to contact their city of residence for more information about rental assistance programs.
- Maximum financial assistance is up to \$10,000 per household to pay for rental arrears and past due utilities.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

- Rental households who can demonstrate their housing is at risk due to unpaid rent or utility bills resulting from their income being negatively affected from COVID 19.
- Rental households who have rental arrears or past due utility bills and home energy costs. Funding for utilities does not include past due internet or telephone bills.
- The household's income must be at or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). See table below:

AMI level	Household Size							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
80% AMI	\$71,750	\$82,000	\$92,250	\$102,450	\$110,650	\$118,850	\$127,050	\$135,250

- The households cannot be receiving federal rental subsidies or receiving assistance from other rental programs.
- Landlords can encourage their tenants to apply.

**DOCUMENTATION NEEDED WHEN APPLYING?**

- Photo identification.
- Copy of a lease or rental agreement.
- Proof of income affected by COVID- 19 (i.e. unemployment letter or letter from employer stating reduced hours or pay).
- Proof of unpaid rent or utilities (i.e. documentation from a landlord or utility company stating the amount owed).

**WHERE TO APPLY AND FIND MORE INFORMATION?**

First open application period is February 1 to 28, 2021. The application is available online or by phone. For more information or to apply for assistance please call 2-1-1 or visit the website: <http://www.ERA.211OC.org> or text ERA to 898211.

# EMERGENCY RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

for Orange County Renters



The **County of Orange** will offer rental households, up to **\$10,000 in financial assistance** for unpaid rent or utility bills due to the impact of **COVID-19**.

**Accepting applications starting February 1** and will only be accepted until February 28, 2021.

**To APPLY and find more information:**



Visit the website at [www.ERA.211OC.org](http://www.ERA.211OC.org)



Text **ERA** to **898211**



Call **2-1-1**

**Eligibility requirements include:**



Eligible expenses are **UNPAID rent or utility bills** due to COVID-19 impact only, not future rent or utility costs. You must also meet income requirement as stated below.

Household annual income must be at or below **80% Area Median Income (AMI)**:

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>80%AMI Level</b>	\$71,750	\$82,000	\$92,250	\$102,450	\$110,650	\$118,850

Landlords can encourage tenants to apply.

Rental households in the cities of Anaheim, Santa Ana and Irvine are ineligible for this County program, as those cities provide their own rental assistance programs.

**For flyers in additional languages and video link, please visit:**

[https://www.ochealthinfo.com/occ/emergency\\_rental\\_assistance\\_program](https://www.ochealthinfo.com/occ/emergency_rental_assistance_program)

# Commission to End Homelessness

---

## HOMELESS SERVICES MAPPING SURVEY

In partnership with the Commission to End Homelessness, the Office of Care Coordination is conducting a survey to better understand the services and resources for those experiencing homelessness in Orange County. Homeless services mapping will ensure that all homeless individuals and those working with them, understand and have access to a comprehensive set of services essential to reducing and preventing homelessness. More information will be presented at future commission meetings.

## Affordable Housing Developments

---



Two affordable housing projects under development during 2020 opened their doors earlier this year.

Casa Querencia is a 57-unit permanent supportive housing development that is receiving on-site support by Mercy House and OC Health Care Agency.

Salerno is an 80-unit development that provides 35 units of housing for special populations, including veterans, families and low-income households. Families Forward and the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs will support the households that enter to ensure stabilization and access to resources.

# Orange County Continuum of Care

---

The County of Orange coordinates a comprehensive regional Continuum of Care (CoC) to develop and implement a strategy to address homelessness in Orange County. Participation in the CoC includes stakeholders from County departments and agencies, local governments, homeless housing and supportive service providers, non-profits, faith-based organizations, interested business leaders, schools, individuals with lived experience and many other stakeholders. The Orange County CoC Board:

- Promotes communitywide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness through regional coordination and collaboration.
- Advocates for funding and resources to end homelessness and provide funding for proven efforts by nonprofit providers, States, and local governments to quickly rehouse people experiencing homelessness, while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused to homeless individuals, families, and communities by homelessness.
- Promotes access to and effective utilization of mainstream programs by homeless individuals and families.
- Promotes implementation of best practices and evidence-based approaches to homeless programming and services.

The Orange County CoC has five committees under the umbrella of the CoC Board aimed at coordination and collaborating on specific functions and programs associated with the CoC. The five committees are: Policies, Procedures and Standards Committee, Coordinated Entry System (CES) Committee, Housing Opportunities Committee, Lived Experience Advisory Committee (further details below) and Homeless Provider Forum.

## LIVED EXPERIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE LAUNCH

On November 18, 2020, the Orange County Continuum of Care (CoC) Board approved the creation of the Lived Experience Advisory Committee. The Lived Experience Advisory Committee was created to obtain and include community-level feedback from individuals with current and past lived experience in the CoC's efforts to end homelessness in Orange County.

For more information on the Orange County CoC, visit the website: [https://www.ochealthinfo.com/homeless\\_serv/coc/2020](https://www.ochealthinfo.com/homeless_serv/coc/2020)

# 2021 Point in Time (PIT) Count Update

---

On December 21, 2020, the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved the exemption request to not conduct an unsheltered count in 2021 for the Orange County Continuum of Care (COC). The Office of Care Coordination and the Orange County CoC Board did not come to this decision easily, but the health and safety of our clients, volunteers, and community was prioritized. The majority of Southern California CoCs have made and had similar requests approved to not conduct their count of unsheltered individuals experiencing homelessness. HUD is still requiring CoCs to complete the Sheltered Count and Homeless Inventory Counts (HIC), which are an annual mandate that occurs concurrently with the biennial unsheltered count process. The Sheltered Count and the HIC have been undertaken early this year in collaboration with 2-1-1 Orange County.

For more information on the work of the Office of Care Coordination, please contact [officeofcarecoordination@ochca.com](mailto:officeofcarecoordination@ochca.com)



Office of  
**CARE COORDINATION**