



# HOME STRETCH HOUSING ASSISTANCE FUND POLICY



The Home Stretch Housing Assistance Fund, managed by Alameda County Health Care Services Agency, was created to provide a flexible source of funding to help Alameda County eligible consumers and their families obtain and maintain long-term, stable housing of their choice in Alameda County.

## Who Qualifies for Assistance through the Housing Fund?

Applicants for assistance must meet ALL of the following criteria:

- The applicant has active Medi-Cal in Alameda County.
- The applicant is currently experiencing homelessness, is at-risk of homelessness, has experienced homelessness in the past 24 months or has been identified as a frequent user of multiple systems by Care Connect.
- The applicant must be working with an agency that serves households experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in Alameda County. The service provider must assist and support the consumer through the application process.
- The applicant agrees that Alameda County can follow up with the applicant and the applicant’s service providers in order to obtain information about the applicant’s housing situation and stability for up to 13 months after assistance is provided.

## What are Eligible Expenses for the Home Stretch Housing Assistance Fund?

There are three categories of eligible uses. In order for a funding request to be approved, there must be rationale explaining why the funding is necessary and how it will impact the applicant’s housing stability.

Up to \$8,000 per household per year		Up to \$8,000 per household per year
Rental Assistance	Move In Assistance	Safety and Accessibility
<i>Eligible expenses:</i> Security deposit and 1 <sup>st</sup> month’s rent.	<i>Eligible expenses:</i> Utility start-up costs, application fees, essential home furnishings, household items such as food preparation items and bed/bath linens, and non-emergency, non-medical transport such as a moving company. See “Approved Home Furnishings and Household Items” checklist.	<i>Eligible expenses:</i> Needed items and services to make the home safe and accessible: medically necessary items such as hospital beds and Hoyer lifts; unit modifications to meet accessibility needs such as ramps and grab bars; pest control; hoarding clean up.

## How are Requests Approved?

If an applicant’s situation is uncertain or unusual, or if the provider is unfamiliar with the Home Stretch Housing Assistance Fund, it is recommended that the provider contact the Home Stretch office at 1 (510) 567-8030 *prior* to preparing an application for assistance to determine whether or not the request is appropriate and eligible for consideration.

Eligible service providers must submit a fully *completed* application and signed HMIS Release of Information form for the use of these funds on behalf of a particular applicant. Eligible service provider is defined as any person who works for an organization that receives funding from Alameda County to provide services to the eligible population. Applicants must also provide a copy of their lease or rental agreement.

For requests that include home furnishings or household items, please attach the “Approved Household Furnishings and Household Items” checklist with the items marked that the applicant would like, as well as expected costs. Please keep in mind that the total allowable amount for rental assistance and move in assistance is \$8,000 and anything chosen will need to fit within that limit, including taxes and shipping.

Upon approval of the request, Home Stretch staff will ask you to pick the items the eligible applicant would like from an approved vendor and follow the instructions for the chosen vendor. The applicant may choose items from up to

two of the approved vendors. All items must be able to be delivered and the cost of delivery, if there is any, must be included in cost calculations. Providers may choose to work with the consumer to choose the items prior to approval and attach a print out of requested items and e-mail the link to the items at the time of the application.

For utility start-up costs, a copy of the utility bill with account number information must be provided. In some instances, a deposit is required to initiate utilities that are not included in the rent. Please contact the utility company to find out what the startup costs would be so this may be included in the application request.

For moving service requests, a copy of the quote from the moving service must be provided.

Requests for safety and accessibility items and services must be accompanied by written verification of need from a medical professional stating that the items or services are medically necessary. Verification of the attempt to obtain requested medical equipment using insurance is also needed.

Within 5 working days of submitting a completed application, the provider will be notified if the application has been approved and under what, if any, conditions. Approvals will be based on eligibility and the likelihood that the Home Stretch Housing Fund will have a positive, long-term, measurable impact in addressing the applicant's homelessness or reducing the risk of homelessness.

The service provider that submitted the application on behalf on the applicant will be notified of the outcome and updated about next steps.

### **How are Payments Made?**

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**For rental assistance:** Once a request has been approved, the service provider and/or landlord must provide the necessary documentation for a payment to be made. For landlords or property management companies, this includes an original signed invoice, an original signed w-9 form from the property owner, and a vendor form. Faxed or electronic copies of the Invoice and W-9 form are NOT accepted. Without these documents from the landlord, property management company or housing provider, the HCSA Finance Department staff cannot issue payment to the vendor.

**For utility payments:** Once the request has been approved and a copy of the utility bill obtained, HCSA will make the payment directly to the vendor.

**For moving services:** Once the request has been approved, the moving company must submit an original signed invoice, an original signed W-9 form, and a vendor form (if they are not already an established vendor).

**For household furnishings and household items:** Once the request has been approved, the applicant will select the authorized furniture and household items from an approved vendor. Home Stretch staff will purchase the items and they will be sent to the applicant's address or, in some instances, the service provider.

**For medical equipment:** Home Stretch staff will order the item to be shipped directly to the applicant.

Once all the final paperwork is received, checks are typically provided within five (5) business days. Checks will be mailed to the property owner or vendor. All funds are issued to eligible third parties. Funds are never paid directly to applicants.

### **How will unit modifications and safety service requests be conducted?**

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The service provider will be responsible for assisting the applicant to secure a vendor to provide the unit modifications or services after the approval. The approval will include a maximum amount that the modifications can cost. Once the work is complete, the County will pay the vendor. Vendors must be licensed, bonded and insured; the service provider is responsible for ensuring that the vendor meets these standards.

### **Where Can I Obtain the Home Stretch Housing Assistance Fund Application?**

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All forms and documents related to the Home Stretch Housing Assistance Fund may be found on the EveryOne Home website at <http://everyonehome.org/our-work/home-stretch/>.

The application may also be obtained by emailing the Home Stretch office at [HomeStretchFund@acgov.org](mailto:HomeStretchFund@acgov.org).

Contact Info:

E-mail: [HomeStretchFund@acgov.org](mailto:HomeStretchFund@acgov.org)

Phone: 1 (510) 567-8030 Fax: 1 (877) 489-4642