Using Home Safe to Get and Keep Older Californians Housed

Vivianne Mbaku, Director of Equity in Elder Justice
Patti Prunhuber, Director of Housing Advocacy

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Justice in Aging is a national organization that uses the power of law to fight senior poverty by securing access to affordable health care, economic security, and the courts for older adults with limited resources.

Since 1972 we’ve focused our efforts primarily on fighting for people who have been marginalized and excluded from justice, such as women, people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people with limited English proficiency.
Housekeeping

- All on mute. Use Questions function for substantive questions and for technical concerns.
- Problems with getting on to the webinar? Send an e-mail to trainings@justiceinaging.org.
- Find materials for this training and past trainings by searching the Resource Library, justiceinaging.org/resource-library. A recording will be posted to Justice in Aging's Vimeo page at the conclusion of the presentation, vimeo.com/justiceinaging.
- Enable closed captioning by selecting “CC” from the Zoom control panel.
Justice in Aging’s Commitment to Advancing Equity

To achieve Justice in Aging, we must:

• **Advance equity** for low-income older adults in economic security, health care, housing, and elder justice initiatives.

• Address the enduring harms and inequities caused by systemic racism and other forms of discrimination that uniquely impact low-income older adults in marginalized communities.

• Recruit, support, and retain a diverse staff and board, including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and presentation, sexual orientation, disability, age, and economic class.
Goals of Home Safe Training

• Learn about Home Safe’s expanded eligibility and scope of housing-related benefits
• Explore how Home Safe can support clients in obtaining and maintaining stable housing
• Learn how to maximize Home Safe’s housing-related benefits to stabilize client housing
Poll Question #1

How familiar are you with the Home Safe Program in your county?

- I’m here to learn about it
- I have heard about it, but haven’t worked directly with the Program
- I have heard about it and have referred clients to the Home Safe Program
Poll Question #2

How many clients have you referred to the Home Safe Program?

- None
- 1-3
- 4 or more
What Is Home Safe?

• Home Safe supports the safety & housing stability of:
  • Seniors and dependent adults served by, or in intake process for, Adult Protective Services (APS)
  • Who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness

• Administered by county; California Department of Social Services (CDSS) oversight

• Adult Protective Services (APS) subcontracts with housing & other community-based orgs
Elder Justice Issues

• Implications of working with APS
  • Marginalized communities may have well-placed fears and concerns when engaging with social services
  • APS has a well established connection with law enforcement
  • Discussion of risks and benefits of self reporting to APS for Home Safe assistance must be discussed

• Culturally Competent and Trauma-Informed skills are a must

• Preserving older adults’ access to their community and community supports
Home Safe Eligibility

• An individual is eligible for Home Safe if they are...

1. An APS client or in process of intake

   APS clients are older adults (60+) or dependent adults with disabilities (18-59)

2. Homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness as result of elder or dependent abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or financial exploitation

3. Voluntarily agree to participate in APS
Eligibility Expansions  
(as of 7/1/21)

• Age lowered to 60+
• Persons in APS intake/investigation process can receive immediate homeless prevention
• Expanded definition of homeless/at risk of
• Increased focus on serving older unhoused adults
• Expanded list of core service requirements

Welf. & Inst. Code § 15770(b), (c)
Homeless Prevention Assistance

• Rent/Utility Payments
  • Arrears and *ongoing* rental/mortgage payments
  • Housing application fees, move-in costs, security deposits, first and last month’s rent
  • emergency shelter, emergency food or basic needs, hotel and motel stays
  • CDSS: maximize “direct financial assistance” so clients get the greatest amount of support possible

• Housing Navigation

• Home repairs or accessibility modifications

• Any supports to maximize independent living
Types of Homeless Prevention Services

• Intensive Case Management
  • Motivational, trauma-informed
  • Can’t be dismissed from Home Safe for not participating in case management

• Landlord/Tenant Intervention
  • APS can connect clients with legal assistance, eviction prevention, tenant education, credit repair

• Cleaning and hoarding assistance
  • Behavioral health supports are available and can be set up by the APS case manager
  • Cleaning services, hazard removal
  • Connection to IHSS, other health/personal care
Who Is “at Risk of Homelessness?”

- No need for Notice to Vacate/Eviction
- Look at all forms of housing instability
- Other risk factors – rent burden, recent institutionalization or loss of household support
- Unsafe living situation
- What it means to “lack family resources”

ACWDL, Attachment 1
Defining Homelessness

- Person who lacks a fixed or regular nighttime residence
  - In a shelter, hotel/motel or other temporary accommodation
  - Place not designed for sleeping
Frequent Problems

• Screening out APS clients who need help with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) or other disabilities

• No written denial/approval notice, timely decision, right of appeal

• APS workers mistakenly think confidentiality rules prevent talking to authorized representative with a signed release
Advocacy Tips

• Ask to meet with your county APS/Home Safe administrator(s) and any subcontracting organizations
• Request any county Home Safe policies
• Refer to Oct. 15, 2021 ACWDL guidance
• Ask for your county certification ID’ing # of people they expect to serve
• Track access or service issues
Hypothetical

Sam is a 75 year old client. Sam hasn’t received an eviction notice yet but his landlord told him he sold the house and he has 90 days to move out.

Sam’s only income is Social Security Insurance (SSI). Sam’s daughter lives an hour away but she says she can’t take him in.

Sam uses a walker and has some cognitive issues from a head injury 10 years ago, but he is capable of taking care of himself with 5 hours of In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) a week. He is on the list for senior housing, but the wait is 2-3 years.

APS Home Safe has assessed Sam and recommended a board and care facility (RCFE).
Home Safe Program

The Home Safe Program was established in 2018 to prevent or address homelessness to support the safety and housing stability of individuals involved in Adult Protective Services (APS), individuals in the APS intake process, or who may be served by a Tribal social services agency and appear eligible for APS, and who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Home Safe offers a range of strategies to address and prevent homelessness and support ongoing housing stability for APS clients, including housing-related intensive case management, housing-related financial assistance, deep cleaning to maintain safe housing, eviction prevention, landlord mediation, and more.

Fifty-eight (58) grantees are participating in a Home Safe program, and each program is tailored to meet the needs of the local community. For more information about county funding, refer to CFL 21/22-67 (January 20, 2022).

Eligibility

Current APS clients, individuals who are in the process of intake to APS, or individuals who may be served through a Tribal social services agency and appear eligible for APS who are experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness as a result of elder or dependent abuse, neglect, self-neglect, or financial exploitation, as determined by the APS agency are eligible for Home Safe. Note that Home Safe services are not contingent upon the outcome of the APS investigation.

Current and prospective grantees must review the ACWDL dated October 15, 2021 for a complete overview of Home Safe program eligibility, definitions, services, rules, and

Contact Us

CDSS Housing and Homelessness Branch
744 P Street, MS 8-4-70
Sacramento, CA 95814
housing@dss.ca.gov
(916) 651-5155

Resources and Information

- County Points of Contact
- County Fiscal Letter (CFL) 22/23-43 (December 20, 2022): Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23 Bringing Families Home (BFH), Home Safe, the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP), and California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids Housing Support Program (CalWORKs HSP) Allocation
- ACWDL (September 21, 2022) Notice of Funding for CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP), Bringing Families Home (BFH) Program, Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP), and Home Safe Program
- ACWDL (October 15, 2021): Notice of Funding For The Home Safe Program
Resources/Keep in Touch!

- Patti Prunhuber, pprunhuber@justiceinaging.org
- Vivianne Mbaku, vmbaku@justiceinaging.org
- Letter to All County WD’s re: Home Safe Expansion Allocations, Oct. 15, 2021
- List of County APS Contacts
Questions?

Patti Prunhuber, pprunhuber@justiceinaging.org
Vivianne Mbaku, vmbaku@justiceinaging.org
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• Join the Aging in Place: Elder, Housing, Health & Disability Listserv by emailing Patti at pprunhuber@justiceinaging.org.