

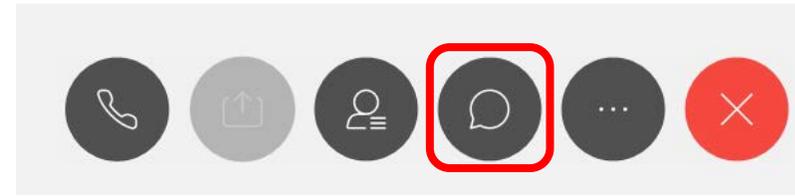


# Office Hours: COVID-19 Planning and Response

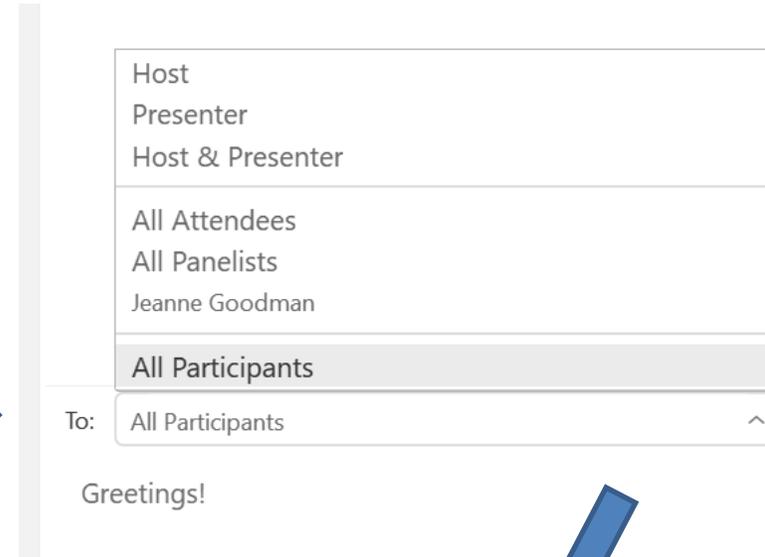
April 10, 2020



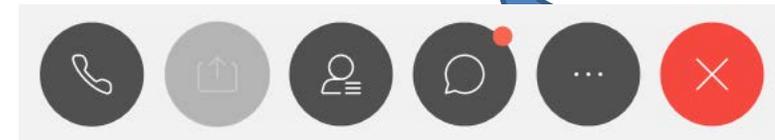
Select the Chat icon to make a comment or ask a question.



Be certain the To field is set to **All Participants**



An orange dot on the Chat icon indicates that you have unread messages.



# Speakers

## Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Dr. Ben Carson, Secretary
- Norm Suchar, Director, Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs

## Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

- Emily Mosites, PhD MPH- COVID-19 At-Risk Population Task Force, Senior Advisor on Health and Homelessness



# Speakers (continued)

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

- Erika Ferguson, Director, Healthy Opportunities

North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness

- Denise Neunaber, Executive Director

California Department of Social Services

- Corrin Buchanan, Assistant Director of Housing and Homelessness

Business Consumer Services and Housing Agency

- Ali Sutton, Deputy Secretary for Homelessness

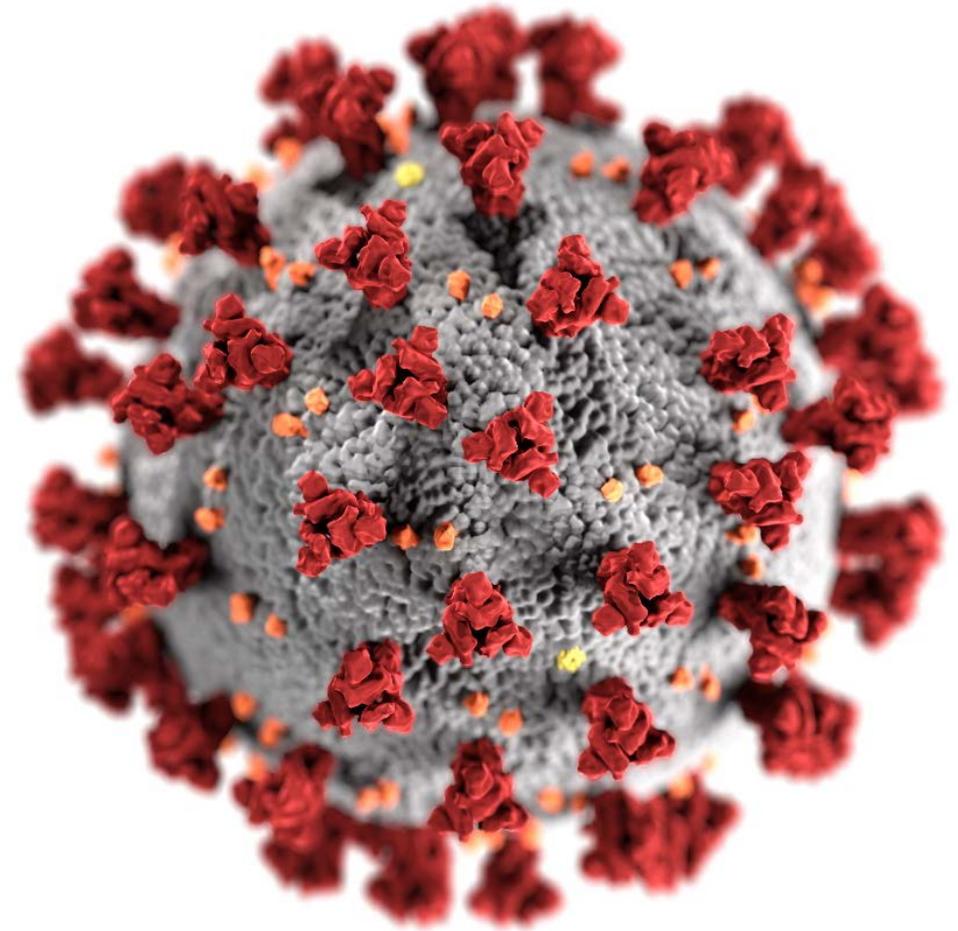


# Agenda

- Updates
  - Dept of Housing and Urban Development
  - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Presentations: Using FEMA Funds to Support COVID-19 Responses for People who are Homeless
- Q&A

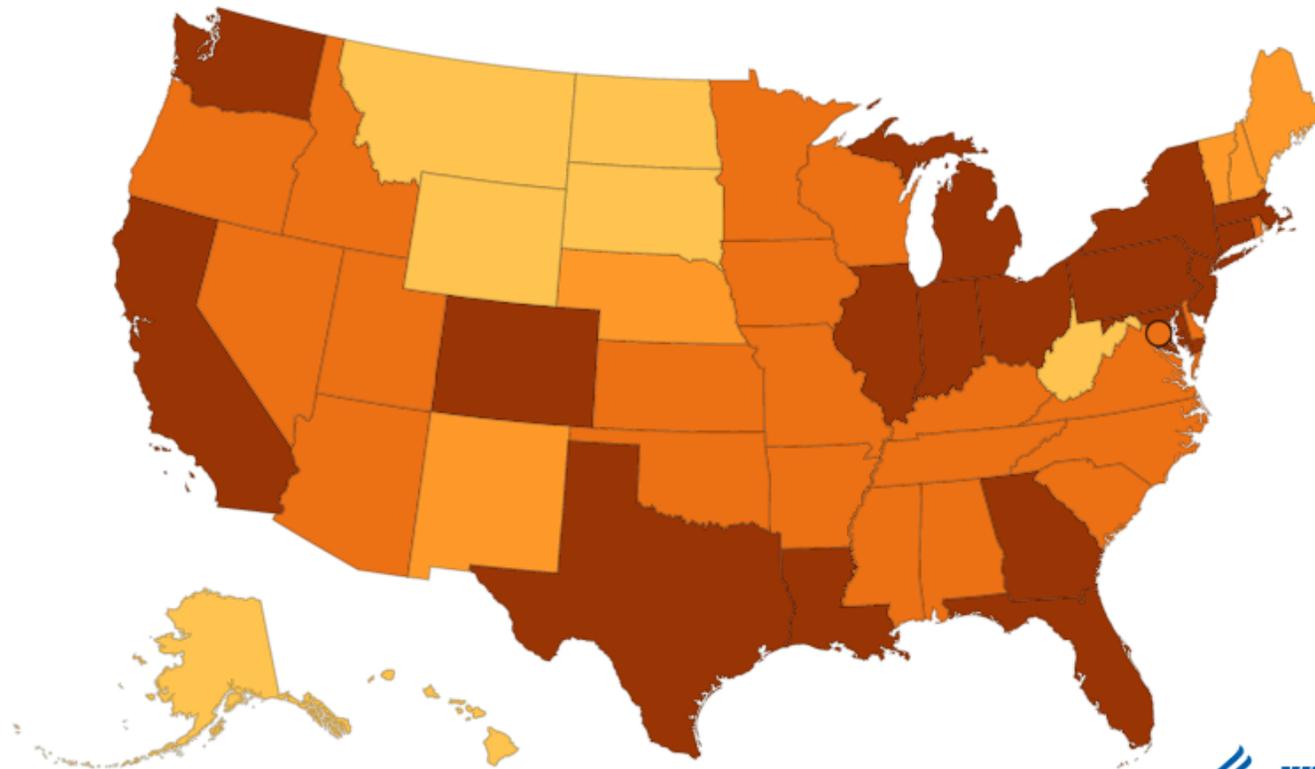
**Emily Mosites, PhD MPH**  
**At Risk Population Task Force**  
**COVID-19 Response**  
**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

## **COVID-19 and Homelessness**



For more information: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

# Over 420,000 cases reported in the United States



## Reported Cases

(last updated April 9, 2020)

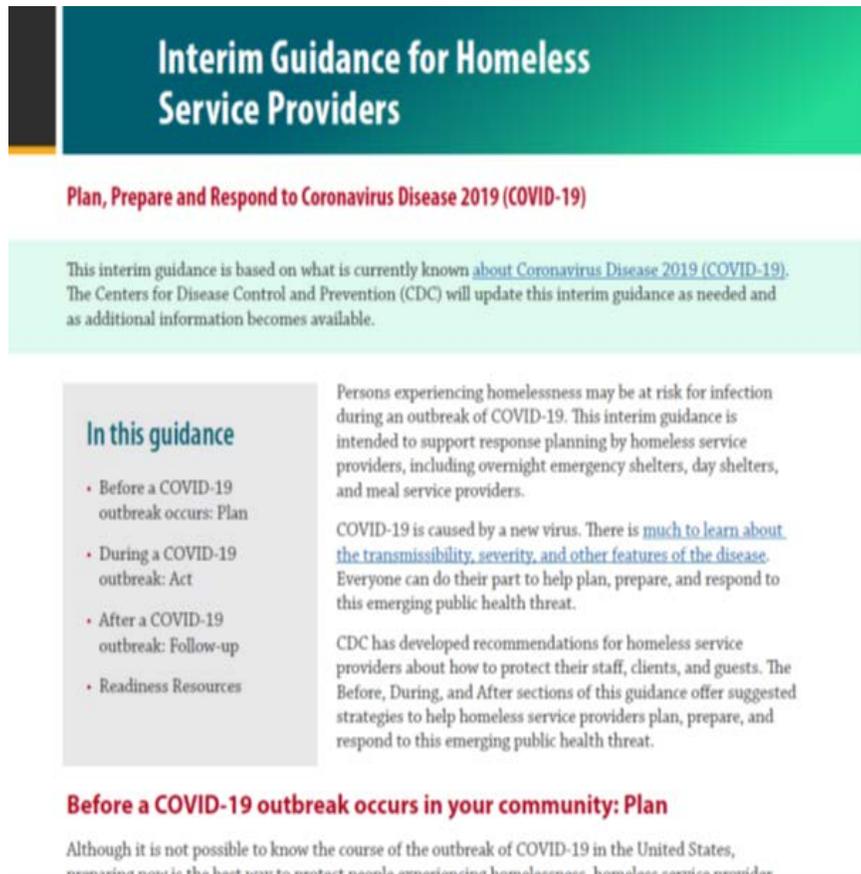
- None
- 6 to 50
- 101 to 500
- 501 to 1000
- 1001 to 5000
- 5001 or more

Territories AS GU MH FM MP PW PR VI



# CDC guidance related to homelessness

Under “Schools, workplaces, and community locations”



**Interim Guidance for Homeless Service Providers**

**Plan, Prepare and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

This interim guidance is based on what is currently known about [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will update this interim guidance as needed and as additional information becomes available.

**In this guidance**

- Before a COVID-19 outbreak occurs: Plan
- During a COVID-19 outbreak: Act
- After a COVID-19 outbreak: Follow-up
- Readiness Resources

Persons experiencing homelessness may be at risk for infection during an outbreak of COVID-19. This interim guidance is intended to support response planning by homeless service providers, including overnight emergency shelters, day shelters, and meal service providers.

COVID-19 is caused by a new virus. There is [much to learn about the transmissibility, severity, and other features of the disease](#). Everyone can do their part to help plan, prepare, and respond to this emerging public health threat.

CDC has developed recommendations for homeless service providers about how to protect their staff, clients, and guests. The Before, During, and After sections of this guidance offer suggested strategies to help homeless service providers plan, prepare, and respond to this emerging public health threat.

**Before a COVID-19 outbreak occurs in your community: Plan**

Although it is not possible to know the course of the outbreak of COVID-19 in the United States, remaining open is the best way to protect people experiencing homelessness. Homeless service providers



## Shelters and other service providers

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/plan-prepare-respond.html>

## Provider serving people experiencing unsheltered homelessness

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/unsheltered-homelessness.html>



# Other CDC Materials on Homelessness

- **Landing page for resources to support people experiencing homelessness**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/index.html>

- **Screening tool**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/screening-clients-respiratory-infection-symptoms.html>

- **Snapshot of guidance for service providers**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/homeless-service-provider-guidance.html>

- **FAQs for COVID-19 and homelessness**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/faqs.html>



# Communications Materials - Homelessness

## PERSONS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

### How to Protect Yourself

#### KNOW HOW COVID-19 SPREADS



- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person.
  - » Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - » Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person breathes, coughs, or sneezes.
  - » These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

## ■ Flyers/Posters

- ❑ Symptoms
- ❑ What to do when sick
- ❑ Social distancing
- ❑ How to take care of others
- ❑ How to protect yourself



**To keep others from getting sick, separate yourself from other people until your fever has been gone for at least 3 days and it has been at least 1 week since your symptoms started.**



**While you are separating yourself, make sure to**



- Avoid common areas or areas where many people gather.
- Stay at least 6 feet away (about two arm lengths) from other people.
- If you usually sleep close to someone else, make a space for yourself (or ask for help to make a space) by using dividers like sheets, curtains, or other barriers.



- If you can, use a different bathroom from other people.
- If you must be around other people, wear a mask if you have one. Or, if you are requested to wear a mask, please do.

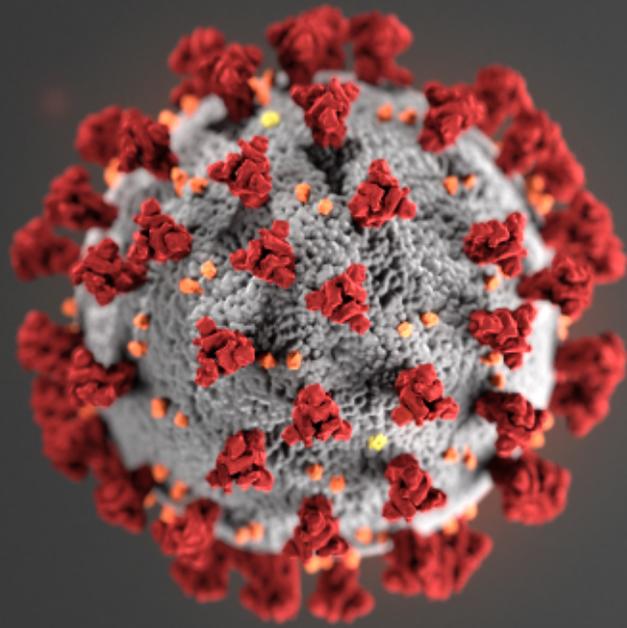
## CDC Communications Resources

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/index.html>

# Coming soon

- **Guidance updates**
- **Additional communications products**





For more information, contact CDC  
1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)  
TTY: 1-888-232-6348 [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs

# DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT



# ESG-CV: Making Smart Investments in a Time of Crisis

- Promote Integrated Planning (CoC, ESG, CDBG, FEMA)
- Lead with Equity
- Short-term Investments Have Long-term Consequences
- Look Outside the Homeless System for Prevention Resources
- Create Clear Pathways to Permanent Housing Options
- This is a Moment to Do Innovative Things!

# Overview: Federal Emergency Management Agency

- FEMA's Mission: Helping people before, during, and after disasters
- Provide cost reimbursable funding to states to respond to disasters
- Cost share funding at 75%
- States can apply for FEMA funding that can support many at-risk populations including the homeless

# NORTH CAROLINA: COVID-19 Housing & Homelessness Planning

Erika Ferguson

Director, Healthy Opportunities, North Carolina Dept. of Health and Human Services

Denise Neunaber

Executive Director, North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness

# North Carolina Overview

## Homelessness in North Carolina

- 9,314 people experienced homelessness during 2019 Point-in-Time Count
- 75% sheltered, 24% unsheltered
- 12 Continuums of Care, 2 HMIS Implementations

## State Context

- 100 counties
- Recent experience with disaster response (Hurricane Florence)
- Coordinated approach across partners to COVID-19 Response
- The homeless service system is essential in flattening the curve to ensure there are enough ICU beds, ventilators, and other resources to meet the demand.

# North Carolina Interagency Council for Coordinating Homeless Programs Work Areas

## 1. Protection in Current Homeless Settings

Steps to increase health and safety in congregate settings

## 2. Non-Congregate Shelter

Create temporary locations to provide:

- Quarantine and isolation options for people who are symptomatic or test positive for COVID-19
- Recovery or care options for people experiencing homelessness to receive care for other health issues to preserve hospital beds
- Options for high-risk individuals to take social distancing measures

## 3. Housing Stability

Divert people from – and move people out of – homelessness into housing so they can follow social distancing and hygiene guidelines to reduce spread of COVID-19. Includes immediate and long-term strategies.

# FEMA Public Assistance

## Category B: Non-Congregate Sheltering

North Carolina became one of the first states to obtain approval from FEMA to provide housing alternatives for people with unstable housing who may need to quarantine in response to COVID-19

- Request submitted April 1st, approved April 6<sup>th</sup>
- FEMA reimbursement 75 %, State 25% of costs
- Funding approved in 30-day increments or less if a re-assessment determines there is no longer a public health need
- The State will work with local partners to provide more than 16,500 units of non congregate shelter in
  - Dormitories
  - Hotels/motels
  - Trailers
  - Other facilities

# Populations served through FEMA assistance

- People who test positive for COVID-19 and need to be isolated but do not require hospitalization, including those discharged from hospitals.
- People exposed to COVID-19 and identified by a health care professional as needing quarantine but do not need hospitalization.
- People needing social distancing as a precautionary measure, as determined by public health officials, particularly for high-risk groups such as people over 65 or with certain underlying health conditions such as respiratory illness, compromised immunities or chronic disease. This may include those whose living situation makes them unable to adhere to social distancing guidance.

# Non-congregate shelter and homelessness system

- People experiencing homelessness are included in every population served through FEMA assistance.
- All non-congregate shelter sites are available to people experiencing homelessness.
- Rapid rehousing approach with current resources and additional CARES Act resources will be used to re-house individuals from non-congregate shelter sites.
- Rapid rehousing approach essential to minimizing non-congregate shelter costs and reducing future risk.

# Tips + Resources

- Partnership-- Emergency Management and HHS
- More information on non-congregate shelter in North Carolina  
<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/covid19/human-services/non-congregate-sheltering>

# Project Roomkey: California's use of FEMA funds to Support People who are Homeless in the COVID-19 Response

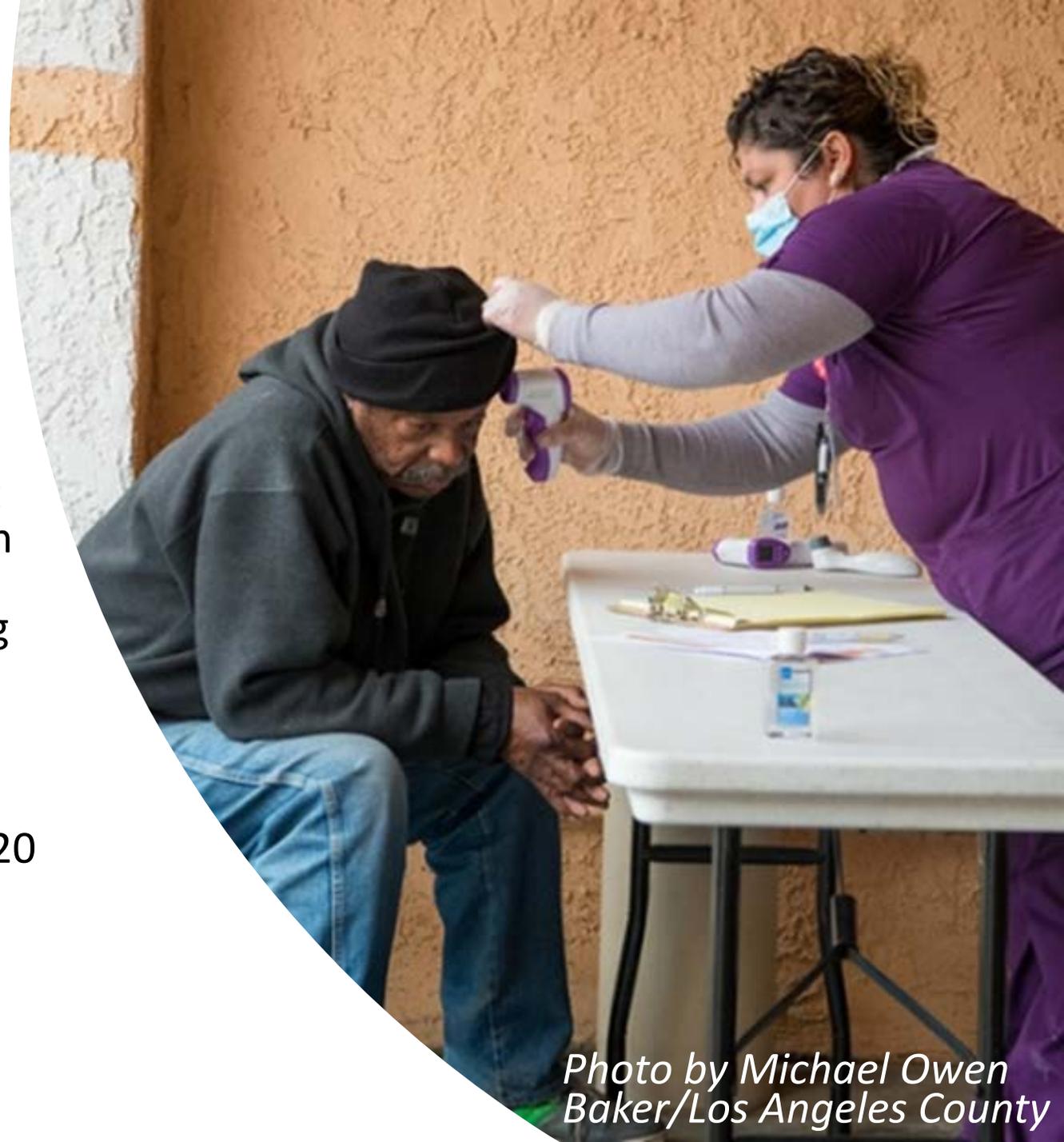
Corrin Buchanan, Assistant Director of Housing and  
Homelessness, California Department of Social Services  
Ali Sutton, Deputy Secretary for Homelessness, Business  
Consumer Services and Housing Agency



# Project Roomkey

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- Locally driven, State supported initiative that was created to provide emergency housing in hotels/motels/and trailers for sick and medically vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness in response to COVID 19
- Mission is to mitigate transmission, reduce hospital surge, and protect lives
- Goal of 15,000 units; 9,829 online as of 4/9/20
- \$150M in state funding made available to support Covid-19 response for people experiencing homelessness



*Photo by Michael Owen  
Baker/Los Angeles County*

# State role

- In addition to funding the effort, various State agencies provide on-going public health guidance, training materials, master agreement for wrap around services, technical assistance in emergency operations
- Hotel/motel identification and occupancy agreement negotiation
- Support the connection to essential behavioral health and health care services including telehealth
- Ensure deployment of resources match the need of counties with significant homeless populations that are also experiencing high concentrations of COVID-19 transmission

# FEMA Approval of Non-Congregate Shelter

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- California made a request for FEMA Public Assistance on March 25, 2020
- State received approval on March 27, 2020
- California was the first state to obtain approval from FEMA to provide non-congregate housing alternatives for people with unstable housing who may need to quarantine in response to COVID-19



*Photo by Michael Owen  
Baker/Los Angeles County*

# FEMA reimbursement

- 75% FEMA reimbursement to state or local government
- Non-congregate shelter and wrap around services directly necessary for the safe and secure operation of facilities are reimbursable
- Case management and behavioral health services not reimbursable
- Approval through April 30, 2020 with opportunity to request extension
- Must maintain tracking mechanism to provide sufficient data and documentation to establish eligibility-plan to use HMIS

# Populations served through FEMA assistance

1. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 that do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine (including those exiting from hospitals);
2. Individuals who have been exposed to COVID-19 (as documented by a state or local public health official, or medical health professional) that do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine; and
3. Individuals who are asymptomatic, but are at “high-risk,” such as people over 65 or who have certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic disease), and who require Emergency NCS as a social distancing measure

# Rationale for FEMA approval

- Individuals lacking stable housing are more likely to use hospital emergency rooms.
- Patients experiencing homelessness are admitted to inpatient units 5 times more often than people who have stable housing.
- Protecting individuals experiencing homelessness will relieve pressure on the hospital system by separating high-risk individuals who are homeless from COVID-positive or persons under investigation (PUI), in order to protect public health and safety for the duration of this public health emergency.

# Providing on-going housing support to Project Roomkey clients post-crisis

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- Goal is to provide on-going housing support to individual after the crisis
- State exploring opportunities to support counties that wish to purchase hotel and motels for conversion to permanent supportive housing



*Photo by Michael Owen  
Baker/Los Angeles County*

# Guidance to other states

- Ensure emergency response systems prioritize people experiencing homelessness and that responses are guided by public health lens
- Invest in a broad hotel/motel outreach and negotiation strategy
- Include homeless service providers in the operations of the housing settings
- Be prepared to tackle issues related to PPE and workforce shortages
- Have a streamlined strategy for who moves in to hotel rooms
- Don't lose sight of opportunities for permanent housing

# Resources for CoCs and Homeless Assistance Providers on the HUD Exchange

## Infectious Disease Prevention & Response page on HUD Exchange

- Submit a question on the [HUD Exchange Ask-A-Question \(AAQ\) Portal](#)

**Check back regularly for new posts!**

# Key Websites with Available Resources

**HUD:** <https://www.hudexchange.info/homelessness-assistance/diseases/infectious-disease-prevention-response/>

**CDC:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/homeless-shelters/index.html>

**NHCHC:** <https://nhchc.org/clinical-practice/diseases-and-conditions/influenza/>

**USICH:** <https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/coronavirus-covid-19-resources/>

**VA:** <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/n-coronavirus/index.asp>

**HRSA:** <https://bphc.hrsa.gov/emergency-response/coronavirus-frequently-asked-questions.html>

# CONTACTS

For additional information or assistance, contact:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
[www.cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19); 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636); TTY: 1-888-232-6348
- Department of Housing and Urban Development:  
[HUD Exchange Ask-A-Question \(AAQ\) Portal](#)
- Department of Veterans Affairs High Consequence Infection (HCI) Preparedness Program:  
[vhahcigenerall@va.gov](mailto:vhahcigenerall@va.gov)



# Q & A

