



Health and Human Services Department  
Mental Health Division

## **Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) in Alameda County Supportive Housing Resources**

Updated December 6, 2007

The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), formerly known as Proposition 63, was approved by California voters in November 2004 and went into effect January 1, 2005. The MHSA imposes a 1% tax on personal incomes in excess of \$1 million in order to increase mental health services for children/youth, adults, and older adults who have a serious mental illness. A portion of MHSA funds has been set aside for developing and operating permanent supportive housing linked with supportive services, and MHSA services are intended to support access to and retention of housing. Funds are administered by the California Department of Mental Health (DMH). Generally, MHSA funds are allocated to County mental health departments, including Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services (BHCS). Berkeley Mental Health (BMH) also has an allocation.

### *How can a housing organization get involved with the new MHSA housing resources?*

Housing developers can apply for MHSA housing funds if they are committed to setting aside units within a particular development for individuals with psychiatric disabilities that are currently homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Developers can choose to apply for local MHSA housing capital dollars through a local RFP process or they can jointly apply for state MHSA housing capital dollars with support from Behavioral Health Care and/or Berkeley Mental Health. In either case, developers must identify a leasing and service partnership strategy as part of their application. All capital funding housing expenditures require the participation and approval of BMH or BHCS. Developers can also choose to offer existing housing resources to new service programs funded through MHSA that have housing funds embedded within their budgets. These new programs are known as Full Service Partnership (FSPs) or FSP-like programs because they partner with their clients and provide a full range of intensive, wraparound supportive services. FSPs are described on the next page. BMH and BHCS are deeply committed to increasing the availability of affordable supportive housing for people with serious mental health issues. Both BMH and BHCS are active participants in the EveryOne Home campaign to end homelessness in Alameda County ([www.everyonehome.org](http://www.everyonehome.org)). For more information or to explore a potential partnership, please contact BHCS or BMH using the contact information on the next page.

### *What MHSA supportive housing resources are available in Alameda County?*

There are four separate sources of funding:

#### **(1) California MHSA Housing Program.**

What is it? The statewide MHSA Housing Program includes \$75 million per year for the capital costs of *permanent supportive housing* for people with serious mental illness and their families, and \$40 million per year for operating subsidies in these developments. Capital funds will be available in the form of loans from the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) to qualified housing developers. To be eligible, projects must be linked with MHSA services.

How much funding is available locally? DMH has allocated funds for the first 3½ years of the program using a formula. For this initial period, BHCS has been allocated about \$14.7 million. Of this, up to \$4.9 million may be used to capitalize 20-year operating subsidy reserves. BMH has an initial allocation of nearly \$1.3 million, of which up to \$419,500 may be used for operating subsidy reserves. Funding will be made available on an on-going basis, at a level determined by DMH.

*What is the application process?* DMH and CalHFA have issued a request for proposals (RFP) for these funds. BHCS and BMH will review applications and submit those approved locally to DMH and CalHFA. For complete details, visit: [http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Prop\\_63/MHSA/Housing/default.asp](http://www.dmh.ca.gov/Prop_63/MHSA/Housing/default.asp)

**(2) BHCS Housing Program.** BHCS, in partnership with Alameda County Housing and Community Development (HCD) established a \$4 million fund of local MHSA dollars for housing capital costs. HCD issued the initial RFP in January 2007. Nearly \$2 million has already been allocated and slightly more than \$2 million remains. BHCS and HCD will make these funds available through a local RFP process.

**(3) BMH Housing Trust Fund.** BMH has set aside \$300,000 - \$500,000 to be used for housing development. The process for allocating these funds will also be via a local RFP process.

**(4) Full Service Partnership (FSP) or FSP-like Housing Funds.** Several of the new service programs created by the MHSA include funding to help pay for ongoing participant housing costs. Some of these new programs also have dedicated Shelter Plus Care certificates. Housing providers that partner with these specific programs may be able to negotiate with the service providing agencies for ongoing housing payments. See below for more information about these programs.

#### *What is a Full Service Partnership?*

“Full Service Partnerships” (FSPs) are a key component of MHSA services. They are new intensive, long-term, stably-funded, supportive service programs for **unserved and underserved people with serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance**. Currently, the programs funded in Alameda County that have housing assistance funds include:

- 1) *BMH's Full Service Partnership.* BMH Adult Services. Targets youth, adults, and older adults.
- 2) BHCS has created seven Full Service Partnership or equivalent programs:
  - *Homeless Outreach and Stabilization Team (HOST).* Bonita House, Inc. Targets the chronically homeless in northern and central Alameda County.
  - *Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT).* East Bay Community Recovery Project. Targets adults with frequent criminal justice mental health contacts.
  - *Greater HOPE.* Tri-City Homeless Coalition. For the chronically homeless in south and east Alameda County.
  - *Supportive Housing for Transition Age Youth (STAY).* Fred Finch Youth Center (services) & Tri-City Homeless Coalition (housing). For transition age youth.
  - *North County Older Adult.* Bay Area Community Services. For older adults in northern Alameda County.
  - *Transition to Independence Process (TIP).* BMH Family, Youth, and Children's Services. For transition age youth living with family but unstably housed.
  - *Creating Homes.* BHCS. For BHCS service participants who are interested in employment and exiting more institutional housing settings.

*For more information on any of these programs or for service provider contact information, please contact:*

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