NEWS RELEASE

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Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council Launches California's First-Ever Statewide Homeless Data Warehouse

The Homeless Data Integration System consolidates individual-level homelessness services data on the provision of housing and services by California's 44 Continuums of Care.

SACRAMENTO – California now has its first-ever data warehouse that will allow the state to make data-driven policy decisions in its efforts to prevent and end homelessness.

The Homeless Data Integration System (HDIS) was developed by the Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council (HCFC) in partnership with the states 44 Continuums of Care (CoCs), and will provide a sharper focus on statewide efforts to respond to California's homelessness crisis to help policymakers develop more effective approaches to addressing homelessness.

"You can't fix what you can't measure and having a statewide data system will help us determine what's working and what isn't, important insight we can use to create accountability and strengthen our response going forward," said Governor Gavin Newsom. "From this data, we see some bright spots – providing permanent housing to almost 100,000 homeless Californians every year and more than doubling our efforts to prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place – but we know there is more work to do."

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By gathering homelessness data into a single repository, HDIS offers a comprehensive picture of efforts to address homelessness statewide, allowing the state and CoCs to answer key questions including about what services are being provided, who is accessing those services, and what interventions are proving to be most effective. It will also facilitate coordination across the state by identifying patterns of homelessness, service usage across geographic regions, and support efforts to identify and address racial and other inequalities among people experiencing homelessness.

HDIS has given the state insight into several metrics that were unavailable until its development. In 2020, for example, 91,626 people exited homelessness and moved into permanent housing. And from 2017 to 2020, the number of people served through homelessness prevention services increased 131.6 percent.

"This is a monumental step. The partnership with local Continuums of Care to establish the HDIS warehouse gives the state and local governments greater visibility and a unified view of California's homelessness response system," said Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) Secretary Lourdes Castro Ramírez, who chairs HCFC. "We are excited to see how communities will utilize the combined data to improve services, increase housing connections, and strengthen coordination."

"For the first time, we will have the necessary data and tools to better coordinate statewide services" said Ali Sutton, BCSH's Deputy Secretary for Homelessness. "HDIS allows us to share best practices and lessons learned, and measure the impact of our collective efforts to prevent and end homelessness in California."

"HDIS provides a foundational piece of the state's data infrastructure," said Joy Bonaguro, Chief Data Officer, California Government Operations Agency. "Before the HDIS, we had at best an infrequent and piecemeal snapshot of the homeless challenges in California. With the HDIS we will have an ongoing and holistic picture of how we can assess and improve services for those experiencing homelessness."

"This is a major step forward in our efforts to ensure every Californian has a roof over their head," said Assemblymember David Chiu, Chair of the Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee. "Having statewide, comprehensive data means we can target programs and funding more effectively. This is a tool that will help us hold state and local governments accountable for addressing our homelessness crisis."

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"We can't understand what we don't measure," said Senator Scott Wiener, Chair of the Senate Housing Committee. "That's why I am thrilled that HDIS will provide critical data about the scope and impacts of our homelessness crisis. We must act quickly and effectively to end this crisis, and HDIS will help us get there."

Plante Moran was the vendor selected in 2020 to develop HDIS. HDIS was developed on time, on budget for $1.2 million, and was produced in the unprecedented short time of 15 weeks. It has been built with the capability to eventually integrate other state-level data to better understand other social benefits and services being accessed by people experiencing homelessness, such as CalWORKS or CalFresh.

What Our Partners Are Saying

"In Santa Clara County, we know firsthand the power of shared data in addressing our homelessness crisis," said Jennifer Loving, CEO of Destination: Home. "The Homeless Data Integration System will bolster our local efforts, improve our ability to collaborate across the Bay Area region, and help measure our collective statewide impact."

"HDIS will be an essential resource for helping the State of California better understand who is homeless, what resources are currently being used, and what is needed to address homelessness in the State," said Jemine Bryon, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Needs at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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The Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency protects consumers by licensing and regulating California professionals and businesses; promotes and funds safe, affordable, and dignified rental and homeownership opportunities; guards the civil rights of all Californians from acts of hate violence and unlawful discrimination; and partners with local communities to prevent and end homelessness. For more information, visit: bcsh.ca.gov.

The Homeless Coordinating and Financing Council oversees the implementation of "Housing First" policies, guidelines, and regulations and identifies resources, benefits, and services to prevent and work toward ending homelessness in California. For more information, visit: bcsh.ca.gov/hcfc.