

County of Santa Clara  
Santa Clara Valley Health & Hospital System  
Mental Health Services



75086

**DATE:** March 10, 2015  
**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Toni Tullys, Director, Behavioral Health Services  
**SUBJECT:** Expansion of Gilroy Armory Emergency Shelter

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Consider recommendations relating to Agreement with HomeFirst.

Possible action:

- a. Approve First Amendment to Agreement with HomeFirst relating to providing Cold Weather Shelter Program services, increasing the maximum contract amount by \$39,092 from \$466,047 to \$505,139, with no extension in the term of the Agreement, that has been reviewed and approved by County Counsel as to form and legality.
- b. Approve Request for Appropriation Modification No. 154 - \$39,092 transferring funds from the General Fund Contingency Reserve to the Department of Behavioral Health Services budget relating to increasing the number of nightly emergency shelter beds at the Gilroy Armory. (4/5 Roll Call Vote)

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

Increasing the number of nightly emergency shelter beds at the Gilroy Armory would increase expenses by \$39,092. There are sufficient funds in the County General Fund Contingency Reserve to support these services. Currently, the County is the only agency that funds emergency shelter services at the Gilroy Armory.

**CONTRACT HISTORY**

In 2009, the Mental Health Department, now the Department of Behavioral Health Services (DBS), assumed oversight of the County's homeless programs. In September 2009, the DBHS issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Cold Weather Shelter Program (CWSP). HomeFirst, formerly EHC LifeBuilders, was the only respondent and was awarded the contract for services in FY 2010.

The Agreement reached its maximum five-year term on June 30, 2014. The DBHS intended to re-bid its CWSP in FY 2014, but the loss of the North County CWSP site due to the

development of new affordable housing at the Sunnyvale Armory location, and the uncertain future for an alternate site delayed issuance of the RFP. DBHS plans to issue the RFP for the CWSP in FY 2015, once a new plan for the CWSP has been approved by the Board of Supervisors.

On October 21, 2014 (ID# 72808), the Board of Supervisors approved an Agreement with HomeFirst for emergency shelter services at the Boccardo Regional Reception Center and at the Gilroy Armory during the cold weather season.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

The current Agreement and budget authorizes HomeFirst to provide 100 emergency shelter beds at the Gilroy Armory each night during the cold weather season, which is approximately December 1 through March 31. The current capacity for the Gilroy Armory is reflective of the average nightly utilization.

The Administration recommends increasing the Gilroy Armory capacity by 30 shelter beds because HomeFirst and the City of Gilroy have reported an unprecedented number of homeless individuals and families that have been turned away from the Gilroy Armory each night. HomeFirst staff reports having to turn away 20 to 30 individuals each night. While not definitive, HomeFirst staff and County staff believe that two factors that have contributed to the increased demand. First, when the County experienced severe cold temperatures at the end of December, the Gilroy Armory's capacity was temporarily increased in order to prevent cold weather injuries or death. This may have created an expectation among homeless persons in South County that the Gilroy Armory would continue operating at a higher level. Second, the Gilroy Police Department abated 30 homeless encampments during the first two weeks of January 2015.

HomeFirst provided a final budget to the Administration on Tuesday, February 3, 2015. They reported that they could operate at increased capacity starting on February 9, 2015. The DBHS, requests a retroactive start date of February 9, 2015, so that HomeFirst could respond as quickly as possible to the increased demand for emergency shelter beds.

The HomeFirst Cold Weather Shelter Program supports the Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System (SCVHHS) Strategic Road Map by increasing the number of healthy life years of the homeless in our community, through decreasing disparities in basic needs for food and shelter in the winter months, thus aiding in the SCVHHS Vision of better health for all.

### **CHILD IMPACT**

This action would have a positive impact on children and youth by providing emergency shelter, food and other assistance to homeless children, youth and their parents during the winter.

### **SENIOR IMPACT**

This action would have a positive impact on seniors by providing emergency shelter, food and other critical assistance to homeless seniors during the winter months.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

There is no-neutral impact on sustainability implications.

## **BACKGROUND**

Since 1987, the County has provided funding for the operation of the CWSP. Initially, the program was operated from armories in Sunnyvale, Gilroy and San Jose. In 1997, the San Jose Armory was replaced by the Boccardo Regional Reception Center. The Sunnyvale Armory closed in 2014 to make way for two new affordable housing developments. The County is currently working with cities and other stakeholders to find one or more facilities to replace the shelter capacity that of the Sunnyvale Armory.

The target population for the CWSP are homeless adults and older adults (age 18 and older) and homeless families. CWSP beds at the Gilroy Armory are assigned on a first-come, first served basis, while the beds at the Boccardo Regional Reception Center are assigned through a lottery.

## **CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION**

HomeFirst would not be able to provide additional emergency shelter at the Gilroy Armory during the FY2015 cold weather season.

## **STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL**

Upon Board approval, the Clerk of the Board is requested to send e-mail notification to Don Casillas ([don.casillas@hhs.sccgov.org](mailto:don.casillas@hhs.sccgov.org)) and Melissa Burnias ([melissa.burnias@hhs.sccgov.org](mailto:melissa.burnias@hhs.sccgov.org)).

## **LINKS:**

- Linked To: 72808 : 72808

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

- F85# 154 expand shelter capacity in South County (PDF)
- HomeFirst CWSP Agreement (PDF)
- FY15 HomeFirst CWSP Amend 1 (PDF)