



# Solano County

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## Legislation Text

File #: 20-15, Version: 1

Approve a contract with Shelter, Inc. for \$177,000 to provide housing navigation services to the homeless CalWORKs population in Solano County for the term of February 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021; and Authorize the County Administrator to execute the contract

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:**

The Department of Health and Social Services (H&SS) recommends that the Board approve a contract with Shelter, Inc. for \$177,000 to provide housing navigation services to the homeless CalWORKs population in Solano County for the term of February 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021; and Authorize the County Administrator to execute the contract.

### **SUMMARY:**

The Housing Support Program (HSP) was established by Senate Bill 855, Chapter 29, Statutes of 2014. The purpose of HSP is to assist families experiencing homelessness through an array of financial assistance and wrap-around supportive services intended to help families secure permanent housing or prevent evictions. HSP is designed to help families quickly secure permanent housing to help achieve self-sufficiency and increase overall child well-being. HSP offers financial assistance and several wrap-around supportive services such as security deposits, rental assistance, utility payments, storage fees, legal fees, household items, case management, and housing navigation.

The contract with Shelter, Inc. is to house the homeless California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) population in Solano County by locating affordable housing. This contract is in adherence to the State's CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP) funding requirement that Solano County utilize Rapid Rehousing (RR) interventions to help homeless individuals and families secure permanent housing as quickly as possible so families exit homelessness permanently.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

This contract is funded by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) CalWORKs Housing Support Program. The first five months of the contract from February 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020 totals \$52,100 and is funded by the CDSS CalWORKs HSP grant for FY2019/20. The remaining one year term from July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 totals \$124,900 and will be funded with the FY2020/21 CalWORKs HSP in Solano County upon approval by CDSS. Contract language specifies that the County's obligation under the contract is subject to the availability of authorized funds. The costs associated with preparing the agenda item are nominal and absorbed by the department's FY2019/20 Adopted Budget.

### **DISCUSSION:**

Solano County has an estimated 1,286 homeless families that are eligible for the Housing Support Program. For FY2019/20, H&SS has committed to housing 75 new homeless families through HSP. Shelter, Inc. will be responsible for finding available housing units for at least 35 of the 75 families for the first five (5) months

(February 2020 - June 2020) of the contract. For the remaining 12 months of the contract Shelter, Inc. will be responsible for finding available housing units for at least 80% of the families that are referred by social workers.

The housing identification responsibilities of Shelter, Inc. include, but are not limited to, (1) facilitating and negotiating the housing application and approval process, (2) verifying unit habitability, (3) verifying affordability, and (4) verifying safety. HSP staff will provide case management services to families, identify and refer eligible families to Shelter, Inc. for house matching, provide clients rent and move-in assistance, and provide other supportive services.

Solano County has a housing vacancy rate of approximately at 2% and when coupled with the lack of a dedicated housing navigators, families face a significant barrier to securing permanent housing. Shelter, Inc. has experience providing housing navigation services in the East Bay Area and this contract can provide substantial assistance to HSP in locating affordable and appropriate housing to eligible families.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board could choose not to approve this contract with Shelter, Inc., but this is not recommended because Solano County has an existing FY2019/20 allocation of \$125,000 for administration and case management, including costs for housing navigation services. Without the housing navigator support, Solano County will not be able to fully spend the allocation which will impact the County's success in placing families in permanent housing.

**CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

**APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION**