



Board Agenda Item 11

DATE: November 18, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Paul Nerland, County Administrative Officer

SUBJECT: Creation of the Office of Housing and Homelessness

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Authorize the County Administrative Officer to create the Office of Housing and Homelessness within the County Administrative Office consisting of the assignment of operational management for the identified homelessness programs and associated positions to the County Administrative Office from the Department of Social Services; and**
- 2. Direct staff to return to your Board within 12 months for an update on the Office of Housing and Homelessness.**

Approval of the first recommended action will authorize the creation of the Office of Housing and Homelessness (OHH), consisting of the transfer of operational control of the identified homelessness programs and associated positions permanently from the Department of Social Services (DSS) to the County Administrative Office (CAO). Approval of the second recommended action will direct staff to return to your Board within 12 months with an update on the OHH. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

If your Board were not to approve the recommended actions, the transfer of operational management for the identified homelessness programs would remain with DSS and the role of the Collaborative Applicant and Management Entity would likely be reconsidered by the Fresno-Madera Continuum of Care (FMCoC). The development of the OHH is intended to centralize housing and homelessness efforts and responsibilities through three phases. Not approving the recommended actions would prevent the CAO from centralizing the County's homelessness efforts which have historically been the responsibility of several County departments.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The recommendation transfers the operational management of the identified DSS homelessness programs. The CAO would return to your Board at a later date to create the budget for the OHH and transfer identified positions to that org.

DISCUSSION:

Beginning in 2018, the Board of Supervisors began efforts towards a more centralized and regional approach to ending homelessness including a more active role coordinating these activities in the County Administrative Office. In June 2019, the Board adopted priorities considering input from the Directors of the Departments of Behavioral Health, Public Health, and Social Services and the 15 incorporated cities of the County. The priorities addressed jurisdictional boundaries, transportation, outreach, housing, data, direct services, and the preservation of public health and public safety. In addition, they were intended to be a comprehensive list that addressed the County and its 15 incorporated cities and would be updated as necessary based on data-driven outcomes and at least once a calendar year. Those priorities were updated and approved by the Board in March 2022 and adopted by 14 of the 15 incorporated Cities.

Over the last several years, your Board has taken steps to centralize the oversight of the County's efforts towards ending homelessness. On June 8, 2021, the Board approved reclassifying a Principal Administrative Analyst to a Program Manager over Homelessness. However, additional resources were not added at that time. With the FY 2023-24 Budget, the Board approved the creation of the position of the CAO Homelessness Program Manager to serve as a liaison and lead for the County on all homelessness response planning and programs conducted by County departments. Since then, the CAO has assessed the entire homelessness system and response infrastructure in our region, including the County's homeless response functions, and determined that there is a need for centralization of homelessness functions throughout the system and in the County of Fresno.

On April 22, 2025, your Board approved staff's recommendation to have the County of Fresno, through the CAO, assume the function of the Collaborative Applicant on behalf of the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care (FMCoC), a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) required regional homelessness response role.

On November 4, 2025, your Board approved staff's recommendation to have the County of Fresno, through the CAO, assume the function of the Management Entity on behalf of the FMCoC, another HUD required regional homelessness response role.

Staff brought to your Board both aforementioned items prior to the proposed establishment of the OHH in order to meet HUD funding requirements and deadlines. Should your Board approve the recommended actions presented in this staff report, these HUD functions will be part of the proposed consolidated OHH.

In addition to the HUD functions, staff recommends that the OHH also assume homelessness response roles and programs that are currently administered in DSS. Attachment A details the recommended organizational structure of the OHH and identifies the current roles and programs of DSS that are recommended for transfer to the OHH.

The centralization of the HUD, DSS and CAO homelessness response roles and programs, which make up Phase 1 of the development of the OHH, ensures a focused vision on the County's efforts to end homelessness that is directly guided by the Board of Supervisors. It also allows for more consistent decision making that aligns with the Board's priorities on homelessness response. The OHH would aim to streamline processes, reduce redundancies, standardize procedures and facilitate faster decision-making. A primary goal of the OHH will be to increase accountability by creating a clear chain of command which goes directly up through the CAO to your Board.

Should your Board approve the recommended actions, CAO will work on the physical relocation of the staff currently assigned to the transferred DSS homeless response roles and programs to allow for better coordination and access to other related OHH functions as well as CAO staff and Board members and their staff.

Finally, should your Board approve the recommended actions, staff will return as soon as possible with a budget and salary resolution item to budgetarily transfer the identified DSS staff and programs to the OHH.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI # 5, November 6, 2018
BAI # 8, June 4, 2019
BAI # 6, October 22, 2019
BAI # 4, June 8, 2021
BAI # 11, March 22, 2022
BAI #7, November 4, 2025
BAI #9, April 22, 2025

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Attachment A

CAO ANALYST:

Dylan McCully