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San Diego County's "Home Again" Announces "Project 25, Home Again's Frequent User Initiative" for Chronically Homeless
RFP Seeks Qualified NonProfits to Provide Permanent Housing to 25 Chronically Homeless People

SAN DIEGO (August 18, 2010) [Home Again](#), United Way of San Diego County's public engagement campaign to end chronic homelessness in San Diego County, has announced the launch of "Project 25, Home Again's Frequent User Initiative." The initiative is the first of its kind in the county.

Based on the proven "Housing First" model, Project 25 will provide permanent housing and supportive services, as well as a comprehensive discharge plan, to at least 25 of San Diego County's chronically homeless who are some of the most frequent users of public resources. Home Again has issued a Request for Proposal [link] seeking qualified nonprofit organizations to submit proposals to implement Project 25.

"Project 25 is a historic opportunity to help end chronic homelessness in San Diego County," said Home Again Commissioner Brian Maienschein. "This program is the first ever partnership of its kind between the City and County, and also has unprecedented collaboration between agencies at the City, County and in the nonprofit sector."

In addition to significantly and positively affecting the lives of the participating individuals, housing the homeless saves taxpayers a lot of money. The initiative will include the first comprehensive data collection for San Diego's frequent users, determining the total cost of services used by each person, before and after entering into the program. The three-year pilot program will track savings on a quarterly basis.

"The public funds saved by providing the homeless with permanent housing and supportive services is substantial and will provide vital economic research that will fundamentally change the way homeless services work throughout the county," Maienschein further stated.

Currently, the chronically homeless represent 14 percent of the population in San Diego County, but they use 50 percent of available public resources, including shelters, emergency medical and law enforcement services, mental health support and detox services. One local study, found that 15 homeless San Diegans consumed \$1.5 million in medical services alone over 1.5 years, totaling nearly \$100,000 per person. In comparison, Housing First has led to a 43 percent savings for taxpayers in Los Angeles, and in Portland, the cost per person for supportive services plus housing is only \$26,000.

The City, County and United Way will work together to provide the selected organization(s) with the vital programs, services and funding needed to support a successful initiative. Each has a vested interest in ending chronic homelessness, while at the same time, saving taxpayers' money.

"Collaboration and coordination are critical to making the most of the resources we have in the San Diego region," said Director of the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency Nick Macchione. "Through Project 25, we will not only learn how to better serve the chronically homeless, but the community at large."

The initiative also represents the joint efforts of multiple organizations that have agreed to share pertinent information toward identifying and serving San Diego's most frequent homeless users. The organizations will share information to improve coordinated services, outcome measurements, efficacy of services, intervention trends/ strategies, housing opportunities and medical home development. Project 25 participants include: Alpha Project, County of San Diego District Attorney, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Family Health Centers of San Diego, Father Joe's Villages, San Diego County Sheriff's Office, San Diego Police Department, San Diego Rescue Mission and the UC San Diego Medical Center.

The Project 25 RFP and more information are available on the Home Again website: <http://www.homeagainsd.org> and is due by October 4, 2010. Home Again plans to select a winner by October 25, 2010 and begin program implementation by December 24, 2010.

* The chronically homeless are defined as people who are continuously homeless for one year or without shelter four or more times in the past three years. There are 1,600 chronically homeless people throughout our region.

About Home Again

Home Again is United Way of San Diego County's public engagement campaign to end chronic homelessness in San Diego County. The campaign supports San Diego County's 10-Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, which employs the "Housing First" model that has been successful nationwide. The model advocates providing affordable housing and supportive services to help move the chronically homeless off the streets and into stable living and working situations.

The chronically homeless are defined as people who are continuously homeless for one year or without shelter four or more times in the past three years. They often have some sort of disability. Although the chronically homeless are a minority of the overall homeless population, they drain significant resources – including legal, medical and emergency services – at a high cost to our community.

The funding United Way is raising will be spent on additional permanent supportive housing and services for the chronically homeless throughout San Diego County. For more information, visit <http://www.homeagainsd.org>, "like" on [Facebook](#) or "follow" on [Twitter](#).

About United Way of San Diego County

Celebrating its 90th anniversary this year, United Way of San Diego County (UWSD) is a nonprofit organization that improves lives and creates long-lasting change. The United Way movement addresses the underlying causes of problems and mobilizes the community to solve education, income and health issues. LIVE UNITED is a call to action for everyone to become part of the change. UWSD's 90th anniversary celebration will include a variety of events to celebrate the spirit of Living United and advancing the common good in San Diego. To learn more or to donate, visit <http://www.uwspd.org>.

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