

California Cohort 1: 100-Day Challenge Summary

Alameda County

100-Day Challenge Goal

In 100 days, 400 people utilizing the hotels, motels, and trailers from Project Roomkey will exit to safe and stable housing.

100-DAY CHALLENGE CONTEXT & FOCUS AREAS

HISTORY OF COLLABORATION TO END HOMELESSNESS

Prior to the 100-Day Challenge, Alameda County had already taken a number of important steps to deepen partnerships and leverage new funding in response to the local housing and homelessness crisis. The County recently developed a Homeless Action Plan to invest \$340 million between 2018 and 2021 toward the goal of ending homelessness. In 2019, the Health Care Services Agency established a new Office of Homeless Care and Coordination (OHCC) to centralize efforts to build a robust, integrated, and coordinated system for housing and homelessness services. OHCC also works to strengthen coordination with County agencies and departments, cities, community-based organizations, and other external partners to respond to homelessness across the County.

OHCC's recent work brought together stakeholders from across Alameda County to conduct system modeling, with the goal of better estimating the types and levels of interventions needed in the County to meaningfully reduce homelessness. This work included a racial equity analysis and reflected a focus across key stakeholders to eliminate racial disparities among entries into and exits from homelessness. Alameda County was able to build on the momentum of this recent work and leverage existing cross-systems partnerships to foster community buy-in for the 100-Day Challenge on Project Roomkey.

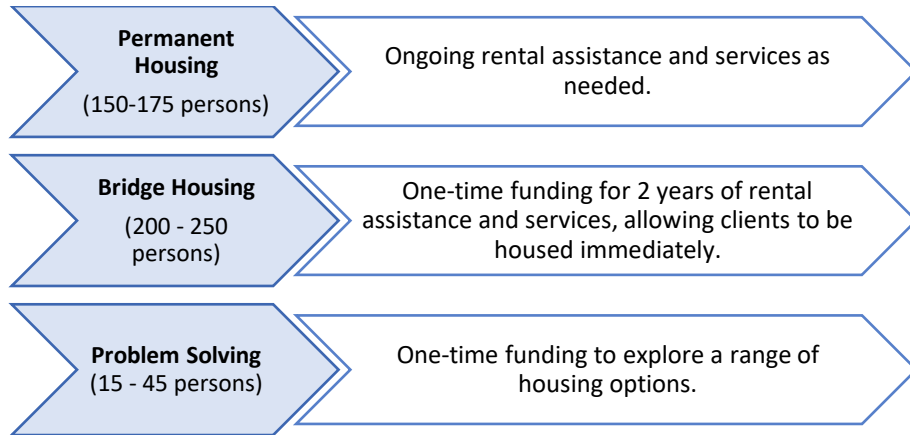
100-DAY CHALLENGE FOCUS AREAS

System leaders from across Alameda County came together to help identify the following areas of focus for their 100-Day Challenge on Project Roomkey:

- Facilitating housing placements from Project Roomkey, including:
 - Creative ideas for getting more affordable housing stock, including but not limited to acquisition and conversion;
 - Speeding up the process from verification of eligibility for housing to placement;
 - Making considerations for geographic disbursement and racial equity; and

- Fostering connections to ongoing services, including health services, support services, and employment.

Project Roomkey in Alameda County includes 9 hotel/motel sites and 3 trailer sites operated by 5 service providers with a maximum occupancy of ~1200 guests. The 100-Day Challenge Team completed a housing stock and funding analysis to assess which pathways to safe and stable housing would be most viable in Alameda County. In order to meet the 100-Day Challenge goal, the Team estimates needing to implement the following housing strategies:



100-DAY CHALLENGE SUCCESSES, ACCOMPLISHMENTS & INNOVATIONS

SNAPSHOT OF 100-DAY CHALLENGE PROGRESS

100-Day Challenge Goal: *In 100 days, 400 people utilizing the hotels, motels, and trailers from Project Roomkey will exit to safe and stable housing.*

OUTCOMES AS OF DAY 100:

97 Project Roomkey (PRK) guests who have secured housing

Permanent Housing



97 PRK guests exited to permanent housing placements, including Permanent Supportive Housing and other long-term rental subsidies.

Rates of Exits to Housing



Rates of exits into housing increased from 5 persons per month in the two months prior to the Challenge to a **high of 30 persons per month** during the Challenge.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN SYSTEMS CHANGE

SIMPLIFYING & STREAMLINING CLIENT DOCUMENTATION PROCESSES

Alameda County utilized the momentum of the 100-Day Challenge to catalyze action around simplifying and streamlining client documentation processes for subsidized housing options. A primary housing pathway for clients exiting Project Roomkey is subsidized housing, which often requires documentation such as social security number and verification of income. Alameda County leveraged the knowledge of the 100-Day Challenge Team and other experts in the community to identify ways that less restrictive documentation requirements could be implemented

that would continue to meet the requirements of various subsidized housing programs – including those funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – while reducing barriers for households experiencing homelessness to access these programs. The Alameda County 100-Day Challenge Team utilized this information to educate providers on options to simplify their documentation processes and provide greater flexibility for clients regarding documentation requests.

The Team also found that PHAs and rental subsidy administrators can accept an original document issued by a local government agency as verification of social security number and income when the income is public benefits. Team members leveraged an existing partnership with the Alameda County Social Services Agency (SSA) to develop a template letter that can be provided to housing providers in lieu of a social security card and to provide verification of a social security number and income from public benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), and CalWORKs. Alameda County has had great success in working with PHAs and rental subsidy administrators to accept the SSA letter to verify program eligibility. This has supported Alameda County in more quickly verifying eligibility for subsidized housing programs and connecting Project Roomkey guests to permanent housing options.

CROSS-SYSTEMS COLLABORATION

Alameda County's 100-Day Challenge engaged numerous partners from across the government, non-profit, and private sectors, including multiple county agencies, city staff, direct service providers, and philanthropy. The 100-Day Challenge Team encouraged silo-busting and collaboration through intentional cross-system weekly meetings of different providers and agencies, including providers outside of the Challenge team members. These meetings were designed to improve coordination of services across Project Roomkey sites, address challenges and barriers to facilitating housing placements, and collectively problem-solve in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. These meetings and the overall improved collaboration achieved through the 100-Day Challenge supported Alameda County in better leveraging each agency's strengths and the experience and expertise each organization brings to the table. The Challenge also encouraged coordination across County and City agencies to align and blend diverse funding streams – including CARES Act Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG-CV), Whole Person Care (WPC), and Housing Assistance Program (HAP) funds – to maximize utilization of existing resources for connecting as many Project Roomkey guests to housing and supportive services as possible.

DATA COLLECTION & SHARING

Alameda County worked in new and innovative ways during the 100-Day Challenge to collect and utilize data to support the work of on-site Project Roomkey housing navigators and staff. The 100-Day Challenge Team worked closely with on-site staff at each of the Project Roomkey sites to identify the types of information about guests that would be most beneficial to help staff understand and respond to guests' needs. On-site staff indicate a need for data from across service systems to better understand the comprehensive needs of guests, which led to outreach efforts and improved data sharing between the homeless response system, Homestretch, and Veterans Affairs (VA).

The Team was able to bring together data from various sources – including Homestretch, the VA, HMIS, Medi-Cal Managed Care programs, local hospitals, and county-run mental health and substance use providers – into one data workbook that could be separated by each Project Roomkey site and shared with housing navigators and on-site staff. This tool enabled on-site staff to have access to quick, reliable, and immediately useful data on guest demographics and service histories, allowing staff to better target housing and service resources to meet their guests' needs. A key benefit of this tool was that housing navigators were able to more quickly identify Project Roomkey guests who may be eligible for housing and services through other systems of care, such as Veterans who

would be eligible for the HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program, Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Program, and VA Health Care Services.

LANDLORD ENGAGEMENT

The 100-Day Challenge encouraged Alameda County to think more innovatively and collaboratively about landlord engagement efforts to support Project Roomkey guests. Alameda County established a Landlord Hotline managed by the County for prospective landlords to learn more about opportunities to rent their units to clients enrolled in a variety of housing support programs. The 100-Day Challenge Team developed a [flyer](#), [advertisement](#), and social media campaign in order to widely share information about the establishment of the Landlord Hotline and to provide information to landlords on the benefits of working in partnership with service providers to house persons transitioning out of homelessness. Landlords who are interested in working with persons transitioning out of homelessness can call the Landlord Hotline and have their information entered into a spreadsheet. The goal is for this spreadsheet to become a collaborative community resource for providers to match Project Roomkey guests to housing opportunities and to organize Countywide outreach and communication with landlords. This landlord engagement effort has helped Alameda County to improve communitywide coordination of housing resources and develop a more collaborative approach to landlord outreach and identification.

ON-SITE SERVICE COORDINATION

The Alameda County 100-Day Challenge Team leveraged the unique opportunity of having previously unsheltered clients in stable shelter through Project Roomkey to coordinate on-site service provision. Service providers were able to come on-site to Project Roomkey locations and provide guests with connections to an array of services while they were still engaged in the housing search process, including health, mental health, and case management resources. One partner agency was able to bring nursing staff on-site and visit guests door-to-door in order to provide information on available resources, conduct health assessments, and make immediate connections to health services as needed and appropriate. On-site service coordination has allowed housing navigators, on-site staff, and partner agencies to meet Project Roomkey guests where they are and engage them as early in their housing plan as possible, with a goal of supporting more successful transitions from Project Roomkey into permanent housing placements by facilitating early connections to services.

MAINTAINING 100-DAY CHALLENGE MOMENTUM

Three Month Community Performance Goal

In the next three months, 200 people will move into a permanent housing opportunity, and 200 people will have a confirmed housing opportunity.

In order to lock in their gains and maintain the momentum around connecting Project Roomkey guest to safe and stable housing, the Alameda County 100-Day Challenge team plans to focus on the following priorities moving forward:

1. Maintaining the Landlord Hotline and unit coordination meetings;
2. Collecting and analyzing HMIS Project Roomkey client data and Homestretch and Veterans Affairs (VA) information and providing this information to on-site staff;
3. Continuing weekly service coordination meetings;

4. Utilizing the centralized location of Project Roomkey sites to increase access to medical staff and behavioral health providers before housing matches are completed; and
5. Working to get 100% of Project Roomkey clients document ready, especially through alternative identity and social security number (SSN) verification.

Additionally, the team has established the following priority system shifts needed to sustain performance and proposed actions to make those system shifts a reality.

Priority System Shifts	Action Areas for System Shifts & Sustainability
Long-term housing and security of ongoing service provision to sustain client success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure long term housing, including Project Homekey • Diversify funding sources to include community and private funding • Secure ongoing services funding, especially as whole person care comes to an end
Landlord engagement efforts that enable progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlord appreciation events • Digital landlord engagement tools (like a website) • Landlord mitigation fund • Landlord advisory board
Data sharing to increase ease and efficiency of housing clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish data sharing between cities, counties, providers as the norm • Develop data use tools and training for frontline staff help them more quickly recognize available resources for clients • Set standards for data collection, sharing, and clean up
Ways to promote equity and client engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate and prioritize client voice in planning and decision-making processes • Support the workforce with lived expertise and expand leadership positions in policy and planning
Breaking down silos and opening new lines of communication to facilitate sustained success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of strategies between cities, county, and community partners • Commitment at the county level for ongoing coordination of efforts