

California's Encampment Resolution Funding Program

\$50 Million to be Awarded to Resolve Homelessness In Encampments With 50 or More Dwellers

- *Data and outcomes will be evaluated to assess efficacy of programs and identify scalable best practices that can be replicated across the state.*
- *Report will be made to the chairs of the relevant fiscal and policy committees in both houses on the outcomes, learnings, and best practice models identified through this program.*
- *Data elements will be entered into local Homeless Management Information System for tracking in statewide Homeless Data Integration System.*
- *Encampment resolution strategies, case studies, and learnings will be disseminated to local jurisdictions.*

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July 2021

Last Thursday, the California Legislature passed many “trailer bills,” including [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 140](#). The bill contains the statutory changes necessary to implement the housing and homelessness provisions of the [Budget Act of 2021](#), which stemmed from the [Senate Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review](#) (7/13/21); [Assembly Floor Analysis](#) (7/14/21); and the [Senate Floor Analysis](#) (7/15/21).

[AB 140](#) includes Sections 4 – 14 that outline historic key investments for solving homelessness including the Encampment Resolution Funding Program (see Sec 13 Chapter 7). Prior to last Thursday, little was known about the Program. The following key details about the Program were copied from Sec 13 Chapter 7:

Program Purpose

50251.

(a) The Encampment Resolution Funding program is hereby established to, upon appropriation by the Legislature, increase collaboration between the council, local jurisdictions, and continuums of care for the following purposes:

- (1) Assist local jurisdictions in ensuring the safety and wellness of people experiencing homelessness in encampments.*
- (2) Provide encampment resolution grants to local jurisdictions and continuums of care to resolve critical encampment concerns and transition individuals into safe and stable housing.*

(3) Encourage a data-informed, coordinated approach to address encampment concerns.

The (Homeless Coordinating and Financing) council shall award the moneys appropriated as competitive grants to applicants to be used to support encampment resolution and rehousing efforts for local jurisdictions.

Application

50252.

The application shall include, at a minimum, all of the following:

(1) Information on the number and demographics of the individuals living in the encampment that the applicant is requesting funding to help resolve.

(2) A description of why this specific encampment is being prioritized for resolution support.

(3) A description of how the applicant intends to collaborate with state and local partners to mitigate risk and address safety concerns, while ensuring a pathway for individuals living in encampments to move into safe and stable housing.

(4) A description of how the applicant intends to use these funds to connect all individuals living in the encampment to services and housing.

(5) A description of other local resources and funding streams that will be used to ensure the ongoing availability of services and housing support for people who are moved out of encampments into permanent housing.

Determining Grant Awards

50252.

(d) When determining grant awards, funding shall be prioritized for:

(1) Jurisdictions that can demonstrate a commitment to cross-systems collaboration and innovative efforts to resolve encampment issues, while focusing on protecting the health and well-being of the individuals living in those encampments.

(2) Jurisdictions that have 50 or more individuals living in the encampment that they are seeking to support with these funds.

(3) The intent of the council is to award grants, to the extent feasible, to a range of applicants that represent the diversity of communities across the state, including rural, urban, and suburban communities.

Application Timeline

50253.

(a) The (Homeless Coordinating and Financing) council shall administer the program in accordance with the following timelines:

(1) The council shall make a program application available no later than October 31, 2021.

(2) Applications shall be due to the council no later than December 31, 2021.

(3) The council shall make initial award determinations no later than March 1, 2022.

The State's Next Steps: Identifying Scalable Best Practices to Replicate Across the State

50254.

(e) All recipients shall provide information and products developed with grant funds on service delivery models in support of the overall program goal to mitigate risk and address safety concerns in encampments, while ensuring a pathway for individuals living in encampments to move into safe and stable housing, in a format and timeframe specified by the council.

(f) The council shall evaluate the data and outcomes reported by recipients to assess efficacy of programs and identify scalable best practices for encampment resolution that can be replicated across the state.

(g) The council shall report to the chairs of the relevant fiscal and policy committees in both houses on the outcomes, learnings, and best practice models identified through this program. The report shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795.

To read all of the details of the Encampment Resolution Funding Program in AB 140 click [here](#) and see Sec. 13 Chapter 7, 50251 – 50254.

Supportive Steps

A [first-of-its kind report for HUD](#) states cities spend millions to clear encampments that largely shuffle residents from one encampment to another while implementing a dominant encampment strategy that involves 1) resource-intensive outreach to connect persons living in encampments with services and temporary and/or permanent housing; 2) requiring that persons leave encampments; and 3) clearing, cleaning, and closing encampments by removing structures and belongings.

A Jurisdiction's Encampment Strategy Should Evolve Over Time

A jurisdiction's encampment strategy should evolve over time to be more effective. Section 50252 states that an application should include five required sections, which are noted above under the subsection entitled "Application."

A Sixth Required Section Should be Included in the Application

A sixth required section should be included in the application that asks the applicant to describe their current dominant encampment strategy and how their dominant encampment strategy will evolve if funded by the Encampment Resolution Funding Program.

Supporting the State's efforts to evaluate the data and outcomes reported by grant recipients to identify scalable best practices for encampment resolution that can be replicated across the state, is certainly worthy of our time. An evolving encampment strategy is necessary, and our evolving support of the State's Encampment Resolution Funding Program is equally necessary.