



## DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

*A Guide to  
the Programs  
of San Mateo  
County's  
Department  
of Housing*

*Divisions:*

- **Housing  
Authority**
- **Housing &  
Community  
Development**





## Department of Housing

In 2005, the Board of Supervisors organized the Department of Housing (DOH) to increase focus on housing issues.

This brochure highlights a wide variety of programs supported by DOH to address the housing needs of County residents.

The department provides rental and housing assistance to income-qualified residents, and provides financing and technical assistance to partner organizations in the public, private and non-profit sectors to pursue housing, community and economic development activities that improve quality of life in the community.

The mission of the department is to facilitate progress toward a vision of San Mateo County as a Livable Community in which housing opportunity exists for residents at every level of income and stage of life, such that every resident has a place to call home.

Duane Bay, *Director*

Bill Lowell, *Deputy Director*

### Housing & Community Development Programs:

- Strategic Initiatives
- First-Time Homebuyer Programs
- Housing Rehab Programs
- Housing & Community Development

### Housing Authority Programs:

- Section 8 Voucher Program
- Project-Based Voucher Program
- Moving To Work Program
- Public Housing Program
- Homeownership Program
- Moderate Rehab (MR) Program
- Time-Limited Self-Sufficiency Program
- Family Unification Program
- Shelter Plus Care and Supportive Housing Programs
- Veterans Affairs Supported Housing (VASH) Program

The Department of Housing consists of two divisions:

■ **Housing & Community Development (HCD)** assists very low, low and moderate income residents through financing and community development in order to stabilize and improve their quality of life. HCD provides loan financing, project funding and technical assistance in addition to services provided through partnerships with non-profit organizations, other public agencies and the private sector.

HCD utilizes U.S. Housing & Urban Development (HUD) federal sources such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, HOME Investment Partnership Act (HOME) funding and Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) funding to help create safe, affordable and prosperous communities in which to live, work and do business in San Mateo County. Through an annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process, HCD focuses on this mission through a comprehensive mix of programs and projects funded to support economic development, revitalization, infrastructure improvements, housing, safety net services and other key issues associated with community development as a whole.

■ **Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo (HACSM)**

was created in March 1941 to provide housing assistance to extremely low, very low and low income households. The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, in a separate legal capacity, serves as HACSM's Board of Commissioners. HACSM receives its funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

HACSM has been a participant in HUD's Moving-To-Work (MTW) demonstration program since the execution of its MTW Agreement in May 2000. The three major goals for the MTW program are to increase cost effectiveness, promote self-sufficiency, and expand housing options for program participants. The additional flexibility offered by MTW allows HACSM to more successfully achieve its mission and program goals, as well as enhance its ability to serve the needs of low-income households and communities in the County of San Mateo.

Today, HACSM administers 4088 Section 8 vouchers. Through its Section 8 Project-Based program, some of the vouchers are leveraged to assist non-profit housing providers to develop much needed affordable housing units in the county. In addition to the Section 8 program, HACSM administers 130 units under the Moderate Rehabilitation program and various grant programs for homeless disabled populations. HACSM is also the landlord of 240 affordable housing units.



### ■ **HCD Strategic Initiatives**

Through Strategic Initiatives, HCD applies resources, leadership, knowledge, skills, funding and social capital to encourage best practices, collaborative efforts and more strategic use of resources to better meet housing needs countywide.

### ■ **HCD First-Time Homebuyer Programs**

provide guidance and assistance to first-time home buyers to purchase a home within San Mateo County.

For a list of programs and other resources, go to: [www.smchousing.org/homebuyer](http://www.smchousing.org/homebuyer)

### ■ **HCD Housing Rehab Programs**

DOH offers low-interest loans to rehabilitate homes for eligible homeowners. These loans cover moderate to substantial rehabilitation to single family owner-occupied residences. Loans are available to low or very low-income homeowners and owners of multi-unit rental properties that benefit low or very low-income families.

In addition, DOH funds non-profit organizations that provide free or low-cost home repair programs.

For a description of the County rehab programs, along with information on other programs and other resources available, go to: [www.smchousing.org/rehab](http://www.smchousing.org/rehab)

### ■ **HCD Housing & Community Development**

On an annual basis, DOH invites applications under a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process to allocate HUD funding including CDBG (Community Development Block Grant), HOME (Home Investment Partnership Program) and ESG (Emergency Shelter Grant) funding.

Through this annual NOFA, DOH is able to provide funding and technical assistance for valuable projects and programs in categories such as Housing Development, Public Facility Rehab, Housing Rehab Programs, Public Services, Shelter Operations and Fair Housing Services.





### ■ **HACSM Section 8 Voucher Program**

The Section 8 Voucher program is the federal government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe and sanitary housing in the private market.

A family that is issued a housing voucher is responsible for finding a suitable housing unit of the family's choice where the owner agrees to rent under the program. This unit may include the family's present residence. Rental units must meet minimum standards of health and safety, as determined by HACSM.

A housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by HACSM on behalf of the participating family. The family then pays the difference between the actual rent charged by the landlord and the amount subsidized by the program. Under the Voucher program, voucher holders may choose a unit anywhere in the United States if authorized by HACSM.

HACSM has a waiting list for the Voucher program, which is closed indefinitely due to great demand. Families who are in need of affordable housing may visit the Section 8 page of HACSM's website to find out what other housing opportunities are available: [www.smchousing.org/Section8](http://www.smchousing.org/Section8)

### ■ **HACSM Project-Based Voucher Program**

The Section 8 Project-Based program is a component of the Section 8 Voucher program and funding for this program comes from the Voucher program. The program's objective is to induce property owners to make standard housing available to low-income families at rents within the program limits. In return, the Housing Authority enters into a long-term contract with the owner that guarantees a certain level of rents.

Anyone who is interested in applying for a project-based unit must be on HACSM's waiting list. Please check the DOH website for updates regarding open waiting lists. For application and program information, call 650-802-3319 or visit HACSM's Project-Based program page at [www.smchousing.org/projectbased](http://www.smchousing.org/projectbased)

### ■ **HACSM Moving To Work Program**

HUD introduced Moving To Work (MTW) in 1996 as a demonstration program for 24 housing authorities. HUD grants MTW agencies exceptions to federal regulations to research whether local innovation can provide incentives to families to become economically self-sufficient, reduce program costs and achieve greater cost-effectiveness, or increase housing choice for low-income families.

■ **HACSM Moving To Work Program** *Continued*  
HACSM is one of the agencies that participates in this program. In April 2008, HACSM received approval from HUD to extend the MTW Program until June 30, 2018.

For a list of programs and other resources, go to: [www.smchousing.org/MTW](http://www.smchousing.org/MTW)

■ **HACSM Public Housing Program**

Public housing is built and owned by the federal government and operated by local public housing agencies. The program was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. HACSM owns and operates one public housing development in Colma with a total of 30 units.

Anyone who is interested in applying for a public housing unit must be on HACSM's waiting list. Currently, the public housing waiting list is closed except for families that qualify for a 4 bedroom unit. The minimum family size to qualify for a 4 bedroom unit is 6 people.

■ **HACSM Homeownership Program**

Section 8 Homeownership program (S8 HO) is limited to the current Section 8 Voucher participants only. HACSM provides monthly assistance to S8 HO participants to meet their homeownership expense, i.e. mortgage. HACSM encourages

participants in the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program to make homeownership a goal, if appropriate, and to utilize the S8 HO program. Likewise, participants and voucher holders who are interested in the HO program will be encouraged to participate in the FSS Program.

■ **HACSM Moderate Rehab (MR) Program**

HACSM receives separate funding for this program. The purpose of the MR program is to assist very low-income families in obtaining decent, safe, and sanitary housing in privately owned, rehabilitated units. Owners agree to rehabilitate properties to meet certain safety and sanitation standards. In return, the Housing Authority enters into a long-term contract with the owner and sets the rents based on the cost of owning, managing, maintaining, and rehabilitating the property. There is one MR property with 130 units in San Mateo County. Under the MR program, the assistance is tied to the unit. A family who moves from the MR unit does not retain continued housing assistance.

Anyone who is interested in applying for a Moderate Rehabilitation unit must be on HACSM's waiting list. Currently the MR Program waiting list is open.

For application and program information, call 650-802-3319 or visit HACSM's website at [www.smchousing.org](http://www.smchousing.org)





### ■ **HACSM Time-Limited Self-Sufficiency Program**

provides time-limited housing assistance to homeless individuals or families, TANF recipients or low-income families who are eligible to receive other county services. Housing assistance is time limited according to the specific program designs and the HACSM policy. Case management and participation in self-sufficiency activities are mandatory. The Self-Sufficiency (SS) contract requires program participants and all their adult family members to be off welfare assistance and the head of household must be gainfully employed by the end of the contract term. Escrow accounts will be established based on achievement of self-sufficiency goals.

Application to the SS program is by referral made by HACSM recognized referring agencies only.

### ■ **HACSM Family Unification Program (FUP)**

is a collaborative effort between the Housing Authority and the San Mateo County Children and Family Services, a Public Child Welfare Agency (PCWA). FUP provides housing assistance to families for whom the lack of adequate housing is a primary factor in the separation (or threat of imminent separation) of children from their families, or is preventing the reunification of children with their families.

The Family Unification Program also provides housing assistance to youth aging out of the foster care system. In order to qualify as a FUP-eligible youth, individuals must be between the ages of 18-21, in foster care on or after their 16th birthday and currently lack adequate housing. The housing assistance provided to

the youth in this program is for a maximum of 18 months.

All applicants must have an open PCWA case at the time of referral, selection, and when the voucher is issued. The families/youths must have substantially complied with all the PCWA service plan tasks.

Application to the FUP program is by referral made by PCWA only.

### ■ **HACSM Shelter Plus Care and Supportive Housing Programs**

The Shelter Plus Care (S + C) and Supportive Housing (SHP) programs are under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Both programs are funded through a special grant application process that is a part of the county's Continuum of Care initiative. HACSM must apply annually for any new or renewal funding.

The S + C and SHP programs provide rental assistance that, when combined with supportive services, provides housing to homeless people with disabilities. The primary target populations are homeless individuals who have serious mental illness and or chronic problems with alcohol, drugs and or AIDS or related diseases. The program provides rental assistance accompanied by a wide range of supportive services.

Application to the S + C or SHP programs is by referral made by HACSM recognized referring agencies only. Anyone who is interested in the S + C program should visit the website of Mental Health Association of San Mateo County at **[www.mhasmc.org](http://www.mhasmc.org)**



## ■ Veterans Affairs Supported Housing (VASH) Program

is a collaboration between the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to help homeless veterans and their immediate families find and maintain affordable, safe, and permanent housing in the community.

The primary goal of HUD-VASH is to help veterans and their families successfully move out of homelessness. The program is designed to improve each veteran's health and mental health, and to enhance each veteran's ability to remain stable, housed, and integrated in their local community. This is done using HUD Section 8 rental assistance vouchers and VA's intensive case management services.

Application to the VASH program is by referral made by Veteran Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) only. Veterans who are interested in the VASH program should first contact their local VAMC.



**Department of Housing**

**Housing Authority  
(650) 802-3300**

**Housing & Community Development  
(650) 802-5050**

**[www.smhousing.org](http://www.smhousing.org)**