

Who are H4H Connectors?

Santa Cruz is changing the way people experiencing homelessness get access to housing and services. Only a small number of people can be helped with the limited housing programs that the Housing for Health (H4H) system has available, but anyone experiencing homelessness can get assistance with developing a plan for housing and meeting other needs. The people who do this work are referred to as *H4H Connectors*. H4H Connectors may work as part of an outreach team, drop-in center, or multi-service program, so long as they are able to meet with participants and assist them with self-identified needs and connections to resources.

What do H4H Connectors do?

- Identify individuals experiencing homelessness and build rapport
- Conduct initial triage and safety screenings and direct participants to crisis assistance if needed
- Enroll participants in HMIS programs and collect important participant data
- Engage participants in completing the Housing Needs Assessment and problem-solving process
- Support participants to identify housing outside of the homelessness response system
- Create a Housing Action Plan with participants; identify priorities to work on that help participants toward housing
- Make referrals that support participant achievement of the priorities in their Housing Action Plan
- Follow-up on the Housing Action Plan and revise as needed
- Support participants prioritized for housing with the housing search and move-in process, including getting identifying documents, completing applications, and securing housing

What are the benefits of being an H4H Connector?

- Ability to provide financial assistance and support to participants who identify self-directed housing opportunities (i.e., problem solving or diversion)
- Get higher need clients that are eligible considered for homeless-targeted housing, particularly Rapid Rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and other permanent housing options
- Help to shape the ongoing implementation of the Coordinated Entry process in Santa Cruz County
- Engage in ongoing learning environment with skill building and peer support

What are the expectations of being an H4H Connector?

While a Connector will use the Housing Needs Assessment as a framework, engagement with participants is not prescriptive. This work requires meeting people where they are and bringing a strengths-based approach and flexibility to each participant's needs and situations. Specific expectations of Connectors include:

- Participate in professional development trainings and peer learning collaboratives
- Maintain an expected caseload target (i.e., number of participants served)
- Collect data in HMIS that is accurate, complete, and high quality
- Complete work from an office setting or field-based location

How to become an H4H Connector

Agencies that serve people experiencing homelessness in any setting may want to consider having some staff become H4H Connectors. Connectors must be licensed HMIS users and participate in required H4H trainings. Contact H4H to find out more.