

**City of La Mesa
Homeless Outreach &
Mobile Engagement (HOME) Program**

Quarterly Report: July-September 2021

HOME Program Overview

The Homeless Outreach and Mobile Engagement (HOME) is an initiative of the City of La Mesa, in collaboration with the La Mesa Police Department and People Assisting the Homeless (PATH). The program launched on November 1, 2020 and provides a **housing-first** and **trauma-informed** approach to addressing homelessness in La Mesa. HOME utilizes **progressive engagement** and **harm reduction** to assist individuals who are unable to access homeless services on their own. This report breaks down the HOME efforts and successes during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2020-2021.

Since the beginning of the quarter, the HOME program outreach specialists have:

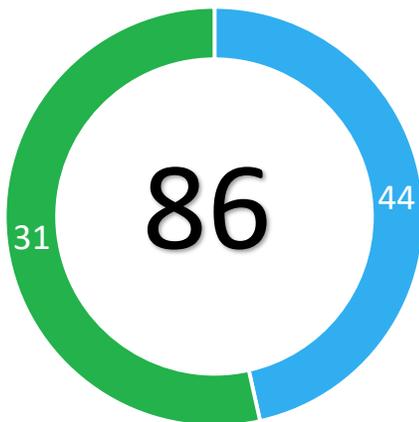
- Made contact with 86 total individuals experiencing homelessness and newly enrolled 40 adults and 0 children, 5 of whom have located a temporary or permanent home;
- Responded to 134 service calls routed through LMPD dispatch, through the hotline or the city email, most of which would have been addressed by city emergency response services and law enforcement;
- Prioritized the most vulnerable individuals in the City of La Mesa, including individuals with heightened risk of complications due to COVID-19, households with children, and individuals facing chronic homelessness.

Total Number of Clients Served from City of La Mesa

HOME program staff operate out of LMPD headquarters in downtown La Mesa and respond to non-emergency, calls for service related to homelessness that are generated through police dispatch. Each of these calls is first attended by a HOME outreach specialist; PD or PERT officers are only requested for rare cases involving legal or safety concerns.

Total Number of Clients Served

■ New Clients in Quarter ■ Continuing Clients



Instances of Service

393



Calls for Service

134

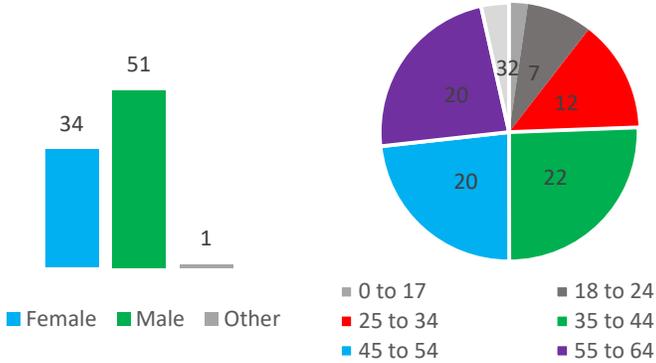


Calls with LMPD Assistance or PERT Assistance

Officer Assistance: 0
PERT Assistance: 0

Client Demographics and Household Composition

Total Clients Served Demographics



Single Person Households



Adult only Households



Households with Children



Chronically Homeless

67%

Housing Outcomes



Nine people from **nine households** left the HOME program during the previous quarter, **8** of whom went to some sort of housing accommodation.



Five households exited to **temporary housing**, defined as an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or other location that provides housing/shelter without tenure;



Three households (eight people) exited to **permanent housing**, defined as a leased unit meeting United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) occupancy standards with or without supportive services, such as mental health counseling.

Client Services

The HOME Team saw a great deal of success in connecting people to a variety of community resources this month. First, HOME was able to partner with a non-profit, Dreams for Change, to help people experiencing homelessness access their stimulus checks if they were not previously able to do so. Many people living on the street struggle to complete tax returns or otherwise apply for these funds, and through this effort 18 HOME Team clients—all La Mesa residents—have overcome these hurdles. After completing their tax returns, the clients are given a bank card where the stimulus money will be deposited in two to four weeks. In addition to connecting people to financial services, HOME connected 5 individuals to various mental health services including East County Mental Health, Jane Westin Wellness and Recovery Center, Areta Crowell Center, Halcyon Center, and Center Star Assertive Community Treatment. For many people experiencing homelessness, getting connected to ongoing mental health support is an essential step towards acquiring and retaining permanent housing. The HOME Team also continues to facilitate connections to both short and long-term housing.

During this quarter, HOME staff has provided some form of financial and/or basic-needs assistance to all enrolled clients with the dual objective of 1) moving them toward a housing outcome 2) keeping them safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. These objectives have not changed throughout this quarter.

	All clients received COVID-19-related services, including updates related to local public-health guidelines, vaccine information, hygiene supplies, and personal protective equipment (PPE), such as face masks and hand sanitizer.
	All clients received food, water, or other nutrition services, with approximately 40 prioritized for on-going meal support.
	HOME program staff distributed \$16,623.42 in direct financial assistance, including vehicle repair, storage costs, and funds used to secure new rental units.
	4 households (7 clients) received accommodation in a motel, designed to provide short-term, bridge shelter for those with a concrete housing plan.
	HOME program staff arranged 144 rides to apartment viewings, shelter stays, program intake interviews, and other critical appointments via ridesharing service.

Narrative

Calls for Service:

- Calls for service this quarter (134) were down significantly relative to Q2 (355 calls during April-June 2021), but similar to Q1 (187 calls during January-March 2021). This refers specifically to printed requests for response delivered by LMPD dispatch. While there were fewer of these during Q3, HOME program staff have noticed an increase in informal service calls from LMPD and members of the community directly to staff.

Hotel Utilization:

- The HOME Team has found that motel funding is most effectively and efficiently utilized in the form of bridge housing for clients who are willing to engage in program services and have an anticipated move-out date for permanent housing. This structure allows HOME to plan around a specific move-out date rather than putting someone in a motel room for an undisclosed amount of time. The HOME Team also utilizes bridge housing for clients who have been approved and matched to housing that cannot be accessed until a future date due to barriers including lease start dates, construction of housing units, and appointment requirements. By placing clients who fall into this category in a motel, the HOME team is better able to support clients in attending necessary appointments, collecting documentation, and communicating with their housing provider. Being in a motel also allows clients to have consistent access to communication and a level of safety that is just not possible for someone who is living on the street. The roughly half of the funding for this assistance was leveraged through other PATH contracts.

Client success stories:

- One of the success stories for this quarter includes a person who had been on the HOME case load since late 2020. This individual was struggling with a mental health diagnosis that was being exacerbated by them using illegal substances as their coping mechanism. After months of exploring the possibility of getting connected to mental health support, the client allowed HOME to facilitate a connection to East County Mental Health where they were enrolled in their outpatient program that includes therapy and medication support. The person was then matched to a Permanent Supportive Housing option. Most recently, the client made the decision to enter into McAlister's residential detox program where they can stay for up to 90 days to help manage their substance use. While in this program, the client will be able to maintain sobriety and mental health support while working with their case managers to ultimately secure their permanent housing match.
- Another success stories for this quarter involved the HOME Team connecting with a person who had been living on the streets for more than 25 years. After weeks of building rapport through progressive engagement, including connecting with the client with Dreams for Change (a non-profit that assists homeless individuals with their stimulus checks), the person allowed the HOME Team to complete an assessment and enter them into the Coordinated Entry System. Due to this person's age and chronic health conditions, they were quickly matched and approved to move into a brand new Permanent Supportive Housing Unit that will be completed in late August/ early September. The HOME Team has continued to support this

client by transporting them to the many appointments needed to move into this unit and by providing bridge housing in the form of a hotel.

Cumulative Data from Nov. 2020 - Sept. 2021:

- There have been 201 persons served and 677 instances of service. The breakdown of those instances indicates that the majority of HOME Team services are being rendered in the form of continuous and intensive case management to La Mesa's most vulnerable individuals:
 - Instances of service where the clients were contacted only one time each: 125
 - Instances of service where the clients were contacted 2-5 times each: 71
 - Instances of service where the clients were contacted 6-9 times each: 73
 - Instances of service where the clients were contacted 10+ time each: 408
- 19 individuals from 20 households exited the program to **permanent** housing, most of whom will have ongoing support and case management that was established while living on the street and working with the HOME Team.
- 32 individuals exited the program to a temporary housing accommodation, defined as an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or other location that provides housing/shelter without tenure. It is the programs intention that these individuals will be able to utilize these destinations to continue to receive services that help them attain permanent housing.
- The HOME Team responded to 786 calls for service from the community that would have otherwise required a response by a police officer. Of these 786 calls, one of them required assistance from an officer and two of them required assistance from PERT.
- HOME Team provided bridge housing 16 people in 10 households. The total cost of this was \$32,116.88. 9 of these people were able go directly from bridge housing to a permanent housing destination. 3 individuals exited to a temporary destination that will be able to connect them to more appropriate and higher level of care.

Community Partnerships:

- Journey Community Church continues to provide any and all food items to the HOME Program, allowing HOME staff to feed up to 60 people per week
- La Mesa Village Association
- La Mesa Thrift Store
- La Mesa First United Methodist Church
- Empire Thrift Store of El Cajon

Community Engagement:

- Home-Start, Inc.
- East County Mental Health

- Center Star ACT
- McAlister Inc.
- City of La Mesa's HOME program steering committee
- La Mesa – Spring Valley School District Social Workers
- East County Homeless Task Force
- San Diego County Mental Health
- In addition, HOME staff has developed a word-of-mouth network of donors and residents and regularly interface with anyone interested into helping those facing hardship on the streets of La Mesa.