

GIVING INSIGHTS

Homelessness: Supportive Services



The interests of our funding community inform the choice of issues we cover in each Giving Insights publication.

Overview

The homeless population in the Bay Area today is growing faster than ever before. In 2020, the Bay Area had more than 35,000 homeless individuals, 74% of whom were located in Alameda, San Francisco, and Santa Clara counties. Between 2010 and 2020, homelessness in the Bay Area grew by 30 percent, and unsheltered homelessness increased by 63%. Due to structural racism, lack of affordable housing, and insufficient economic opportunity, people of color are disproportionately affected by homelessness. Black residents make up nearly 30% of the Bay Area's homeless population, while comprising less than 7% of the population. Latinx and mixed-race residents also disproportionately experience homelessness compared to white and Asian residents.¹ Homelessness can take many forms including living in shelters, transitional housing, with family and friends, in cars, or on the streets.

Homelessness is a complex problem involving many societal factors. In a [previous guide](#), we profiled organizations working to prevent homelessness through housing solutions. This guide focuses on organizations offering wraparound services that address other critical challenges faced by the local homeless and at-risk populations. Services provided include access to medical care, treatment for mental illness, alcohol and drug abuse programs, education, and job training. While some organizations offer both housing and services, this guide focuses on services offered.

Our Jewish tradition of giving *tzedakah* inspires us to help the most vulnerable in our communities live dignified lives and provide them with resources to meet basic human needs. "Share your bread with the hungry, and take the wretched poor into your home. When you see the naked, clothe him, and do not ignore your own kin" – *Isaiah 58:7*. In addition, the principle of *pikuach nefesh* emphasizes the sanctity of life and obliges us to save a life before the observation of any other law.

Using Your Donor-Advised Fund

Wraparound programs can help provide a path to stabilization, improved health, and permanent housing for those who are currently or at risk of becoming homeless. Giving in these three areas can make a difference in the lives of those struggling with economic and medical issues connected to homelessness:

- **Health**

Many of those who are unhoused suffer from physical and mental health challenges, substance abuse disorders, PTSD, malnourishment, and other chronic illnesses. Without proper treatment, they are unable to retain employment and housing and stabilize their lives. These organizations offer treatment and care services as well as emergency food assistance that can improve participants' health and increase their chances of a productive life.

¹ Bay Area Council Economic Institute. (2021, June). *Bay Area Homelessness: New Urgency, New Solutions*.

- **Case management/Counseling**

Comprehensive counseling and case management services are critical to the physical and mental well-being of those who are transitioning from homelessness. Many organizations that provide housing services also offer need-based case management assistance that helps connect participants with health and social services that will enable them to stay off the streets. Other organizations connect those who are at risk of falling into homelessness with community-based resources offering broad assistance.

- **Education/Training**

These organizations assist homeless individuals or those at risk of becoming homeless in developing the skills needed to return to society as contributing citizens. Educational programs empower individuals to live independent lives and include employment training, job preparation and interview skills, language courses, technology training, and after-school programs for children.

Our donors are giving to many of the local organizations listed below. You may want to consider these when implementing your giving strategy.



Resource Connection



Health



Counseling



Education



Jewish



Focus on Women & Families

East Bay		
<p><u>Berkeley Food and Housing Project</u></p>	<p>Offers emergency food and shelter, a rapid-rehousing program, and a permanent housing program with wraparound support services for homeless individuals diagnosed with a serious mental illness. Also provides supportive services to veterans who are at risk of homelessness including temporary financial assistance, healthcare-specific case management, housing assistance, and employment services.</p>	
<p><u>Homeless Action Center</u></p>	<p>Provides free legal services and access social safety net programs, providing a pathway out of homelessness. Through HAC's legal help, individuals obtain health care, housing, a sustainable income, mental health treatment, and healthy food to increase their likelihood of maintaining housing.</p>	
<p><u>Jewish Family and Community Services, East Bay</u></p>	<p>Offers a COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Program and a Jewish Community Safety Net program that helps families and seniors with emergency financial assistance for basic needs, food delivery, mental health services, parenting support, and finding community resources.</p>	

Marin		
<u>Gilead House</u>	Helps empower low-income, vulnerable, and homeless single mothers and their children to attain financial stability and independence by providing them with transitional housing, education, mentoring, and therapeutic support. The majority of families that participate in the program are Latino.	   

San Francisco		
<u>Compass Family Services</u>	Provides wraparound services for homeless and at-risk families including a trauma-informed resource center that supports family well-being and a children's center that focuses on social and emotional development for children. Offers shelter services, a transitional housing program for families, and supports parents with care and educational programs for their children. Over 90% of those served are from communities of color.	    
<u>Glide</u>	Empowers homeless individuals to live better lives through comprehensive services, advocacy initiatives, and an inclusive community. Provides a daily free meals program, crisis intervention services, children's services and resources, and substance use treatment services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Glide began offering its services outdoors, digitally, and through mobile units to accommodate the shifting needs of vulnerable populations. Eradicating racial disparities is an important part of Glides work, and about 70% of those served are people of color.	  
<u>Homeless Prenatal Program</u>	Offers a housing assistance program, ongoing case management, and counseling services, and short-term financial assistance to families to enable them to find and retain safe housing. Homeless Prenatal offers a 14-month paid community health worker training program that prepares formerly homeless women for careers in the nonprofit sector. About 92% of participants in the program find jobs within 30 days of graduating. In 2018, 95% of those served were women and families of color.	    
<u>Jewish Family and Children's Services</u>	Provides assistance to Jewish families and seniors who are homeless or are facing hardships due to the COVID-19 pandemic. JFCS offers short-term loans, emergency grants that help with basic living expenses and necessities, as well as case management services to help families regain self-sufficiency. It also operates food banks throughout the Bay Area.	    
<u>St. Anthony's</u>	Advocates for resources for the disadvantaged, homeless, and those experiencing extreme poverty by helping them build productive and healthy lives. Offers essential services, health care and addiction recovery services, and a job skills training program. St. Anthony's workforce development program provides coaching sessions and assists participants with finding employment.	   

Peninsula		
<u>Downtown Streets Team</u>	Provides homeless individuals with resources they can use to rebuild their lives. Through a one-year program, homeless participants volunteer collaboratively on local beautification projects while taking advantage of case management and employment services that help them find permanent housing and stable employment.	  
<u>Project We Hope</u>	Provides innovative mobile services for the homeless including access to free showers, laundry, medical assessments, and case management services. Offers an emergency shelter and hot meal services to families facing challenges. Helps homeless and formerly incarcerated individuals break barriers to employment by offering free job certification courses.	   
<u>Samaritan House</u>	Provides food, access to shelter, healthcare, and a broad range of case management and supportive services for low-income and homeless individuals in San Mateo County. Of the 800 men, women, and children served in 2019, almost 75% were Black.	   

Have Questions or Suggestions?

If you have additional suggestions or questions on this topic, or would like information on other causes and ways to give, contact your philanthropy advisor or email us at philanthropy@sfjcf.org.

Federation Philanthropy Partners connects impact and meaning by helping others view the world through the lens of Jewish values. Our 100-year history at the center of Bay Area generosity—supporting both those who give and those who benefit—grants us a unique ability to amplify results and create moments of transformation in the world, our community, and ourselves.