

Homeless Benefits Linkages

People experiencing homelessness...

- Often face unique challenges in obtaining and maintaining public benefits
- Have lower rates of enrollment than their housed counterparts
- Are in crisis, have a history of trauma, and may have a difficult time managing complex, bureaucratic systems that require multiple appointments and paperwork

Homeless Benefits Linkages

Rather than simply referring clients to the address of a county building, the goal of benefits linkage is:

- To meet clients where they are
- Streamline business processes whenever possible
- Provide personalized support to help them navigate application systems
- Help meet WPC goal that 100% of people experiencing homelessness will be assessed for housing, health, and benefits

Benefits Linkages Projects

1. Housing & Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP)
2. Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) Benefits Outreach Pilot
3. Navigation Center Benefits Outreach
4. Expanded SSI Advocacy Services Tipping Point Pilot

1. Housing & Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP)

A county administered program that assists disabled individuals who are experiencing homelessness in applying for disability benefit programs while also providing housing assistance.

SF was awarded \$2.4 million for the program over a three year period, from 7/1/17 through 6/30/20.

Required Components:

- Outreach
- Case management
- SSI Advocacy
- Housing

HDAP

Partners:

- DHS: SSI advocacy; program planning , oversight, reporting, analysis
 - DAAS: Care planning, case management and housing stabilization, IHSS, client assistance funds
 - HSH: administer housing subsidies, access to Permanent Supportive Housing portfolio
 - Institute on Aging – supportive services to move referred clients into housing, up to 9 months of intensive case management for housing stability
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- So Far
 - 13 people housed, 5 awarded SSI benefits
 - 25 in the pipeline (identified as HDAP-eligible); 50% assessed for housing through Coordinated Entry

2. Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) Benefits Outreach Pilot

Partnership between HSH, DPH, and HSA

- Initiated by findings of Whole Person Care
- Outstations one SF HOT staff at the city's largest shelter, MSC South, and one at the two Access Points for Adult Coordinated Entry
- Developed streamlined business processes designed to lower barriers and expedite the application process for shelter and Access Point clients

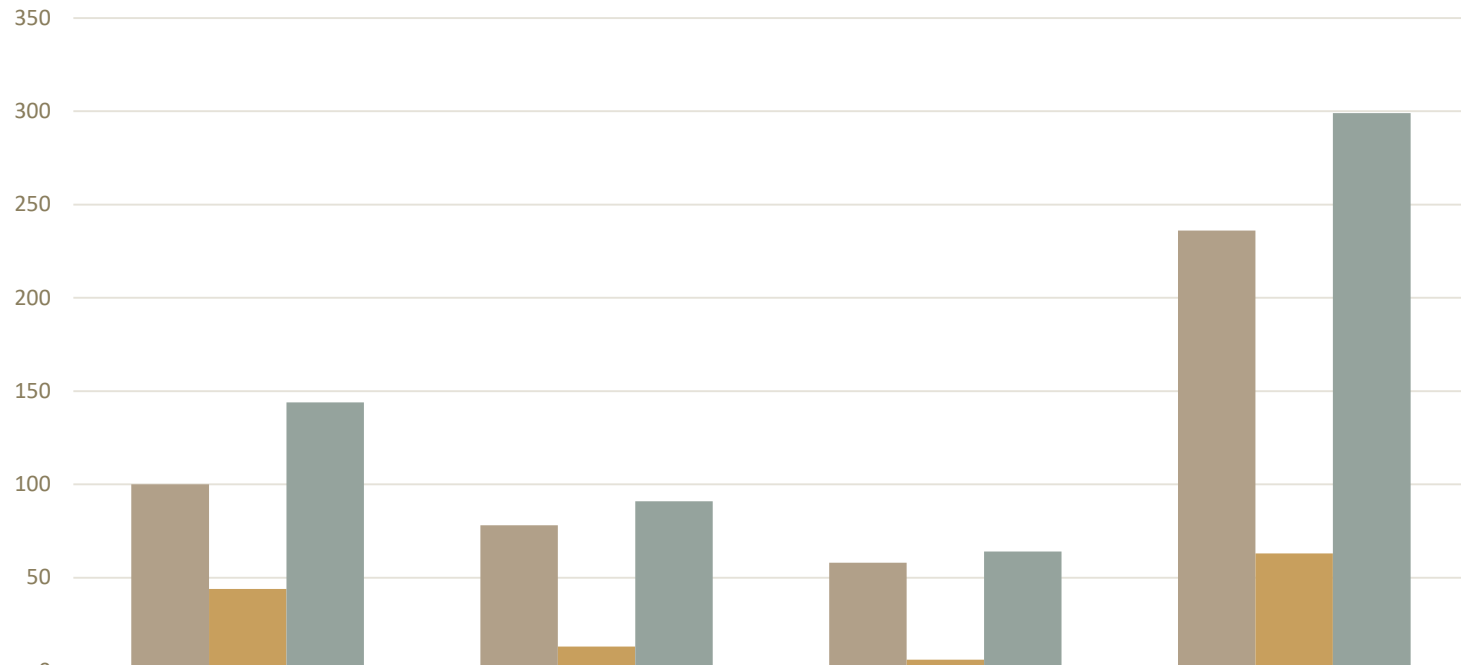
Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) Benefits Outreach Pilot

Goals:

- Increase access to medical care through Medi-Cal enrollment
- Decrease food insecurity through CalFresh enrollment
- Increase income through enrollment in the County Adult Assistance Program (CAAP) which also puts clients on a path to supportive housing, and direct referral to SSI legal representation organizations

Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) Benefits Outreach Pilot

SF HOT Shelter Pilot
Applications Approved by Benefit
March 2018 to February 2019



■ Approved
■ Denied
■ Totals

CAAP

CalFresh

Medi-Cal

Totals

100

78

58

236

44

13

6

63

144

91

64

299

% of Applications Approved/Days to Dispo HSA Services Centers and HOT Pilot

Program	% Applications Approved Service Centers	% Applications Approved HOT Pilot	Days to Disposition Service Centers	Days to Disposition HOT Pilot
CAAP	38%	68% (30% increase)	13	7 (6 days faster)
CalFresh	62%	85% (23% increase)	22	6 (16 days faster)
Medi-Cal	70%	90% (20% increase)	32	8 (24 days faster)

3. Navigation Center Benefits Outreach

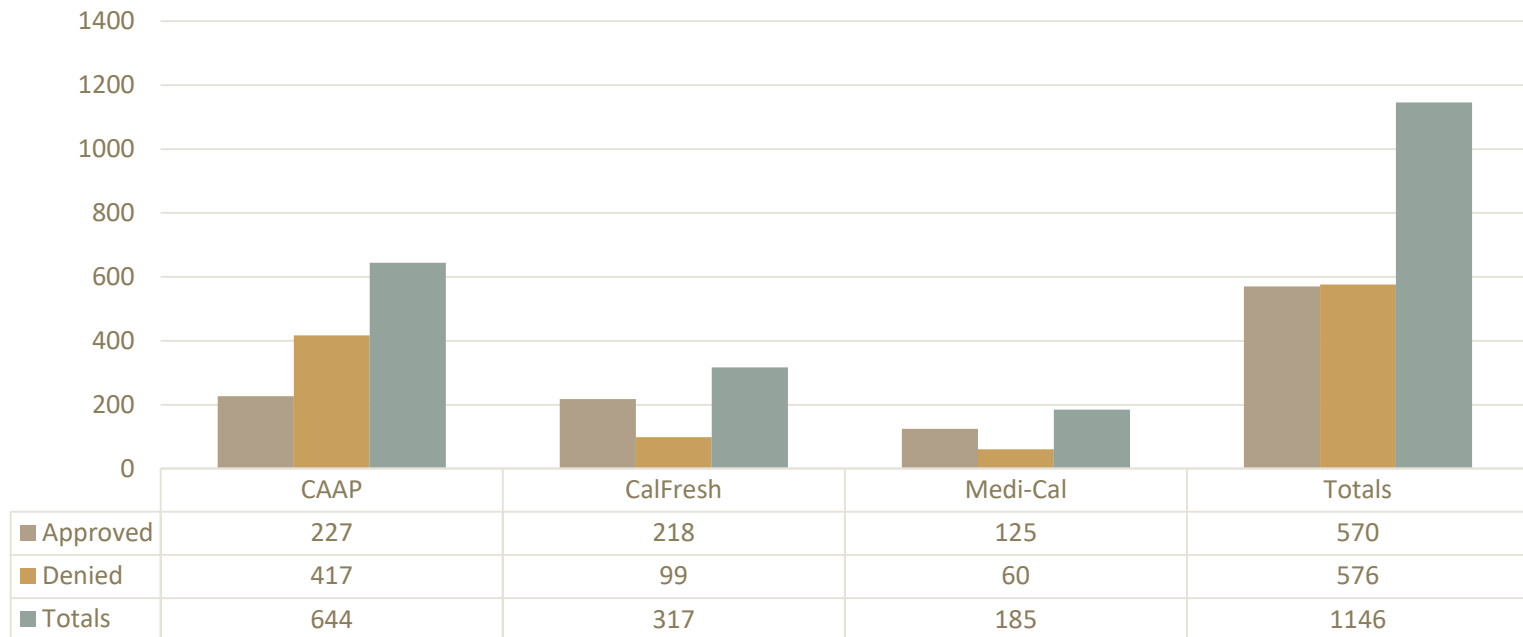
- Navigation Centers provide accommodations to highly vulnerable and long-term homeless residents who would often not access traditional shelter and services.
- HSA outstations rotating Medi-Cal, CalFresh, and CAAP Eligibility Workers (EWs) at each of the five Navigation Center sites across the City:
 - Division Circle (SOMA, 126 beds)
 - Bayshore (Bayview, 128 beds)
 - Civic Center (Central City, 93 beds)
 - Central Waterfront (Dogpatch, 64 beds)
 - Bryant (SOMA, 84 beds)

Navigation Center Benefits Outreach

- The EWs are authorized to approve benefits applications, which expedites the process and allows the client to bypass traveling to a county office and wait for one or more in person appointments to receive aid.
- EWs also perform critical benefits retention functions, which help clients avoid being discontinued from aid and losing access to vital services like filling prescription medications.

Navigation Center Benefits Outreach

Navigation Centers
Total Approvals by Benefit
March 2018 to February 2019



% of Applications Approved/Days to Dispo HSA Services Centers and Nav Centers

Program	% Applications Approved Service Centers	% Applications Approved Nav Centers	Days to Disposition Service Centers	Days to Disposition Nav Centers
CAAP	38%	40% (2% increase)	13	13 (same)
CalFresh	62%	70% (8% increase)	22	7 (15 days faster)
Medi-Cal	70%	68% (2% decrease)	32	10 (22 days faster)

4. Expanded SSI Advocacy Services

Tipping Point Pilot

- In 2017, San Francisco grant-making agency Tipping Point launched its first endeavor with the public sector, committing \$100 million to cut chronic homelessness in San Francisco in half by 2022.
- This initiative, in partnership with the City and County of San Francisco, aims to create housing, improve public systems like criminal justice and child welfare to reduce the rate of homelessness, and help the city leverage more state and federal funding.
- As a component of the homeless prevention strategy of the Chronic Homeless Initiative, Tipping Point approached HSA in 2018 with funding to expand SSI Advocacy services specifically to people experiencing homelessness.

Expanded SSI Advocacy Services

Tipping Point Pilot

HSA, Tipping Point and CBO legal services providers Bay Legal and PRC worked together to identify the need, gaps in existing services, and potential **underserved** target populations that could be well served by the legal model of advocacy, including:

- Shelter and Navigation Center residents
- Transition Age Youth 18-25 living on the street
- Clients with hard-to-win cases such as a dual diagnosis, and those who require an ALJ Hearing
- Clients assessed by CAAP as being able to do light duty community service work but who are struggling with their assignment

Tipping Point SSI Advocacy Pilot

81 Clients Accepted for Representation

Referral Source	Bay Legal	PRC
Internal/Walk In	17	19
HSA SSI Case Management	12	15
MSC South Shelter	7	3
Project Homeless Connect	1	1
Homeless Youth Alliance/ Harm Reduction Therapy Center	3	
Civic Center Navigation Center	2	1
Total	42	39

Lessons Learned

- “Appointments are the enemy of homeless people”
 - Dr. Barry Zevin
- Face to face outreach and engagement works
- Minimize the number of encounters needed to complete the process
- Fully integrate benefits navigation into the program environment
- Embrace PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act)

Lessons Learned

- Be prepared to project manage multiple stakeholders down to smallest detail
- Develop clear roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority among those stakeholders
- Create Steering Committee or Continuous Quality Improvement group, meet regularly
- Collect the MVP – minimum viable product for data important to know

What's Next?

1. HDAP - \$25 million new funding proposed in Governor's budget, program would become permanent
2. SF HOT Benefits Outreach – new staff at Coordinated Entry Access Points, continue to evaluate
3. Nav Centers – ongoing expansion and addition of SAFE (Shelter Access for Everyone) Centers; budget request for more EWs
4. Tipping Point SSI Advocacy – implement new data collection system to better understand successes in underserved populations

Accessing Benefits Anytime

HSA Service Centers:

Apply for Medi-Cal and CalFresh at

1440 Harrison Street, between 10th & 11th Streets

Apply for CAAP, Medi-Cal and CalFresh at

1235 Mission Street, between 8th & 9th Streets

Medi-Cal and CalFresh Hotline

(415) 558-4700

CAAP Hotline

(415) 558-2227