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SDHF POLICY DIRECTOR

## COVID-19 Response and Affordable Housing

### *Federal Government*

In response to the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis, Congress passed the [CARES Act](#), which was signed into law on March 27. The bill provides \$12 billion in funding for HUD programs:

- \$4 billion for Emergency Solutions Grants for homelessness assistance
- \$5 billion for Community Development Block Grants
- \$1.25 billion for the Housing Choice Voucher program
- \$1 billion for project-based rental assistance
- \$50 million for Section 202 Housing for the Elderly
- \$15 million for Section 811 Housing for Persons with Disabilities

The National Low Income Housing Coalition provides a thorough [analysis](#) of the housing provisions of the bill as well as a helpful [chart](#) comparing the House, Senate, and final bills.

The San Diego Housing Federation sent a [letter](#) on March 24 in response to the flurry of legislative proposals at the federal level, supporting HUD funding levels aligned with the anticipated need.

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To learn more about SDHF's policy positions, visit our [website](#).

While we are working to monitor federal policy and to ensure that the San Diego region is included fairly in all legislative proposals, we recommend signing up to receive updates from our partners working in Washington, DC:

- [National Low Income Housing Coalition](#)
- [National Housing Conference](#)
- [Affordable Rental Housing ACTION Campaign](#)
- [Novogradac](#)

### *COVID-19 and California's Budget*

In a [memo](#) from the Assembly Committee on Budget, Committee Chair Ting describes how the California budget will have to adjust to the realities of the impacts of COVID-19 on the State. Among what is expected is that the "May Revise" will become a "workload" budget that reflects 2019-20 service levels, an "August Revision" will need to be done due to the delay in personal income tax receipts to July 15, and many of the early promises of 2020 will likely be put on hold since the state's ongoing surplus will be impacted. While this is certainly sad news for advocates who had been working on significant state budget requests for affordable housing, there is an expectation that homelessness will continue to be a top priority in regard to the state's budget.

### *Local Governments Work Quickly to House People and Keep People Housed*

In just days after declaring local emergencies due to COVID-19, several local governments adopted local ordinances to prevent evictions for households impacted by the crisis.

## POLICY UPDATES



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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT

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While there are federal and state eviction moratoriums, each policy is different and CSH has created a very thorough overview [chart](#) explaining each moratorium order. On April 6, the Judicial Council adopted an emergency court rule to effectively stop all evictions, other than those necessary to protect public health and safety, for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency. The Western Center on Law and Poverty has an overview of the rule available [here](#).

At the same time, San Diego leaders have worked swiftly to move as many people as possible out of crowded bridge shelters and off the streets. On March 23, it was [announced](#) that the San Diego Convention Center will be used as a homeless shelter to help stave off the spread of COVID-19 among the region's unsheltered population. The San Diego City Council voted on April 7 to approve \$3.7 million in state grants to fund the convention, bringing the total amount of funding for the Convention Center shelter to \$7.1 million, according to [KPBS](#). Nearly 1,000 people experiencing homelessness have been sheltered at the Convention Center as of April 7. The County has also [secured](#) about 1,900 hotel rooms for homeless people during this crisis, earning the region and its leaders praise from Governor Newsom.

### *New Appointments at HCD*

Governor Gavin Newsom has appointed Gustavo Velasquez as director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development.

Mr. Velasquez comes to HCD from the Urban Institute, where he has served as senior director since 2017. He was assistant secretary for the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development from 2014 to 2017.

Zack Olmstead has been appointed as chief deputy director at HCD. Olmstead has been deputy director of housing policy development at HCD since 2017. Prior to that, he was senior assistant to Speaker Toni Atkins in the California State Assembly from 2013 to 2016.

### DID YOU KNOW?

**The Housing Federation is working rapidly to adjust to the COVID-19 response as it relates to housing policy and advocacy at all levels of government. Please make sure to sign up to receive our weekly brief to get the latest on advocacy action alerts and other time-sensitive items.**