



City of Austin

Recommendation for Action

File #: 25-1665, **Agenda Item #:** 57.

8/28/2025

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of an agreement with El Buen Samaritano to provide homelessness prevention services to help households most at-risk of homelessness beginning on September 1, 2025, for a term of up to 24 months. Funding: \$2,212,508 is available in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Homeless Strategy Office Social Services Contracts Budget.

Lead Department

Homeless Strategy Office.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$2,212,508 is available in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Homeless Strategy Office Social Services Contracts Budget.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

Homeless prevention focuses on identifying and assisting individuals and families at imminent risk of losing their housing. This includes short-term financial assistance-such as help with rent, utilities, or security deposits - along with case management and legal or mediation support to stabilize housing. Prevention efforts are coordinated through the Homelessness Response System and often target households with limited income, lack of support networks, or recent housing instability, aiming to keep people housed and reduce inflow into homelessness.

Homelessness prevention is distinct from broader anti-displacement or general rental assistance programs. Homelessness prevention specifically targets individuals and families who are at immediate risk of homelessness - namely, those who are likely to enter the homelessness response system without timely intervention. In contrast, anti-displacement initiatives often focus on preserving affordability and community stability in gentrifying areas, and rental assistance programs may support a wider range of low-income households without requiring evidence of imminent housing loss. Effective homelessness prevention requires targeted screening to ensure limited resources reach those most at-risk of homelessness.

Approval of this item will authorize the Homeless Strategy Office (HSO) to negotiate and execute an agreement with El Buen Samaritano beginning on September 1, 2025. The agreement will provide homelessness prevention services for households most at-risk of losing their housing. Services will include financial assistance to address outstanding rental arrears or unpaid housing-related obligations (e.g., utility bills), short-term rental assistance, supportive services to connect participants to mainstream resources, mediation with landlords, and/or relocation support if needed. The goal of this agreement is to stabilize households facing serious housing insecurity and prevent them from becoming homeless. By addressing housing issues early, the program aims to reduce the number of people who experience homelessness.

This agreement was awarded through the Homeless Strategy Office Request for Applications (RFA) 2025-001

Homelessness Prevention. HSO solicited more than 650 vendors, and HSO received 15 applications. El Buen Samaritano was recommended for an award for a 24-month term, without option to renew. The RFA evaluation process used set criteria for uniform review of all applications. An evaluation panel comprised of individuals with education and expertise in the issue area rated the applications. The criteria for evaluation included fiscal and administrative capacity, experience, cultural competence, equity, program design and performance metrics, data-informed program management, and cost effectiveness.