



OUR JOURNEY TO
Prevent Homelessness

Keep Oakland
HOUSED 
powered by 
Bay Area Community Services



Keeping Oakland Housed

— Since 2018 —

To All of Our Friends Who Wish to #KeepOaklandHoused

Since this effort started in 2018, we have had some tumultuous times together. There were already challenges that displaced many Oaklanders, resulting in The Town losing 30% of its Black population in a 17-year span. Then, with the COVID-19 pandemic, racial and economic inequities were further exacerbated and those at risk of homelessness became even more vulnerable. Luckily there was a safety net available to prevent Oakland's lowest income residents from losing their housing — Keep Oakland Housed.

Keep Oakland Housed was launched with the wisdom that **an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure**. The program recognizes that our community needs to stop homelessness before it starts — to **prevent** individuals and families from getting pushed out of their homes, to **prevent** people from having an eviction on their record, and to **prevent** the toll that homelessness takes on the people and communities experiencing it.

As you'll see in this report, Keep Oakland Housed has proven that **homelessness prevention works**. Keep Oakland Housed uses a simple and secure online platform to offer legal, financial and supportive services to residents most at risk of becoming unsheltered. An independent evaluation found that the program effectively reaches those most at risk, for a fraction of the cost of waiting until they are experiencing homelessness. The model continues to spread as other cities and counties replicate the program and join the movement to Keep People Housed.

Keep Oakland Housed was incubated at The San Francisco Foundation, with services led by three local non-profits: Bay Area Community Services, East Bay Community Law Center, and Catholic Charities of the East Bay. Today, Keep Oakland Housed has found its home in Oakland as a flagship program of Bay Area Community Services (BACS). BACS has deep roots in the community, providing housing and mental health services in Oakland since 1953. We are proud to continue this work and deeply grateful to everyone who supports and champions this effort.

In partnership,



Jamie Almanza,
CEO,
Bay Area Community Services



Logan McDonnell
Director,
Keep Oakland Housed

KEEP OAKLAND HOUSED NETWORK PARTNERS



Targeted Homelessness Prevention Works

The interrelated housing and homelessness crises in the Bay Area are driven by many underlying factors, including:

Decades of discriminatory practices across multiple systems



that have decimated wealth in Black and Brown communities and increased the likelihood of homelessness and extreme poverty

Severe shortage of housing, especially for extremely-low-income people



Dramatic rise in the cost to rent, purchase, or build new housing



Wage stagnation for low-wage workers and little to no increase to social security income for seniors and people with disabilities



Insufficient support for people with mental health conditions or addiction



Solving the homelessness crisis requires addressing the systemic causes of housing and economic insecurity. **Preventing homelessness** requires understanding who is most at risk of becoming homeless.

People are at greater risk of experiencing homelessness if they:

1. Have prior experience with homelessness or the criminal justice or child welfare system
2. Are from specific marginalized groups and zip codes that have historically been deprived of resources
3. Are currently experiencing a housing crisis, including eviction, foreclosure, rent increase, or inability to continue staying with family, friends, or roommates
4. Are experiencing a financial hardship caused by persistent low-income or an economic shock, including a job loss, medical bill, or other money issues

Bay Area Community Services (BACS) worked with community members and academic researchers to develop an evidence-based screening tool to identify and direct resources to people who are empirically most likely to become homeless. Some racial groups and neighborhoods experience homelessness at far greater rates and this tool allows the program to counteract disinvestment in these communities and concentrate resources on high-stress zip codes. BACS prioritizes people who are precariously housed, without a lease, and/or facing imminent homelessness. This model is known as **targeted homelessness prevention**.

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“To end homelessness, we need to focus on both increasing exits from homelessness, and decreasing entrances into homelessness. Targeted homelessness prevention has been shown to be key to reducing homelessness. Homelessness prevention programs that target those at high risk of homelessness have been shown to be a cost-effective strategy to decrease homelessness. We need to build this infrastructure in every community.”

— Margot Kushel MD, Professor of Medicine at UCSF, Director, UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative

Here are the Results

7,000+ households served since inception

\$67 million distributed in financial assistance

2,390 households received legal services

51% of households served identify as Black

26% of households served identify as Latinx

61% of clients served identify as women

52% of households have children

\$5,400–\$8,150 average cost per household

Only 8% of clients stated they had become unhoused when contacted by an independent evaluator for follow up

Keep Oakland Housed has been replicated in 5 jurisdictions, doubling the initial private investment from \$9m to \$18m and securing \$150.3m in public funds.

Our Clients are Working Hard to Make Ends Meet

Jasmine was already struggling to afford her apartment in Oakland in 2021 when she learned her landlord would be selling the building. She managed to find another apartment, but it was much further from public transit, making her commute to work longer and less reliable. Jasmine's employer was unwilling to accommodate for this and instead let her go. Jasmine quickly fell behind on rent.

By January 2022, Jasmine was pregnant and on the verge of losing her housing. She contacted Keep Oakland Housed, submitting an application through the Homelessness Prevention Platform (HPP). BACS determined that Jasmine was eligible for help based on the high probability that without assistance, she would lose her housing and be at risk of homelessness.

Keep Oakland Housed provided financial support to cover Jasmine's back rent and help her avoid eviction. Jasmine's case manager also helped her to enroll in unemployment. Shortly after, Jasmine gave birth to a healthy baby girl. With a stable roof over her head, and support from her baby's father, Jasmine is keeping up with her monthly rent and utilities while she focuses on finding a job and creating a healthy home for her daughter.

Jasmine (whose name we changed for privacy) grew up in the Bay Area and lived in Oakland for many years before we met her. Like many of our clients, Jasmine simply could not keep up with the high cost of rent. Thousands of Oakland families are facing the same challenge and Keep Oakland Housed is a critical resource when they have nowhere else to turn.



We Earned Federal Recognition and Funding

In 2020, Keep Oakland Housed was selected to distribute state and federal relief funds aimed at keeping low-income renters from losing their housing during the pandemic. To meet demand, Keep Oakland Housed quickly expanded to include additional nonprofit organizations located throughout Oakland's diverse neighborhoods, including the Fruitvale.

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“We received a call very early in the COVID-19 crisis, asking if we would like to join Keep Oakland Housed and distribute emergency financial assistance to clients of The Unity Council. We serve a community that is predominantly Black and Latino, heavily immigrant, and already struggling with poverty. Many of the people we serve live in crowded households and work multiple jobs, where they are considered essential, yet offered no paid sick time. As a result, our community experienced some of the highest rates of COVID-19 in the whole Bay Area and suffered tremendous financial hardship. Joining Keep Oakland Housed allowed us to distribute \$668,419 to 207 individuals and families in our community to keep them housed. It was helpful beyond measure.”

— Chris Iglesias, CEO, The Unity Council



Thanks to Our Donors and Partners

The San Francisco Foundation
 Kaiser Permanente
 Crankstart
 Tipping Point Community
 Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.
 All Home
 Amazon
 Gass Entertainment
 Kelson Foundation
 Loud Hound Foundation
 Oakland Athletics Community Fund
 Walter and Elise Haas Fund
 Wells Fargo Foundation
 And many generous individuals!

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We are pleased that Keep Oakland Housed has already prevented so many families from losing their housing. With continuing support, we’re confident that this model can help thousands more Oaklanders remain housed, and rooted in our community.”

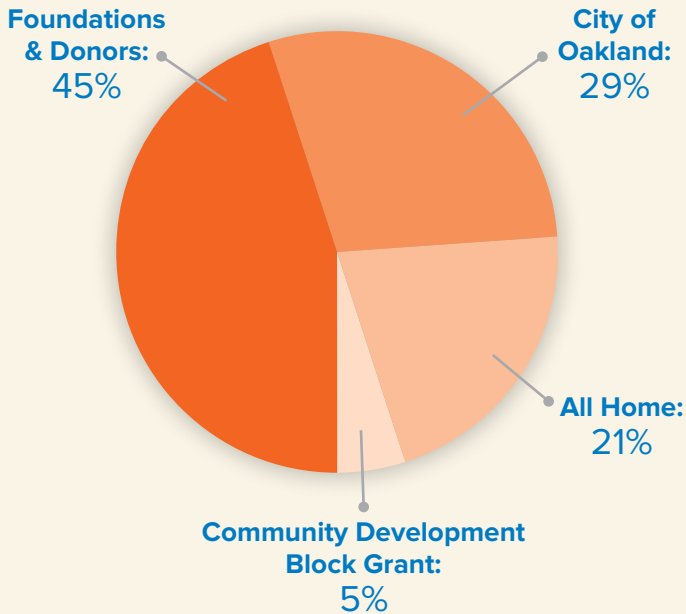
— Fred Blackwell, CEO, The San Francisco Foundation

In 2022, Keep Oakland Housed received the **Secretary’s Award** for Public-Philanthropic Partnerships from US Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge and the Council on Foundations. The award recognized Keep Oakland Housed for building an innovative partnership between donors, nonprofits and government agencies to address “the tremendous need that exists in communities in every corner of our society.”

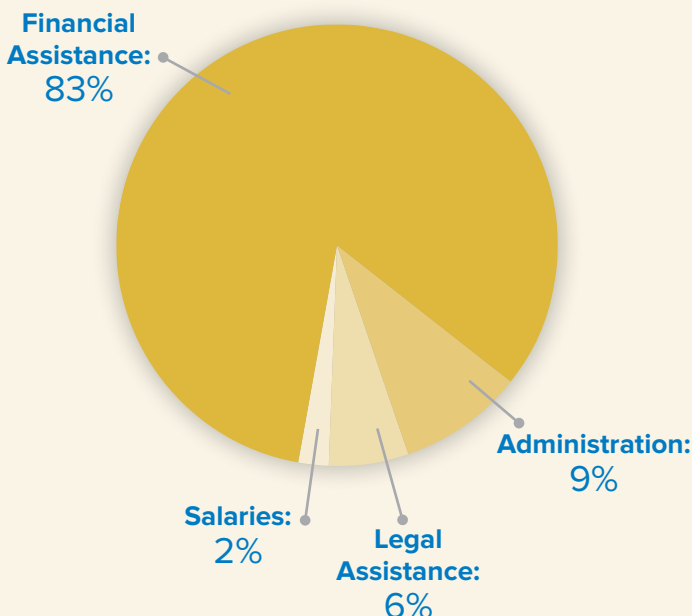


Financials

PUBLIC & PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP CURRENT REVENUE



KEEP OAKLAND HOUSED EXPENSES



Keep Oakland Housed launched in 2018 with a pool of private resources from Kaiser Permanente, Crankstart, and The San Francisco Foundation. In the first year, the program focused on preventing eviction and displacement, primarily serving low-income lease-holders.

We quickly learned that another group was even closer to entering street homelessness: people without a lease who were doubled-up, couch surfing, or living in other precarious situations. This group included people with prior experience with homelessness and those who had recently exited shelter or another housing program, moving into vehicles, or crowded, expensive, or short-term arrangements.

Keep Oakland Housed rapidly adapted to serve this group, offering fast, customized support to rehouse these households quickly. In the first twelve months, 305 households were diverted from homelessness, with just \$736,000 in assistance deployed toward move-in expenses, rent, grocery support, car repairs, and other flexible housing retention expenditures. **Interestingly, the average cost per household receiving financial assistance through this model was under \$3,000, less than half the average cost of serving lease-holders.**

While public funding helped Keep Oakland Housed scale quickly during the pandemic, private funding is what allows the program to adapt quickly to serve those most in need. Now in 2023, we have the strongest blend of public and private funding to date. We are using some of our private funding to add employment services and experiment with shallow subsidies — ongoing, modest rental assistance for extremely low-income households. As we prepare for a surge of requests for help, we require continued public and private investment to keep up with demand.

To support Keep Oakland Housed and the movement to prevent homelessness in the Bay Area, contact Logan McDonnell, Director of Keep Oakland Housed at lmcdonnell@bayareacs.org.

We Focus on the People Who Need Us Most

Behind the numbers are the stories of each client we serve. We fondly remember Keep Oakland Housed client, Mr. H., who passed away in 2022. Mr. H. was a disabled senior with a passion for collecting metal antiques. He was introduced to Keep Oakland Housed for assistance when his landlord tried to evict him from subsidized housing for an alleged failure to prepare his unit for pest control treatment. Attorneys at East Bay Community Law Center worked with Adult Protective Services to successfully clean and prepare his apartment for treatment, but his landlord proceeded with the eviction anyway.

Legally blind and 91 years-old, Mr. H. was unable to read and understand the unlawful detainer and did not respond in time. Thankfully, our attorneys were able to successfully litigate the case and prevent the eviction. They took further steps to protect his rights by filing a disability discrimination case with HUD. Because of Keep Oakland Housed, Mr. H. was able to live with dignity, knowing he had the right to remain in his home, until he passed away in January 2022.

Thank you, East Bay Community Law Center.





Keep People Housed and Our Homelessness Prevention Platform

Keep Oakland Housed started with a big vision (prevent homelessness) and tangible goals (an average of 1,700+ households per year while we learned what worked). After almost five years, we know what works. Our dream has stayed the same, but the goal has gotten bigger.

Looking forward, Keep Oakland Housed will continue to expand. We call this growing movement **Keep People Housed**.

With enough funding, we could prevent homelessness at a scale that meets the growing need, effectively stopping the inflow into our already overwhelmed homelessness response system. As 49% of those experiencing homelessness in 2022 reported during the county's official point-in-time count, rental assistance would have stopped their descent into homelessness, which is exactly the kind of flexible services Keep Oakland Housed provides.

At the onset of the pandemic in 2020, BACS developed an innovative web-based application portal and workflow management platform, the Homelessness Prevention Platform (HPP), which in partnership with All Home, has scaled up and out to serve six total different jurisdictions, expeditiously disbursing over **\$100 million dollars** of assistance and supportive services directly into our communities' hands. To date, over 35 nonprofits across Oakland/Alameda County, San Francisco City and County, and Napa County have utilized this tool to serve over 11,000 households with efficient, low barrier, and equity-focused services to prevent homelessness.

We are proud to be part of a learning community that continues to experiment, innovate, and push for equitable, scalable solutions to the region's homelessness crisis, and we will continue to work with the local, state, and federal government to make sustainable, systemic change to **keep people housed**.

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“As we witness the number of unhoused residents in our communities grow, interventions that help prevent people from becoming homeless are essential. That's why I'm a big supporter of Keep Oakland Housed. I've worked in the Legislature on new laws and budget actions to help struggling renters and expand the success of Keep Oakland Housed to communities around the state. Now, as we emerge from the pandemic, it's imperative that Keep Oakland Housed, and programs like it, continue to successfully help people stay housed.”

— State Senator Nancy Skinner, chair of the Senate Budget Committee



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