



Housing for the Harvest – Program Overview

On July 24, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom announced the launch of the Housing for the Harvest program. The program is designed to provide temporary hotel housing options for essential farm and food processing employees who are either COVID-19 positive or exposed, who do not require hospitalization, to have safe and suitable places to isolate and are unable to do so at home.

Background:

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, agricultural workers have played an essential role in ensuring the continuity of our food supply. As cases of community-wide transmission COVID-19 increase, some farm workers and food processing employees who are either COVID-19 positive or are exposed are finding it difficult to self-isolate due to their housing situation.

Housing for the Harvest is a state framework for temporary, emergency non-congregate shelter for essential employees in the food and agriculture sector. The state will secure hotel rooms in participating counties and will partner with local governments to identify local administrators who will provide additional sheltering support, such as meals, wellness checks and additional services.

The program will provide opt-in housing support in counties or regions that are interested and have eligible farm and food processing populations who are unable to reasonably self-isolate in their current housing setting. The initial efforts will focus on the Central Valley, Central Coast, and Imperial County regions—the regions with the highest number of agricultural workers—and will be expanded as other counties or regions with these populations opt-in.

Program Overview

How does the program work?

The state will contract with hotels to secure local hotel rooms. Local administrators will serve as the primary point of contact with food and agriculture workers in need of isolation housing; coordinate with the state to book

rooms; provide or coordinate wrap-around services at the hotel site including transportation, meals and wellness checks; and collect data required for federal FEMA reimbursement. The Local administrators will be identified in coordination with State government and may be a county or city agency, Tribe, non-profit organization, or a philanthropic organization working in collaboration with county and State government.

Who qualifies?

Program Eligibility (participants must meet all criteria):

- Work in California food processing or agriculture
- Meet [FEMA non-congregate sheltering criteria](#) for COVID-19:
 - Have tested positive; or
 - Been exposed as documented by a state or local public health official, or medical health professional)
- Be unable to self-isolate or quarantine at home

Program Details:

- For the purposes of this program, agricultural workers are defined as employees in occupations or industries as defined by Industrial Welfare Commission wage orders 3, 8, 13, and 14 ([Canning, Freezing and Preserving Industry](#); [Industries Handling Products after Harvest](#); [Industries Preparing Agricultural Products for Market, on the Farm](#); and [Agricultural Occupations](#)) or similar industries and occupations.
- This program will provide state funding for temporary housing (up to 14-days) for recovery isolation or quarantine.

State Support Includes:

- Hotel Rooms: The state Department of General Services (DGS) will execute the hotel sourcing contracts and utilize existing travel agency vendors to reserve rooms for eligible participants, similar to the model established for the Hotels for Healthcare Workers Program. The local administrator (role described below) will work with DGS to book rooms and is responsible for verifying eligibility prior to making the reservations. California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) will collect and retain eligibility documentation from the local administrator.
- Outreach: State agencies will inform employers and agricultural and food processing worker groups about the availability of this resource.
- Technical Assistance: California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), California Department of Social Services (DSS) and the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) will provide technical assistance to local administrators and other local partners in providing COVID-19 response non-congregate shelter.

Local administrators:

- Local administrators will be identified in coordination with State government and may be a county or city agency, Tribe, non-profit organization, or a philanthropic organization working in collaboration with county and State government.
- Local administrators will be responsible for the following:
 - Conducting outreach to agricultural and food processing workers and employers on the availability of NCS during the public health emergency;
 - Providing a hotline to secure a room;
 - Serving as a liaison between farmworkers eligible for a hotel room and DGS who will make lodging reservations;
 - Providing wrap around services at the hotel site, including transportation, meals and wellness checks;
 - Collecting data required for FEMA reimbursement; and
 - Providing language access for the program's services.
- While it is not required, Counties are encouraged to partner with non-profit organizations to serve as local administrators and to partner with philanthropy to support this work.
- County partners may include County Administrative Offices, County Public Health Officers, County Agricultural Commissioners, and County Offices of Emergency Services, depending on regional need, structures and partnerships.

Funding and Program Costs:

California has received Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) approval for non-congregate sheltering during the public health crisis. The State will seek federal reimbursement for its hotel costs associated with this program at a 75% federal cost share.

Local administrator costs for transportation, meals, wellness checks and any additional services would be identified at the county level. It is anticipated that philanthropy may cover a portion or all of the costs. Some costs may be eligible for FEMA reimbursement by the county.

Contact Information:

For more information, or if your county or region would like to participate, please contact:

cdfa.emergency_response@cdfa.ca.gov