



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MEETING DATE: November 22, 2024

HCR24-085

SUBJECT: Approval of the Contract between the San Diego Housing Commission and INFO LINE SAN DIEGO dba 2-1-1 San Diego to operate the HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO Hotline

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Homeless Housing Innovations

CONTACT/PHONE NUMBER: Casey Snell, 619-578-7691

REQUESTED ACTION:

Approve an agreement with INFO LINE SAN DIEGO, dba 2-1-1 San Diego, to operate the San Diego Housing Commission's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline for an initial seven-month term from December 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, with three one-year options to renew.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF KEY FACTORS:

- The Housing Commission has contracted with 2-1-1 since 2017 to operate the Housing Commission's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline. Hotline staff conduct a screening with callers to determine eligibility for HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs, which assist households at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
- Eligible callers are referred to the Housing Commission for services. Callers who are ineligible for HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs are referred to other services in the community as appropriate. 2-1-1 is the region's source for information and connections to resources. It maintains a database of more than 6,000 services; is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; and helps in more than 200 languages. 2-1-1 maintains a comprehensive database of resources tailored to meet the individual needs of each caller.
- Since initially contracting with 2-1-1 in 2017, the HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs have expanded and awareness of the hotline has increased, leading to a significant increase in the volume of calls over time. In 2017, the contract for the Housing Commission's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline included responding to an average of 700 calls per month over the term of the contract. The call volume has more than doubled since 2017. As of 2024, hotline staff respond to an average of 1,800 calls per month during the contract term.
- Benefits of centralizing inquiries with this hotline include 2-1-1 staff assigned to the HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline. Callers are able to talk with staff specifically trained to assist those experiencing a housing crisis, at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness and well-versed in HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs. When callers contact the hotline, they are screened for initial eligibility for HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs and, when appropriate, are referred directly to Housing Commission staff to determine final eligibility.
- In addition, HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline staff make referrals to other community programs based on the caller's needs. If callers are not eligible for HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs, they are provided with tailored referrals to agencies that can directly meet their needs.
- The current contract between the Housing Commission and 2-1-1 expired October 31, 2024, with the option for a 90-day extension, which the Housing Commission exercised to continue operations until a new contract is executed. The maximum annual compensation under this contract is \$242,500.
- The new agreement includes an increase of \$61,000 for the new annual contract amount to support the increases in compensation and volume of calls over recent years.



REPORT

DATE ISSUED: November 15, 2024

REPORT NO: HCR24-085

ATTENTION: Chair and Members of the San Diego Housing Commission Board of Commissioners
For the Agenda of November 22, 2024

SUBJECT: Approval of the Contract between the San Diego Housing Commission and INFO
LINE SAN DIEGO dba 2-1-1 San Diego to operate the HOUSING FIRST – SAN
DIEGO Hotline

COUNCIL DISTRICT: Citywide

REQUESTED ACTION

Approve an agreement with INFO LINE SAN DIEGO, dba 2-1-1 San Diego, to operate the San Diego Housing Commission's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline for an initial seven-month term from December 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, with three one-year options to renew.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

That the San Diego Housing Commission (Housing Commission) Board of Commissioners (Board) take the following actions:

- 1) Authorize the Housing Commission to enter into an agreement with INFO LINE SAN DIEGO, dba 2-1-1 San Diego (2-1-1), to operate the Housing Commission's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline for an initial seven-month term from December 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, in an amount not to exceed \$177,042.25 with three one-year options to renew in the amount of \$303,501 per year.
- 2) Authorize the Housing Commission's President and Chief Executive Officer (President and CEO), or designee, to execute all documents and instruments that are necessary and/or appropriate to implement these approvals, in a form and format approved by General Counsel, and to take such actions necessary and/or appropriate to implement these approvals, provided that a copy of the documents, signed as to form by General Counsel, is submitted to each Housing Commissioner.
- 3) Authorize the President and CEO, or designee, to substitute funding sources and/or increase compensation by not more than 20 percent of the total agreement amount for the proposed agreement, if necessary, without further action by the Housing Commission Board or the Housing Authority of the City of San Diego, but only if and to the extent that funds are determined to be available for such purposes.

SUMMARY

The Housing Commission has contracted with 2-1-1 since 2017 to operate the Housing Commission's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline. Hotline staff conduct a screening with callers to determine eligibility for HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs, which assist households at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Eligible callers are referred to the Housing Commission for services.

Callers who are ineligible for HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs are referred to other services in the community as appropriate.

2-1-1 is the region's source for information and connections to resources. It maintains a database of more than 6,000 services; is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year; and helps in more than 200 languages. 2-1-1 maintains a comprehensive database of resources tailored to meet the individual needs of each caller.

Since initially contracting with 2-1-1 in 2017, the HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs have expanded and awareness of the hotline has increased, leading to a significant increase in the volume of calls over time. In 2017, the contract for the Housing Commission's HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline included responding to an average of 700 calls per month over the term of the contract. The call volume has more than doubled since 2017. As of 2024, hotline staff respond to an average of 1,800 calls per month during the contract term.

Benefits of centralizing inquiries with this hotline include 2-1-1 staff assigned to the HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline. Callers are able to talk with staff specifically trained to assist those experiencing a housing crisis, at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness and well-versed in HOUSING FIRST SAN DIEGO programs. When callers contact the hotline, they are screened for initial eligibility for HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs and, when appropriate, are referred directly to Housing Commission staff to determine final eligibility. In addition, HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline staff make referrals to other community programs based on the caller's needs. If callers are not eligible for HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO programs, they are provided with tailored referrals to agencies that can directly meet their needs.

For Fiscal Year 2023, the contract between the Housing Commission and 2-1-1 was for a total of \$237,500. For Fiscal Year 2024, the contract was increased by \$5,000 to reflect cost-of-living increases for 2-1-1 staff. The current contract between the Housing Commission and 2-1-1 expired October 31, 2024, with the option for a 90-day extension, which the Housing Commission exercised to continue operations until a new contract is executed. The maximum annual compensation under this contract is \$242,500. The total award is negotiated each year; however, Fiscal Year 2025 is the first time the increase has exceeded \$250,000 which requires Housing Commission Board approval. The new agreement includes an increase of \$61,000 for the new annual contract amount to support the increases in compensation and volume of calls over recent years. The main elements of the scope of work include:

- Provide a live answer for 24 hours each day for 365 days per year. The Contractor's staff will answer the line Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Additional support from the Contractor's community connectors will provide live answers after hours.
- Respond to inbound calls (1,800 monthly), make outbound calls and gather required information from callers.
- Complete Housing Commissions HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO program screening tools and provide accurate responses tailored to the individual needs of the caller and Housing Commission requirements.
- When appropriate, utilize diversion techniques to connect callers to the most appropriate resources based on their immediate need.
- Collect data outlined on landlord interest forms.
- Provide qualified and trained personnel in sufficient quantities to perform the scope of work, including agents, project management and support staff.

- Assure callers are satisfied with quality of service by monitoring each telephone representative’s performance for quality assurance and appropriate coaching.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS

Approving this action will authorize the Housing Commission to expend \$177,042.25 for an initial seven-month term in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 and \$303,501 per year for each option year.

FUNDING SOURCE	FUNDING BY USE	Fiscal Year	Contract Amount
SDHC Local	Operator Agreement	2025 (pro-rated)	\$177,042.25
SDHC Local	Operator Agreement	2026	\$303,501
SDHC Local	Operator Agreement	2027	\$303,501
SDHC Local	Operator Agreement	2028	\$303,501

HOUSING COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN

This item relates to Strategic Priority Area No. 4 in the Housing Commission’s Strategic plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2024: Advancing Homelessness Solutions – Supporting the City of San Diego Community Action Plan on Homelessness. The Housing Commission is in the process of developing a new Strategic Plan.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CONTRACTING AND EQUITY ASSURANCE

2-1-1 provided their 2024 Comprehensive Diversity Equity & Inclusion Policy that demonstrates a proactive commitment and dedication to ensuring equitable opportunities for all, creating a workplace and community environment that honors and celebrates diversity and inclusion and fosters an inclusive culture.

AD HOC COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS AMONG BLACK SAN DIEGANS ACTION PLAN

The Housing Commission supports and is committed to applying the action items identified in the regional Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness Among Black San Diegans’ (Ad Hoc Committee) Action Plan. The staff-recommended actions proposed for Housing Commission Board consideration in this report relate to Ad Hoc Committee Action Item No. 6, Transform the Crisis Response System.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMPACT

2-1-1’s continued operation of the HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline, including the increased call volume, will assist households with low income and experiencing a housing crisis to access Housing Commission programs and resources through other community services. The HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline is used to screen eligible households for the Housing Commission’s Prevention & Diversion program and the City of San Diego’s Housing Instability Prevention Program, which the Housing Commission operates. Housing Commission programs accessible via the HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline assist households experiencing a housing crisis and at imminent risk of becoming homeless, as well as households currently experiencing homelessness. The hotline also provides options for landlords to notify the Housing Commission of available units and opportunities for collaboration to assist program participants.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS and PROJECTED IMPACTS

Stakeholders include households in the City of San Diego with low income and experiencing a housing crisis, landlords and property owners for those households, 2-1-1 and the Housing Commission. The HOUSING FIRST – SAN DIEGO hotline will continue to have a positive impact on the community by

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helping eligible households at risk of homelessness or newly experiencing homelessness to resolve their housing crisis and refer them to appropriate resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The agreement between the Housing Commission and INFO LINE SAN DIEGO is not a project as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 21065 and State CEQA Guidelines Section 15378(b)(5), as it is an administrative activity of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment. The determination that this activity is not subject to CEQA, pursuant to Section 15060(c)(3), is not appealable and a Notice of Right to Appeal the Environmental Determination (NORA) is not required.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by,



Casey Snell
Senior Vice President, Homelessness Housing
Innovations
San Diego Housing Commission



Jeff Davis
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
San Diego Housing Commission

Hard copies are available for review during business hours at the information desk in the main lobby of the San Diego Housing Commission offices at 1122 Broadway, San Diego, CA 92101. Docket materials are available in the "Governance & Legislative Affairs" section of the San Diego Housing Commission website at www.sdhc.org