



Recommendation for Action

File #: 20-2564, **Agenda Item #:** 51.

7/29/2020

Posting Language

Approve ratification of an agreement with Front Steps to provide staffing for Protective Lodges for people experiencing homelessness who have serious underlying health conditions increasing their risk of complications and hospitalization if they contract COVID-19, in an amount not to exceed \$904,673 for the six month term ending December 31, 2020.

Lead Department

Austin Public Health.

Fiscal Note

Funding in the amount of \$904,673 is included in the COVID-19 Spending Framework (Resolution No. 20200604-040).

Prior Council Action:

June 4, 2020 - Council approved Resolution No. 20200604-040 to adopt a spending framework for Shelters & Quarantine Facilities, which include emergency housing, supportive housing, and isolation facilities for individuals who do not have the ability to self-isolate during the COVID-19 pandemic and supportive services in the amount of \$14.5 million, on a unanimous vote.

For More Information:

Stephanie Hayden, Director, 512-972-5010; Vella Karman, Interim Homeless Services Officer, 512-972-5064; Lucy Thompson, Agenda Coordinator, 512-972-5045.

Additional Backup Information:

Approval of this item will authorize Austin Public Health to continue an agreement with Front Steps to provide staffing for the continuation of Protective Lodging for people experiencing homelessness who have serious underlying health conditions placing them at greater risk of severely negative outcomes and hospitalization should they contract COVID-19. Protective Lodging, also referred to as ProLodges, have been activated through the Austin/Travis County Emergency Operations Center as an emergency response to COVID-19 and are an important component of the infection control strategy to prevent and mitigate spread of COVID-19.

The priority population for this project is persons receiving temporary emergency shelter in a ProLodge operated by the City of Austin during the emergency response to COVID-19. Persons receiving temporary emergency shelter in a ProLodge are those experiencing homelessness who have been identified as high risk for severe complications and hospitalization if they are exposed to or contract COVID-19.

Services provided through a ProLodge include a private room to safely isolate from exposure to COVID-19, daily symptom checks, meals, laundry services, access to mental/behavioral health services, connection to medical care as needed, and assistance connecting to case management and community resources to move to permanent housing upon discharge from a ProLodge.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (also known as the CDC), "community coalitions should identify resources to support people sleeping outside as well as additional temporary housing, including

sites with individual rooms that are able to provide appropriate services, supplies, and staffing. These sites should include:

- Overflow sites to accommodate shelter decompression and higher shelter demands
- Isolation sites for people who are confirmed to be positive for COVID-19 by laboratory testing
- Quarantine sites for people who are awaiting testing, awaiting test results, or who were exposed to COVID-19
- Protective housing for people [who are at highest risk for severe illness from COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html)
<<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>>

Depending on resources and staff availability, housing options that have individual rooms (such as hotels/motels) and separate bathrooms should be considered for the overflow, quarantine, and protective housing sites. In addition, plan for how to connect clients to housing opportunities after they have completed their stay in these temporary sites.”

Strategic Outcome(s):

Health and Environment.