



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONTROL (SAPC)



PROJECT ROOMKEY FACT SHEET

What is Project Roomkey?

In April 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom launched Project Roomkey, a statewide initiative aimed to provide 15,000 hotel/motel placements for thousands of people experiencing homelessness (PEH). This initiative is designed to offer more emergency safety measures to protect public health by offering a temporary housing solution for PEH who are medically vulnerable (regardless of immigration status), and to ease shelter populations for social distancing guidelines and slow the spread of COVID-19.

Project Roomkey targets counties with the highest rate of homelessness that are also experiencing high incidence and prevalence of COVID-19 cases. The selected hotels/motels participating in this initiative are also providing essential wraparound services, such as case management, meal support, laundry, 24-hour security, and support staff.

Purpose of Project Roomkey Statewide

As stated in the Governor’s press release, Project Roomkey provides safe options for PEH in response to COVID-19 to:

- Prioritize PEH who are asymptomatic, but at high risk, such as people over 65 or who have certain underlying health conditions, and move them into hotel/motel units where they can more safely self-isolate;
- Provide isolation for PEH who have been exposed to COVID-19 (as documented by a state or local public health official, or medical health professional) who do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine; and
- Provide isolation for PEH who are COVID-19 positive, but who do not need hospitalization. Without these isolation units would return to a congregate shelter setting or encampment – which would further spread COVID-19.

Project Roomkey in Los Angeles County

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) is the lead agency for Los Angeles County. In Los Angeles County, Project Roomkey will only focus on individuals who are asymptomatic and 65 years of age or older, or who have underlying medical conditions, or are medically compromised as other initiatives serve those who have been exposed to or diagnosed as COVID-19 positive. Each Project Roomkey site is operated by a different homeless service provider. To date, LAHSA has secured approximately 2579 rooms in 26 hotels and motels throughout Los Angeles County and over 1,800 PEH have been placed in Project Roomkey rooms. The locations are confidential, and referrals are required. For more information on Project Roomkey referrals and participant eligibility, please review LAHSA’s frequently asked questions (FAQs) attached.

Resources and Additional Information

Statewide Press Release: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2020/04/03/at-newly-converted-motel-governor-newsom-launches-project-roomkey-a-first-in-the-nation-initiative-to-secure-hotel-motel-rooms-to-protect-homeless-individuals-from-covid-19/>

California Covid-19 Response: <https://covid19.ca.gov/>

Los Angeles County Project Roomkey FAQs: <https://www.lahsa.org/documents?id=4372-project-roomkey-frequently-asked-questions.pdf>

Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority: <https://www.lahsa.org>

For more information, please contact the following SAPC staff: Jennifer Bell, at jbelle@ph.lacounty.gov, (626) 293-2865 or Linda Hamill at LHamill@ph.lacounty.gov, (626) 293-2849.



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PROJECT ROOMKEY AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER



Substance Use Disorder Treatment Services for Project Roomkey Participants

Project Roomkey participants with substance use disorders (SUDs) will be connected to SUD treatment services through the Client Engagement and Navigation Services (CENS). CENS counselors will support all Project Roomkey sites during regular business hours. Most CENS services will be provided at the Project Roomkey sites as participants have limited access to telephones and computers. When available, CENS counselors can provide CENS services via telehealth or telephone. Project Roomkey participants will be asked about substance use at the time of Project Roomkey enrollment.

The homeless service provider operating the Project Roomkey site will refer participants to the CENS for harm reduction services, SUD screening and referrals to SUD treatment services, syringe exchange programs (SEP) and medications for addiction treatment (MAT). The homeless service provider will also coordinate transportation for the PEH to SUD services. CENS counselors will report SUD treatment program status back to the referring homeless service provider staff only if it effects onsite Project Roomkey operations. The reporting mechanism will be determined by the referring individual and the CENS counselor.

Approximately 50 percent of Project Roomkey participants have case managers, which creates continuity of care issues. Not all participants have completed the Coordinated Entry System (CES) survey packet at Project Roomkey intake and enrollment. The onsite case managers are primarily focused on meeting the basic needs of participants. Project Roomkey participants cannot use substances onsite but may use off site and return to their rooms, as long as their behavior is not disruptive.

Approximate co-location projections per SPA are as follows and are subject to change at any time:

SPA 1	1 hotel	94 rooms	SPA 5	2 hotels	183 rooms
SPA 2	5 hotels	468 rooms	SPA 6	1 hotel	69 rooms
SPA 3	5 hotels	420 rooms	SPA 7	2 hotels	260 rooms
SPA 4	6 hotels	693 rooms	SPA 8	4 hotels	392 rooms

Guidance and direction on integrating Project Roomkey within CENS operations are still underway. CENS providers will be updated as soon as more information is available.

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