

Measure GS Committee Staff Update Memorandum:

Santa Monica Renter Aid (SMRA) Launch

Homelessness Prevention & Intervention Division

Date submitted: 6/29/2006

Program Overview

The Santa Monica Renter Aid program provides short-term financial assistance and housing case management services to Santa Monica renters who are at risk of losing their housing to keep individuals and families safely housed and out of homelessness.

Program launch is anticipated for summer 2026. Based on available funding and anticipated assistance amounts, SMRA is expected to provide direct financial assistance to approximately **150 households during its first year of operation.**

Staff anticipate that demand for SMRA will exceed available program resources. As a result, not all eligible applicants will be selected for assistance. Applicants who are not enrolled will be provided information and referrals to other local, regional, and community-based resources that may support their housing stability and help address their immediate needs. SMRA is one component of the City's broader homelessness prevention continuum (shown in the figure below), which includes Right to Counsel legal services, case management programs, and regional homelessness prevention resources.



Eligibility & Prioritization

Applicants must reside in Santa Monica, have income at or below 120% Area Median Income (AMI), and be experiencing a housing crisis that places them at risk of housing loss or homelessness.

Because demand is expected to exceed available funding, eligible applications will be prioritized using a standardized assessment tool designed to identify households at greatest risk of homelessness. Factors considered include income, eviction risk, senior status, disability status, families with minor children, prior experiences of homelessness, involvement with foster care systems, impacts related to federal immigration enforcement, and other indicators of housing vulnerability.

Applicant responses generate a prioritization score that informs the order in which applications are reviewed. Program staff then assess whether available SMRA assistance is likely to resolve the household's immediate housing crisis and support ongoing housing stability. Meeting eligibility requirements or receiving a high prioritization score does not guarantee enrollment.

All applications will be reviewed through this standardized process.

Applying for Assistance

Residents may apply directly through the SMRA online application portal or have a community partner complete an application on their behalf. To improve accessibility, TPC will offer multilingual in-person application support hours at Virginia Avenue Park and the Main Library in partnership with the Library's Tech & Task program. These sessions will assist residents with completing applications, uploading documentation, and accessing available resources.

Outreach & Promotion

The City and TPC are conducting outreach through community-based organizations, service providers, neighborhood networks, and City communication channels. Staff have presented or are scheduled to present information about SMRA to the Disabilities Commission, the Housing & Human Services Commission, Familias Latinas Unidas, the Santa Monica Black Community Group and the Measure GS Committee.

Staff welcome additional feedback and recommendations regarding outreach strategies, community forums, and opportunities to connect eligible residents to the program.