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San Antonio/Bexar County Community Partners Surpass their Housing Surge Goal to Rehouse 500 Households Experiencing Homelessness

SAN ANTONIO (December 13, 2021) – The South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless (SARAH) and the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services are proud to announce that our community has surpassed its housing surge goal to rehouse 500 households experiencing homelessness in San Antonio/Bexar County from August 1 to December 31, 2021. As of today, housing surge partners have reported 538 permanent housing placements.

This successful concentrated effort to house a large number of people in a short time frame highlights our community's ability to leverage federal funding and work together toward solutions to the issues of homelessness and housing instability. We expedited the housing process by streamlining procedures and addressing common delays in rehousing, resulting in lasting positive change. Among the improvements are increased landlord engagement, a streamlined ID recovery process, new data quality standards, and resources to help caseworkers find units for clients with high barriers to housing.

"I want to praise the efforts of our twenty-five local nonprofit organizations and partner agencies for accomplishing a truly remarkable goal," says San Antonio Mayor Ron Nirenberg. "Through this effort, our partners demonstrated their passion, commitment, and ability to re-house our most vulnerable residents. This achievement represents an important milestone in our goal to re-house 1,500 households as part of the national House America initiative."

In November, the City of San Antonio joined the [House America](#) initiative, partnering with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) in a national effort to respond to the crisis of homelessness. Our community has set the ambitious goal of re-housing 1500 households from homelessness and adding 860 units to the development pipeline for people exiting homelessness from October 1, 2021, to December 31, 2022. We believe the efficiencies and momentum resulting from our local housing surge have prepared us to take on this House America Pledge.

Although we have seen immense progress in less than five months, plenty of work lies ahead. We identified gaps resulting from the housing surge, like the need for tailored housing solutions for large families, people with disabilities, and sustainable options for those on limited incomes. We will continue collaborating with our partners to address these gaps and further improve our homeless response system.

“Our homeless service providers are incredible,” says Katie Vela, Executive Director of SARAH. “We are grateful for their unmatched commitment, compassion, and grit in helping our most vulnerable neighbors during another challenging year--but they need our support. We must expand housing availability, including permanent supportive housing, to meet the present and future needs of our residents experiencing homelessness. We hope our community closely monitors the housing bond and other opportunities to fund affordable housing development.”

Thank you again to the official housing surge partners, their employees, and community advocates for making this initiative a success: SARAH, City of San Antonio Department of Human Services, Bexar County Economic & Community Development, Housing Authority of Bexar County, San Antonio Housing Authority, Haven for Hope, SAMMinistries, Centro San Antonio, Endeavors, American GI-Forum NVOP, Roy Maas Youth Alternatives, San Antonio AIDS Foundation, Thrive Youth Center, The Salvation Army, The Center for Health Care Services, Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Charities, Christian Assistance Ministry, SA Hope Center, BEAT AIDS, Housing First Community Coalition, The Strong Foundation, My City is My Home, The University of Texas at San Antonio, Corazón San Antonio, and ICF International.

To learn more about the joint housing surge initiative, contact Billy Mahone, Director of Community Engagement of SARAH, at billymahone@sarahhomeless.org. To stay abreast of the latest news across the Continuum of Care, [subscribe to SARAH's newsletter here](#).

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About SARAH

The South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless (SARAH) is the lead Continuum of Care (CoC) agency for San Antonio and Bexar County. As the CoC, SARAH secures and distributes funding for direct service providers in the housing and homeless community and provides guidance to strengthen policies and programs. SARAH is responsible for collaborating with, listening to, and collecting data from our partner network to ensure everyone has a place to call home. For more information, visit sarahhomeless.org.