



GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM

Governor Newsom Increasing Oversight of Homelessness Funds

Governor Newsom has taken strong action against cities and counties that fail to build more housing. **This summer, the Governor finalized his plan to increase enforcement and oversight to hold cities and counties accountable** when they fail to adequately address homelessness.

WHY THIS MATTERS: Lack of affordable housing, quality mental health and addiction services, and homelessness are all part of the same problem. Much of the responsibility and money to address these problems falls on local jurisdictions. New accountability and more enforcement are needed to ensure our laws work and taxpayer dollars are spent effectively.

NEW UNIT FOR ACCOUNTABILITY: Governor Newsom has expanded California's Housing Accountability Unit to increase its oversight to include more aggressive enforcement of existing housing laws to address homelessness, doubling down on an aggressive strategy to build more homes and get more people into housing. As part of the budget process, Governor Newsom finalized statutory changes to move personnel and functions into this expanded unit within the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) — to bolster their capacity.

MORE OVERSIGHT: The state will monitor how cities and counties use state homeless funds — ensuring taxpayer dollars are used according to grant terms to produce real, measurable results. And when they aren't, the state can provide technical assistance and pursue consequences.

ENFORCING THE LAW: The increased oversight will help verify that local governments are following state law to combat homelessness, including Housing First, meeting commitments in their Housing Elements, and following state law around Fair Housing and the Housing Accountability Act.

PLANNING FOR MORE HOUSING: The Governor will also work with the Legislature this year to include homelessness in the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process, requiring local jurisdictions to meaningfully account for the needs of the homeless populations in planning their fair share of housing.

A MODEL THAT WORKS: Since its inception, the Housing Accountability Unit has worked with, cajoled, and forced local governments to plan for thousands of additional units in their communities. The unit has taken over 500 accountability actions, including filing multiple lawsuits. These efforts, including efforts to implement the Surplus Lands Act, resulted in the development of at least 7,500 units that otherwise would not have been built. The state is now implementing a similar approach to produce real results in the fight against homelessness.

“Many California cities and counties have worked tirelessly on ending homelessness. Many have not. We want real accountability at all levels, so taxpayers see measurable results.”

— GOVERNOR NEWSOM



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