

CREDO-47 Step Down Housing

Step Down Housing (SDH) offers supportive housing for up to 20 individuals (4 female and 16 male) with mental health and/or substance use disorders, who are also justice impacted and experiencing homelessness. Following stabilization, individuals are “stepped down” from higher level of care settings, such as residential treatment, to one of four substance-free homes where they can reside for six to twelve months to facilitate reentry in the Santa Barbara community.

Individuals living at SDH receive case management, medical and behavioral health support, weekly support groups, life skills education (e.g., financial literacy, managing personal property), and housing support (e.g., securing housing vouchers, locating long-term housing) as appropriate. Food and limited transportation provided. Housing staff include four live-in housing assistants (one per house), one life skills case manager, one program manager, and one behavioral health case manager, all of whom are trained in trauma-informed approaches to client engagement.

SDH uses a multi-agency and client-centered approach to achieve health and wellness, with the goal of transitioning clients into permanent independent housing. Program partners include Good Samaritan Shelter, Family Service Agency, SBC Behavioral Wellness, and SBC Public Defender.

Client Expectations

- Meet with SDH staff for case management twice weekly to achieve short and long-term goals
- Attend ongoing outpatient mental health and/or substance use treatment during residency
- Participate in daily household chores and weekly house meetings to promote healthy communal living environment, personal independence, and well-being for all residents
- Take medications as prescribed
- Participate in random urinalysis drug screening and breathalyzer testing to promote recovery goals

Eligibility Criteria

- SB county resident eligible for SB County Medi-Cal/Medi-Care
- Willing to sign Universal ROI with program partners (i.e. Good Sam, FSA, BWell, PD)
- Criminal conviction and/or has an open case, in a diversion program, on probation/parole
- Completed Mental Health and/or Substance Use Disorder assessment and is participating in services
- Homeless (verified & if possible documented)
- Eligible for Good Samaritan programs
- No arson conviction, no 290 registration; violent charges/convictions will be reviewed on case-by-case basis

Admission Process

- The referral timeline is unique to each individual. New referrals are reviewed weekly by Step Down Housing team to ensure all eligibility criteria are met
- Behavioral Health and/or Substance Use verification
 - Step-Down Housing Referral Form
 - Release of following documents from Behavioral Wellness: *most recent Compressive Assessment and/or assessment update, medication record, health history questionnaire*
 - *Treatment provider updates*
- Collaboration with Public Defender’s Office to verify justice involvement and support legal requirements

For more information or to begin the application process, please contact Julia Lara with the Public Defender’s Office at julara@publicdefendersb.org. Thank you for considering Step Down Housing!