



Close to Home exists to ensure everyone has a place to call home in San Antonio & Bexar County.

Critical Need in our Community and Population to Be Served by the Project:

Homelessness continues to rise as families face mounting economic pressures, including inflation, rising utility costs, stagnant wages, and a severe shortage of affordable housing. Many households are now one emergency away from losing their homes. These challenges intensify during the summer months, when schools close, childcare expenses increase, and utility bills surge in the Texas heat. Close To Home's Diversion Program was launched in 2020 in response to COVID-19 social distancing measures to help prevent an overwhelming influx of families into shelters. By providing flexible, immediate financial assistance, the program helped families identify safe alternatives to shelter entry during a time of crisis. Since then, Diversion has become a critical tool in preventing homelessness, helping individuals and families remain safely housed while reducing strain on emergency shelters and the broader homeless response system. Despite its success, funding is consistently exhausted during the summer months, precisely when housing instability increases. Without intervention, families face trauma, food insecurity, educational disruption, and long-term instability. The "Sustain SA" expansion will help meet this growing seasonal demand and ensure more families remain safely housed. Stable housing is foundational to family well-being, educational success, and long-term economic resilience, directly aligning with the Family focus area.

Diversion improves lives by providing immediate, flexible assistance that helps families avoid entering homelessness altogether. In 2025, the average monthly income for heads of household seeking Diversion assistance was just \$467.28, making it nearly impossible for many families to afford rising rent costs, mortgages, transportation, or relocation expenses without support. Additionally, 28% of Diversion clients reported experiencing domestic violence at enrollment, highlighting the urgent need for rapid, person-centered intervention that can protect safety and even save lives.

The majority of Diversion clients are women, and the largest demographic groups served are Hispanic, African American/Black, and White households. In one anonymous case highlighted by Bexar County, Diversion funding helped a woman safely escape a dangerous domestic violence situation, demonstrating the life-saving impact of flexible, immediate assistance.

Description of Project and Proposed Use of Impact SA Funds:

The Diversion Program intervenes at the critical moment when individuals and families are at risk of losing housing, offering a flexible, one-time payment to help them remain safely housed and avoid entering the homeless response system. Services may include rental assistance, transportation, landlord mediation, reunification support, and resource navigation tailored to each household's unique situation. It remains significantly more cost-effective for both families and individuals than the long-term cost of care once someone enters the homeless response system. The program is also innovative because it empowers households to identify the safest and most sustainable housing solutions for themselves, recognizing that they are the experts in their own lives. The "Sustain SA" expansion will scale this impact during the high-demand summer months, helping prevent avoidable trauma, preserve family stability, and advance our mission to end homelessness with dignity.

Impact SA funds will directly support the expansion of our Sustain SA initiative during the critical summer months. Funds will provide housing-related financial assistance, transportation, utility support, case management, and mediation services that help families avoid entering the homeless response system altogether. While costs can fluctuate due to economic conditions and inflation, the average cost per household served in 2025 was \$1,026.66, while the average head-of-household income at enrollment was just \$467.28. At this average cost, if expenses remain stable, Impact SA funding could help an additional 80-85 families secure or maintain housing without entering shelter or homelessness services during a known funding shortfall and seasonal demand. These timely interventions keep children and caregivers connected to schools, employment, healthcare, and community supports while promoting long-term stability.

Impact on People to Be Served - Measurable Outcomes (Described in "S.M.A.R.T." terms):

Specific: Between Nov. 1 and Oct. 31, 2028, we can divert 80-85 families, based on the average amount per household, from entering homelessness through immediate financial assistance and housing stabilization services.

Diversion funds are administered by Close to Home, while the referring Alliance partner provides wraparound services when available. If a partner cannot meet a family's needs, they refer out to another trusted Alliance agency. Regardless of partner capacity, Close to Home ensures that the family is successfully diverted out of homelessness.

Measurable: We, and every agency with access, log all service data into the community-wide Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which allows us to track assistance provided, diversion outcomes, and housing stability over time. As the administrator of the Coordinated Entry System, known locally as Homelink, we also monitor whether families fall back into homelessness and intervene early. All outcome data will be reviewed post-expansion to assess effectiveness, fairness, and successful outcomes, to ensure no slips back into homelessness.

Achievable: Close to Home is the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) - designated lead agency for the San Antonio/Bexar County Homeless Response System, a responsibility we've held for over a decade, even above city and county governments. We have successfully secured and administered multi-million-dollar public and private contracts and have helped thousands of households exit or avoid homelessness. This project builds upon our proven infrastructure, systems, and partnerships to address a known seasonal gap.

Relevant: This project is central to our mission of preventing homelessness with dignity and effectiveness. While Diversion began during COVID due to distancing needs, it's more relevant than ever now as local shelters reduce capacity or change policies, leaving fewer emergency options for families. With fewer places to turn, immediate Diversion is the most strategic, humane, and cost-effective solution to avoid the trauma of shelter entry or unsheltered homelessness. In short, it's both a cost-effective and efficient tool helping ensure everyone has a place to call home in San Antonio and Bexar County.

Time-Bound: The expansion will focus on the summer 2027 and 2028 peaks, when demand is highest, and resources are often depleted. Grant funds will help us support more families during the riskiest months of housing instability. Because the intervention occurs within a defined period, we can evaluate outcomes in the fall and make data-informed improvements before the next cycle. Limited funds will also be used in the fall and spring to assist families, fully utilize the grant, and test strategies ahead of the summer surge.

Project Budget:

Project Expense Category	Amount	Narrative
Indirect Costs (Overhead)	\$10,000.00	N/A
Program Supplies and Expenses	\$90,000.00	Direct program expenses.
Total Expenses	\$100,000.00	