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**CalHFA's Mental Health Services Act Housing Program
Helps Keep Bay Area Families Off the Streets**

Nearly \$150 Million Has Supported Statewide Program for Mentally Ill Facing Homelessness

SACRAMENTO, July 19, 2011 – The California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA) has helped finance nearly 900 units under its Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Housing Program in partnership with the California Department of Mental Health and counties' mental health departments. The multifamily projects provide housing to low-income adults and their families with psychiatric disabilities who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

In the Bay Area, three projects have been completed with MHSA Housing Program loans totaling \$1.8 million and MHSA operating subsidies totaling approximately \$575,000. Another 11 projects located in the Bay Area have MHSA Housing Program funds committed to them but are not yet available for occupancy by MHSA-eligible tenants.

The opportunity for affordable housing has truly changed the life of Marin County resident Peter, who has wrestled with mental illness for more than 20 years. After three years of sleeping in his car, on the street and in shelters, Peter finally was offered a home at The Fireside, affordable apartments serving seniors, families, individuals with mental illness and those seeking refuge from homelessness in Marin County. "My life changed dramatically better," he said. "I found myself in a new life with new opportunities."

The Fireside apartments are located in one of California's most expensive communities. With the \$475,000 loan and the \$250,000 operating subsidy from the MHSA Housing Program, five units were built and set aside to assist low-income formerly homeless individuals get off of the streets and regain productive lives with permanent affordable housing.

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“In 2004, Californians authorized the state, through the passage of Proposition 63, to increase funding for mental health services, including ways to provide supportive housing for people in need,” said Claudia Cappio, Executive Director for the California Housing Finance Agency. “As an agency, we are proud to be able to partner with local communities and the Department of Mental Health to make these housing options available for California families.”

In California, 56 facilities have secured \$91 million in funding from the Mental Health Services Act Housing Program for capital costs associated with development, acquisition, construction and/or rehabilitation of permanent supportive housing, and \$57 million in operating subsidies.

Additional details about the Housing Program can be accessed through the Department of Mental Health at www.dmh.ca.gov and CalHFA at www.calhfa.ca.gov/multifamily/mhsa.

About the California Housing Finance Agency

The California Housing Finance Agency was created in 1975 with the goal of helping more Californians live in a home they can afford. CalHFA's Multifamily Division has invested \$1.4 billion for the construction and preservation of more than 33,000 affordable rental housing units to assist very low and low-income Californians. For more information on Multifamily Loan Finance programs and the full complement of CalHFA programs, visit www.calhfa.ca.gov or call toll free 877.9.CalHFA (877.922.5432).

About the California Department of Mental Health

The California Department of Mental Health, entrusted with leadership of the California mental health system, ensures through partnerships the availability and accessibility of effective, efficient, culturally competent services. This is accomplished through advocacy, education, innovation, outreach, understanding, oversight, monitoring, quality improvement and the provision of direct services. For more information, visit www.dmh.ca.gov.

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