



Alameda County  
Health Care Services Agency



Alameda County  
Social Services  
Agency

# PROJECT ROOMKEY: ALAMEDA COUNTY OPERATION COMFORT & OPERATION SAFER GROUND

## Protecting the Health & Safety of Our Community

Hotel rooms provide a safe environment for isolation and recovery.

### What is Project Roomkey?

Project Roomkey is the first-in-the-nation initiative to secure hotel and motel rooms for people experiencing homelessness during the COVID-19 pandemic. Governor Gavin Newsom secured FEMA approval for these hotel and motel rooms, including wraparound supports such as meals, security, and custodial services. Essential behavioral health and health care services are also provided by the local governments and community partners, as needed.

### Who qualifies?

1. Individuals experiencing homelessness who are asymptomatic, but are at high risk, such as people over 65 or who have certain underlying health conditions.
2. Individuals experiencing homelessness who have been exposed to COVID-19 (as documented by a state or local public health official, or medical health professional) that do not require hospitalization, but need isolation or quarantine.
3. Individuals experiencing homelessness who are COVID-19 positive, but who don't need hospitalization. Without these isolation units, their only choice is to return to a congregate shelter setting or back to an encampment – both of which would lead to further spread of COVID-19.

### Does the State identify clients for hotel isolation placements?

Local governments are responsible for identifying shelter clients or encampment residents for hotel isolation placements and transporting them to the hotels for intake.

### Does Alameda County have isolation hotels for homeless individuals?

The County currently has four hotels providing isolation units: 1) Operation Comfort Oakland, 2) Operation Safer Ground Oakland, 3) Operation Comfort Q, and 4) Operation Safer Ground Alameda.

### What is Operation Comfort?

Operation Comfort serves people who are homeless and 1) tested positive for COVID-19, or 2) are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, and/or have been exposed to COVID-19. Operation Comfort may serve some people who are not homeless but are COVID-19 positive and cannot safely isolate at home.

### What is Operation Safer Ground?

Operation Safer Ground serves people who are homeless and over 65 or otherwise at high risk (medically fragile), or both. Alameda County relies on guidance from the CDC and is targeting people over the age of 65 and/or persons with a variety of specific health conditions including certain heart, lung, blood, neurologic disorders, pregnancy and other conditions.



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### **What is the current capacity (number of rooms)?**

Operation Comfort Oakland has 104 rooms. Operation Comfort Q has 98 rooms. Operation Safer Ground Oakland has 289 rooms. Operation Safer Ground Alameda has 50 rooms.

### **Where are the individuals coming from?**

They may come from any location in Alameda County if they meet the admission criteria and are referred through the identified process.

### **What can the guests bring with them? How will this be stored? What can go in their room?**

One large plastic bag can be brought in and stored in the guest's room. Additional belongings will be stored as capacity allows in outside storage containers provided by the City of Oakland or hotel.

### **Are you separating guest's belongings?**

There is limited space at the hotels and only essential personal items (clothes, hygiene products, etc.) will be allowed on premises. Bags coming into the hotel will be screened with a wand to identify large metal objects and a bedbug screen will be performed. Belongings will be treated before entry if bedbugs are suspected.

### **Do you serve families with children?**

Families with children may be placed in the Safer Ground program. The initial rooms for Operation Comfort are appropriate for 1-2-person households for people with symptoms that might have COVID-19.

### **Are pets being allowed?**

Guests may bring one companion animal per household if the owner is able to care for the pet. Pets must be non-threatening, under the owner's verbal control at all times, and on a leash or in a carrier any time it is not inside the guest's room.

### **Is there parking access for homeless people living in cars?**

Parking spaces are available for people staying in the hotels. The area, however, is not designated to be a "Safe Parking" site.

### **Is Alameda County going to open more Project Roomkey hotels?**

Yes, and the County's goal is to secure more hotels and rooms quickly.

### **Are there limitations to location? Or can the hotel be located anywhere in Alameda County?**

Our goal is geographic diversity for residents throughout the county in need of assistance.

### **What is the duration of these contracts?**

Our hope is to secure rooms for the duration of the COVID 19 emergency.

05.14.20