

Hon Michelle Lensink MLC

Minister for Human Services

Hundreds of SA rough sleepers housed in pandemic

Unprecedented numbers of rough sleepers have been housed during the coronavirus pandemic thanks to a mammoth, combined effort by the Marshall Liberal Government and its housing and homelessness providers.

A total of 250 South Australians who had been rough sleeping prior to COVID-19 are now living in housing after leaving motel accommodation offered as part of the Marshall Liberal Government's swift and strong response to the pandemic to keep people safe.

The \$7.3 million initiative included \$5.9 million to fund short-term motel accommodation and support services, as well as funding for staff and to temporarily house Aboriginal rough sleepers from remote communities.

Minister for Human Services Michelle Lensink thanked staff and providers for working hard to house as many South Australian as possible

"To successfully help so many people so quickly off the street and into a longer-term home is a remarkable achievement," said Minister Lensink.

"While South Australians were in motels, it gave support services an unprecedented opportunity to work with a large number of people to help them stabilise their lives and support them to move into accommodation, rather than risk returning to the streets.

"The State Government has provided \$5.9 million funding for motel accommodation and support services to be in place over the next 12 months to give people a strong chance at maintaining their accommodation.

"The fact that we have been able to house so many people through organisations working so closely together indicates we are on the right path to making an impact on reducing street homelessness.

"To continue to achieve these positive outcomes for South Australians, we need to make sure that all parts of the homelessness system are working together, and this is central to the homelessness reforms we are undertaking at the moment.

"It really shows what can be achieved when the sector works together to achieve a common goal and I commend all of the hard work that has made this outstanding outcome possible."

The SA Housing Authority has played a major role in housing people during the pandemic, with 182 people now housing in Housing SA properties. Eight people are now living in community housing and 60 are now in other accommodation such as boarding houses, supported accommodation, private rental or have been assisted to return home.



During the height of the pandemic in Adelaide, a number of South Australians sleeping rough housed in temporary motel accommodation chose not to engage with homelessness services.

The Authority worked with a variety of homelessness services in the pandemic motels response, including Street to Home, Uniting Communities, Baptist Care, SYC and the Hutt St Centre.