

Governor Newsom's Newly Created Housing Accountability Unit Marks First Year

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Department of Housing and Community Development has cleared the way for nearly 3,500 new homes over two years

SACRAMENTO – One year ago, Governor Gavin Newsom launched the Housing Accountability Unit at the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) with the goal of increasing stringent enforcement and oversight at the local level to create more housing, faster in California. Since 2020, HCD has helped to clear the way for nearly 3,500 new homes, with about half of those as a result of the Housing Accountability Unit's work in the last year.

“The housing crisis we are experiencing in California was decades in the making, but we are taking aggressive steps with an all-of-the-above approach, which includes unprecedented actions to bring about accountability at the local level,” said Governor Newsom.

“Understanding that we have no time to waste, in just one year, the Housing Accountability Unit has moved with a fierce intensity to break the status quo and remove bureaucratic roadblocks.”

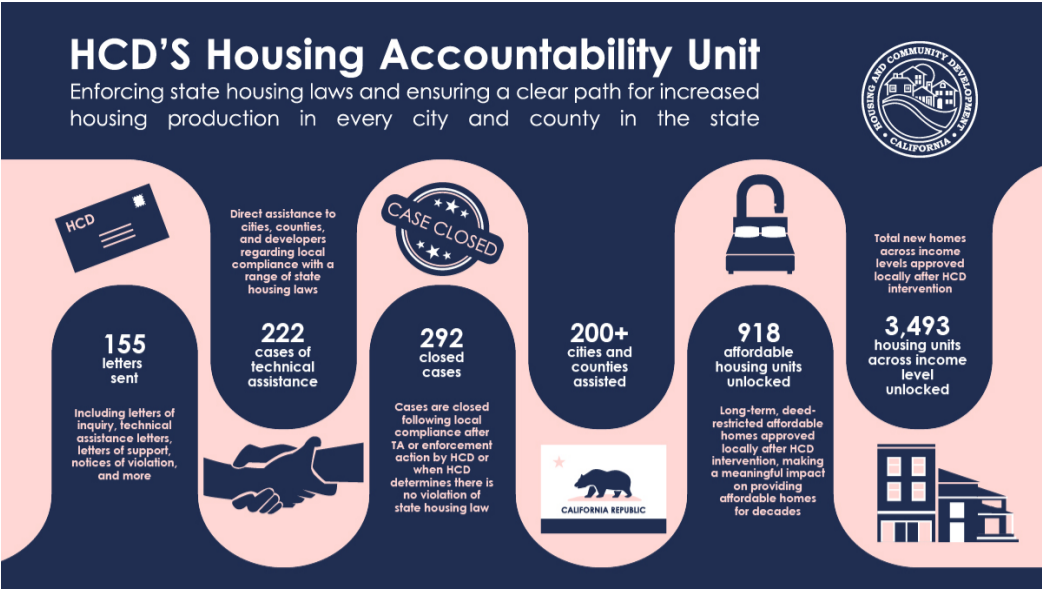
Under Governor Newsom, for the first time in state history, local governments are being held accountable to meet their housing targets, with a statewide goal of reaching 2.5 million new units by 2030 – 1 million of which must be affordable. To help reach this goal, the Housing Accountability Unit has worked with local jurisdictions to provide technical assistance and review of policies that often hinders the building of housing throughout the state. In their first year, the unit opened the door to nearly 1,700 new homes, with over 600 being affordable housing.

“California is removing barriers to housing development and preservation, streamlining permitting, and, most importantly, holding local jurisdictions accountable for meeting the housing needs of their communities,” said Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency Secretary Lourdes Castro Ramírez. “By prioritizing enforcement of state housing laws, we are working toward the day that all Californians will have access to an affordable place to call home.”

Among other key accomplishments over the past year, the Housing Accountability Unit launched a first-of-its-kind Policy and Practice Review into San Francisco's legal, planning, and political barriers to housing production at all income levels. The unit also formally absorbed enforcement of the Surplus Land Act, unlocking hundreds of affordable housing units through its review of state surplus land.

“Cities and counties must abide by state housing laws,” said HCD Director Gustavo Velasquez. “First and foremost, HCD will provide technical assistance to create a path toward understanding and complying with state housing laws. But no longer are cities' and counties' compliance going unchecked. Accountability is key to getting the 2.5 million new housing units our state needs to serve Californians across the income spectrum.”

As the state continues to lead the nation in tackling the housing crisis, local accountability and enforcement measures will continue to be effective tools to ensure that every city and county meets its fair share of housing. Additionally, the Governor's historic investment of \$13.6 billion over the past two years – the most ever invested in housing – creates the state's most comprehensive housing affordability strategy. To bolster these efforts, in the last two years, the Governor has signed over 70 housing bills, providing cities and counties with the tools and support needed to build housing at all income levels.



To learn more about the milestones completed over the past year visit: [Accountability and Enforcement | California Department of Housing and Community Development](#).

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