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Santa Clara supes OK \$309k in homeless job training

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At least 200 homeless men and women in Santa Clara County will soon start training for long-term construction jobs through a program approved Tuesday by the Board of Supervisors.

The board approved an agreement with Working Partnerships USA for \$308,625 through June 30, 2019 and approved a no-cost “memo of understanding” with Destination: Home.

The city of San Jose will vote next month on a partnership agreement to support the program, county officials said.

Board of Supervisors President Dave Cortese said in a statement:

“Employment is the missing rung in the ladder of stability for homeless men and women and those who have recently found housing. ... We want them to become self-sufficient so they can stay housed and lead successful lives. I believe our partnership with Destination: Home and Working Partnerships USA will accomplish those goals.”

Starting this month, 75 homeless or formerly homeless men and women will enroll in six 130-hour courses that will help them apply to become state-registered apprentices in trades including carpentry, sheet metal work, electrical work, ironworking or commercial painting.

The starting wage for these apprenticeships ranges from \$17 to \$25 an hour, county officials said.

Destination: Home executive director Jennifer Loving said in a statement:

“I am so excited to pilot this new partnership between Destination: Home, Working Partnerships and the county. ... Our ability to create programs to train and employ men and women exiting homelessness is the most important thing we can do to ensure folks are able to rebuild their lives.”

Nearly 90 percent of the 126 men and women who have enrolled in the program managed to complete it, county officials said.

Some 49 of the 55 graduates of the program in 2014 and 2015 secured apprenticeships or jobs.

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