

Homeless Headlines

A publication of the Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies, 3435 Liberty Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62704 - (217) 789-0125

JUNE 2008

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 6

Rapid Re-housing

Congress has appropriated \$25 million to support Rapid Rehousing programs for families. The funds can be used to provide short-term rental assistance, housing placement and home based case management for families experiencing homelessness. The funds will be competitively awarded and can be applied for as part of a community's continuum of care application. The following article provides more detailed information, but we, like you, eagerly await more information from HUD. - Sharon McDonald, National Alliance To End Homelessness, July 8, 2008

Congress appropriated \$25 million in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants for 2008 to demonstrate the effectiveness

of Rapid Re-housing programs to reduce family homelessness.

How will the federal Rapid Re-housing Demonstration funds be awarded?

Communities can apply for Rapid Re-housing funds as part of the Homeless Assistance Grants competition process (Continuum of Care). Determining the effectiveness of Rapid Re-housing programs is an important part of the initiative and \$1.25 million is reserved for evaluation.

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FY09 Budget Resolution Adopted and Appropriations Process Begins

The Senate and House have each adopted the FY09 budget resolution conference agreement, paving the way for Congress to begin work on the FY09 appropriation bills. The agreement provides \$436.6 billion in domestic spending for FY09, which is \$21.1 billion over FY08 and \$22.6 billion over the President's request. The Senate adopted the conference agreement, S. Con. Res. 70, on June 4, and the House

adopted the conference report June 5. Both votes were largely on party lines.

The next step is for the House and Senate Appropriation Committees to develop their 302(b) allocations. These allocations establish the overall amount for each of the twelve appropriation bills, including the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and Related Agencies

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Headlines/Hotline on the Internet - The Illinois Community Action Association publishes both Homeless Headlines and Homeless Hotline on the Publications page of its web site at www.icaanet.org. To receive both by email, send a blank email to: headlines-hotline-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. (Self service only.)

Illinois Department of
Human Services



HUD Budget Contains Major Funding Shortfalls

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Congress last year rejected deep cuts the Administration proposed in affordable housing and community development programs and funded the Department of Housing and Urban Development at \$2.1 billion above the Administration's budget request for 2008.

For 2009, Congress will have to provide a substantially larger increase — totaling \$6.5 billion above the Administration's request — to avoid cuts in core programs that help millions of low-income families secure decent housing at affordable rents.

First, Congress can no longer rely on large recaptures of unspent funds from the "Section 8" programs to finance HUD programs.

For most of the past decade, Congress and the Administration have used

roughly \$2 billion per year in unspent balances in Section 8 program accounts to help finance the current costs of HUD programs, thereby reducing the amount of new funding required.

Second, the President's budget fails to provide funding increases in HUD's three main rental assistance programs needed to prevent cuts in assistance to low-income families now being served.

The renewal of Housing Choice vouchers for 2 million low-income families will cost \$15.5 billion in 2009, according to Center estimates, which is \$868 million above the 2008 funding level and \$1.3 billion above the President's 2009 request.

Nearly \$2 billion in prior-year funds were available but rescinded in fiscal year 2008. These funds will not be available in 2009. Once they are netted out of Congress' 2008 appropriation, the President's overall 2009 budget for HUD is \$885 million below the 2008 level before adjusting for inflation.

For the full report, go to www.cbpp.org/3-5-08hous.htm.

Budget

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Appropriations (T-HUD) bill. This allocation will be considered by the House Committee on Appropriations on June 18. The House Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies will mark-up the T-HUD bill on June 20, and the full committee is expected to consider the bill June 26. The Senate Committee on Appropriators has not announced its schedule.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition budget chart can be found at www.nlihc.org/doc/FY09_BudgetChart.pdf.

For further information, contact the NLIHC at the address in *Headlines Directory*.

Housing First Updates

The Alliance released Housing First for Families: Research to Support the Development of a Housing First for Families Training Curriculum several years ago. This document provides detailed information re: the choices a program may make in designing a Housing First (or Rapid Rehousing) program for families. I'm including a link here in case it may be useful for programs interested in applying for Rapid Rehousing demonstration. www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/1225/

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The current issue of Homeless Headlines and back issues are available at <http://www.iacaanet.org/homelessheadlines/>.

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Action on National Housing Trust Fund Expected

The Senate on June 19 began but did not yet complete consideration of a bill that would establish a permanent housing trust fund. During the course of debate over the bill, advocates quickly rallied to defeat an amendment by Senator Christopher 'Kit' Bond (R-MO) that would have gutted the initial and only funding mechanism for the housing trust fund. The Bond Amendment would have made the contributions to the trust fund by the housing Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, voluntary as opposed to mandatory.

It is anticipated that the overall measure will garner strong bipartisan support and, if the votes



on the Bond amendments are an indication, a veto-proof majority of votes. The White House issued a veto warning on June 19.

The legislation, the Housing and Economic Recovery Act, H. R. 3221, is very similar to the Federal Housing Finance Reform Act that passed out of the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs on May 20. In addition to creating the trust fund, the bill would reform Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac by enforcing more stringent regulations on the GSEs, and expand the Federal Housing Administration to create a HOPE for Homeowners Program designed to help families facing foreclosure. Senators Dodd and Shelby tweaked some of the

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Making the Connection

Family Care and Changes in LINK Card Process

Contributor: DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform



The authors of this column welcome your comments and questions. See contact information at the end of the article.

This month I want to share with you information about a couple of major changes that may affect your clients.

Family Care Update

As many of you know, Family Care is a medical program administered by the state and is meant to provide health care coverage to low income adults

who care for related children age 18 or younger. The children receive their medical coverage through the All Kids program.

Prior to November 2007, adults were able to receive medical coverage through the Family Care Assist program when the family income was at or below 133% of FPL. When the family income was between 133% and 185% of the FPL, the adults had the ability to enroll in Family Care Share or Rebate. In November 2007, the state announced an expansion of the Family Care program to permit adults with incomes 133% to 400% of the Federal Poverty Level to enroll in Family Care Premium benefits. Payment of a moderate premium permitted adults with higher incomes to begin to purchase Family Care coverage for themselves. Many of us encouraged parents and adult caretakers to begin enrolling in this expanded program.

Unfortunately the state announced on April 22, 2008, that new applications for this expanded Family Care Premium program were no longer being approved. In fact the announced change rolled back coverage for Family Care to include only adults with income under 133% of the FPL, and ended the Family Care Share program. (NOTE: the change did not affect pregnant women who are covered through the Moms and Babies benefits and the All Kids Premium 1 through 8 benefits). When individuals applied and income was over 133% of FPL medical coverage through Family Care was denied for the adult, or the adult was enrolled in Family Care spenddown in instances when the adult had medical costs that exceeded the spenddown obligation. At the time change was announced, no

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House Committee to Take Up Homeless Bill

The House Committee on Financial Services was expected to mark up H. R. 840, the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act on June 24. This bill was introduced on February 6, 2007, by Representative Julia Carson (D-IN). Mrs. Carson passed away in December 2007.

House Financial Services Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity Chair Maxine Waters (D-CA) was expected to offer a manager's amendment to the bill during the June 24 markup. The manager's amendment will make the bill more like the Senate's homeless programs bill, S.

1518, introduced in May of 2007 by Senator Jack Reed (D-RI).

The manager's amendment, which NLIHC supports, modifies the original bill's definition of homelessness so that it includes people who are not necessarily living on the streets or in shelters, but whose housing situations are very unstable. People who live in a series of temporary situations—such as sharing the housing of others or living in a motel—and can stay only for a short time because they lack resources or support networks to obtain housing would be defined as homeless. The original HEARTH Act's modification of the definition was much broader, allowing for people who are living in doubled up situations to be considered homeless. The manager's amendment would allow this population to receive housing and

support services but they would not be defined as homeless.

Ms. Waters' manager's amendment is also expected to require HUD to promote rapid rehousing efforts, provide additional resources for homelessness prevention, require that at least 10 percent of funds are used for permanent housing for families with children, and improve coordination between HUD's homeless assistance programs and the low income housing tax credit.

The Senate's S. 1518 was reported from the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs in September of 2007, but has not been considered by the full Senate.

For further information, contact the National Low Income Housing Coalition at the address in Headlines Directory. ■

Rapid Re-housing

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HUD is directed by Congress to select a limited number of sites to receive funds. When determining awardees, HUD is directed to select sites based on the following criteria:

- ⊗ Proven experience in providing Rapid Re-housing Services;
- ⊗ Strongly performing Continuum of Care; and
- ⊗ Geographic diversity.

While programs that model a comprehensive Rapid Re-housing approach will be favored under these criteria, communities that offer only one component of Rapid Re-housing services (e.g. home-based case management services or housing placement assistance) may still want to consider competing. HUD may need to include programs that may not have a fully developed Rapid Re-housing intervention, in order to achieve geographic diversity as directed by Congress. In an application, programs

can stress the services they currently offer that are consistent with Rapid Re-housing, and explain how additional funds will allow programs to extend their intervention.

How can the Rapid Re-housing funds be used?

HUD will provide detailed information on how funds can be used when the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants is released. Based on information included in the Report Language that accompanied the Appropriations legislation, Congress expects the funds to be used to provide:

- ⊗ Housing placement services
- ⊗ Short-term housing assistance (including up to 18 months of rental assistance)

- ⊗ An array of appropriate services for families.

What does Rapid Re-housing Programs Offer?

Consistent with a Housing First Approach, Rapid Re-housing programs help families experiencing homelessness locate housing in the community, negotiate with landlords, and provide home-based case management to promote housing retention and link families with needed services within their new community. Rapid Re-housing strategies have been used in rural, suburban, and urban communities. In communities with limited shelter resources, helping families move quickly back into housing can reduce the strain on shelters while ensuring families have the services they require to be successful. Some Rapid Re-housing programs offer support beyond what is allowed in the demonstration or within McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants programs. This is achieved by leveraging other funding resources or

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Rapid Re-housing

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using McKinney-Vento as a funding bridge.

Examples of successful Rapid Re-housing initiatives include the Shelter to Housing Pilot in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Family Housing Collaborative in Columbus, Ohio, and the Rapid Exit Program in Hennepin County, Minnesota. In each of the above programs, nonprofit organizations help families who are unable to afford rent independently in the short term locate rental housing in their community. In Massachusetts, families with a working parent or a parent enrolled in an education or training program were targeted for Rapid Re-housing services in the Shelter to Housing Pilot. In other communities, families with limited incomes are also targeted and families receive help to increase their income as quickly as possible through enrollment in benefits and help with employment.

Critical to the success of Rapid Re-housing programs is aggressive landlord outreach and housing search assistance. Providers use a variety of strategies to educate landlords in the community about their services to families, dispel myths about families experiencing homelessness, and provide support to the family and the landlord to promote successful tenancy. Building and retaining the trust of landlords is instrumental and expands the housing options available to families, particularly those with more challenging rental histories.

Rapid Re-housing programs typically offer some housing assistance to help families pay for housing. Housing assistance can vary from security deposit and first month's rent, a two year rent subsidy, a subsidy of up to a capped amount (e.g. \$6,000 per family) that can be tailored to meet the needs of families, and traditional Housing Choice Vouchers. The extent of the rental assistance offered can impact

which families are targeted for Rapid Re-housing services. It appears, however, that communities providing Rapid Re-housing services are achieving success with a large number of families experiencing homelessness with small amounts of housing assistance.

Rapid Re-housing ensures that people who are exiting homelessness have services. Indeed, the home-based services are a critical element in creating a smooth transition into housing and promoting housing retention. It is true that home-based services will differ from services delivered to families in shelter or transitional housing. Once a family is in its own home, services are voluntary and are therefore tailored to the goals of the family. Services may be more effective and efficiently delivered to families in their own home; families in their own homes do not require services that are largely supervisory in

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Updates

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The Center for the Study of Social Policy/McCormick Graduate School at University of Massachusetts has released a report looking at the first two years of an initiative to house chronically homeless adults in Quincy, Massachusetts. The report, can be viewed online at: www.mccormack.umb.edu/centers/csp/publications/FPB%20Housing%20First%20final%20report.pdf (warning: it may take a while to load). Among the findings: the program was able to reduce chronic homelessness in the community by 19 percent, individuals who moved into housing addressed previously neglected medical issues, and hospital stays were reduced dramatically.

For further information, contact Sharon McDonald of the National Alliance To End Homelessness at (202) 942-8253, or at the address in *Headlines Directory*. ■

Trust Fund

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provisions unrelated to the housing trust fund to bring it closer to the package that has previously passed the House. Following passage in the Senate, the House will again take up consideration of the bill. Consideration of the bill is expected to resume on June 24.

Other amendments might also arise. Habitat for Humanity International is lobbying to weaken the income targeting in the bill, which currently directs 75% of the trust fund's resources to extremely low income households and the remainder on very low income households, although no amendment to do so has been introduced yet.

Also included in this bill is the previously passed Senate bill to authorize \$3.9 million in CDBG funds, a one-time allocation to states to buy foreclosed properties as a neighborhood stabilization measure. One quarter of the funds must be used to assist very low income households. The inclusion of this provision in the larger bill is one reason why it has drawn veto threat from the White House.

A copy of the GSE/FHA Bill that passed the Senate Banking Committee can be found at: http://banking.senate.gov/public/_files/LanguageAYO08700_xml.pdf

For further information, contact the National Low Income Housing Coalition at the address in *Headlines Directory*. ■

Link Card

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information was provided as to what would happen to adults who had higher incomes and who had enrolled in the expanded Family Care program between November 2007 and April 22, 2008.

The state has now announced that those adults with household income between 133% and 400% of the FPL who had enrolled in the expanded Family Care Premium programs prior to April 22, 2008 will be able to continue to receive medical benefits as long as they meet all other program eligibility criteria. The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) will monitor enrollment in the expanded program through the regular benefit renewal process. If at renewal the adult's income is over 400%, additional benefits will be denied and the coverage canceled. If the income remains below the 400% FPL threshold the adult's medical coverage will be renewed.

This change, however, does not help adults who never enrolled in the expanded Family Care program. When adults ask to be newly added to existing All Kids and Family Care cases, the family income will be reviewed. If the income is greater than 133% of the FPL, medical coverage for the adult will continue to be denied.

Adults are still able to apply for Family Care Spenddown if they have medical expenses that are over the spenddown obligation. The application for the spenddown coverage has to be done at the local Illinois Department of Human Services' Family Community Resource Centers (FCRC).

These changes are likely to prompt inquiries from families regarding the FamilyCare program. Please refer families who have questions to the All Kids Hotline at 1-800-ALL-KIDS (1-866-255-5437).

LINK Update

Recently I told you about a change that is coming in the way LINK cards are being issued as well as issuance of the PIN. Starting 6/23/08, when cash or Food Stamp benefits are approved by the state, the Link card will be mailed to your client. When your client receives the LINK card she/he will then need to call the Illinois Link Help Line at 1-800-678-LINK (5465) or TTY 1-877-765-3459 or access the new website at www.link.illinois.gov to select a Personal Identification Number (PIN).

The DuPage Federation on Human Services Reform, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization focused on advocacy and planning in DuPage County, Illinois and designer and trainer of Making the Connection: A Guide to Accessing Public Benefits. The DuPage Federation is affiliated with Northern Illinois University, Regional Development Institute. Questions can be directed to knelson@dupagefederation.org or cking@dupagefederation.org. ■

Rapid Re-housing

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nature and parents may be more prepared to focus on their long-term goals for their family when they are not overwhelmed in shelter.

Typically, home-based services are offered for a transitional period of time of six to twelve months. There is an emphasis on maximizing the use of services that already exist in the community to support low income families, including income support programs, education and work training, early childhood education, mental health and domestic violence counseling. These services allow formerly homeless families to access specialized and skilled practitioners and allow the Rapid Re-housing provider to focus on helping families exiting homelessness make a smooth transition back into their community. In some instances, providers find that it is difficult to link families with the

services they need. While challenging, efforts to improve access to public and community-based services is critical. It will benefit families enrolled in the Rapid Rehousing program along with many other low income families in the community that may also be at risk of homelessness.

Ideally, Rapid Re-housing programs are being evaluated to determine their effectiveness and refinements are being made as needed. The Shelter to Housing Pilot in Massachusetts provided families with up to \$6,000 in rental assistance, housing placement services, and home-based case management. Approximately, 85 percent of families housed remained stably housed 18 months after the housing placement. While the families who were targeted for intervention were those with the greatest potential for employment income, the rate of success parallels what is achieved with a full housing subsidy for homeless families as a whole. This demonstrates that short-term or capped rental assistance can effectively end homelessness for some families experiencing homelessness. Other programs, such as Hennepin County's Rapid Exit Program, capture returns to shelter. Families who are offered minimal rental assistance, housing search assistance, and home-based case management have return-to-shelter rates of approximately eight percent.

For further information, contact Sharon McDonald of the National Alliance To End Homelessness at (202) 942-8253, or at the address in *Headlines Directory*. ■

Private Resources

by **Pamela M. Salela**, Coordinator, Central Illinois Nonprofit Resource Center
telephone: 217-206-6633 - email: psale2@uis.edu - url: library.uis.edu/findinfo/grants/index.html

Benjamin Moore & Co. Contributions Program

101 Paragon Dr.
Montvale, NJ 07645-1727
Telephone: (201) 573-9600
URL: www.benjaminmoore.com/
Contact: Not stated

Areas of Interest: Children/youth, services, Disasters, preparedness/services, Education, Health care, **Housing/shelter, Population Groups:** Minorities **Geographic Focus:** National **Types of Support:** Donated products, Employee matching gifts, General/operating support, In-kind gifts, Program development **Limitations:** Giving on a national basis. **Application Information:** Contact Benjamin Moore directly for specifics on applying.

McCormick Foundation

(formerly McCormick Tribune Foundation)
435 N. Michigan Ave., Ste. 770
Chicago, IL 60611-4025
Telephone: (312) 222-3512
Contact: Donald A. Cooke, Sr. V.P.,
Philanthropy
Fax: (312) 222-3523
E-mail: info@mccormickfoundation.org
URL: www.mccormickfoundation.org

Purpose and Activities: The foundation aims to improve the social and economic environment; to encourage a free and responsible discussion of issues affecting the nation; to enhance the effectiveness of American education; and to stimulate responsible citizenship. **Limitations:** Giving on a national basis **Fields of Interest:** Child development, education; Child development,

services; Children/youth, services; **Community/economic development;** Education, early childhood education; Employment; Government/public administration; **Homeless, human services; Housing/shelter, development; Human services;** Vocational education; Voluntarism promotion; **Population Groups:** Economically disadvantaged; **Homeless;** Minorities. **Geographic Focus:** National. **Types of Support:** **Building/renovation;** Conferences/seminars; Continuing support; Curriculum development; Employee matching gifts; General/operating support; Matching/challenge support; Program-related investments/loans; Program development; Program evaluation; Research; Seed money; Technical assistance. **Application Information:** See web site for additional application information and program description. Applicants should submit:

1. Signature and title of chief executive officer
2. Results expected from proposed grant
3. Principal source of support for project in the past
4. Copy of IRS Determination Letter
5. Copy of most recent annual report/ audited financial statement/990
6. Listing of board of directors, trustees, officers and other key people and their affiliations
7. Detailed description of project and amount of funding requested
8. Contact person
9. Copy of current year's organizational budget and/or project budget
10. Listing of additional sources and amount of support
11. Additional materials/ documentation

Initial approach: Proposal and letter of inquiry; Copies of proposal: 1; Board meeting date(s): February, May, September, and December; Deadline(s): Varies

Deutsche Bank Americas Foundation

(formerly BT Foundation)
60 Wall St., NYC 60-2110
New York, NY 10005-2858
Telephone: (212) 250-0555
Contact: Gary S. Hattem, Pres.
URL: www.community.db.com/

Purpose and Activities: The foundation supports programs designed to promote the arts; education; and community development. **Program Area of Relevance - Community Development:** The foundation supports programs designed to develop **affordable housing and housing for the formerly homeless and those at risk of homelessness;** support the creation of new businesses; generate employment opportunities; and address critical service needs. **Fields of Interest:** Community/economic development; Education; Education, services; Employment; **Housing/shelter; Human services;** Visual arts. **Population Groups:** Boys; Economically disadvantaged; **Homeless;** Immigrants/refugees; Youth. **Geographic Focus:** National; international. **Types of Support:** Continuing support; Employee matching gifts; General/operating support; Internship funds; Program-related investments/loans; Program development; Sponsorships; Technical assistance. **Application Information:** The foundation utilizes a Request for Proposal (RFP) process for most programs. Support is limited to 3 years in length. For further information regarding available RFPs, contact the foundation directly or visit their web site at: www.community.db.com/html/db_americas_foundation.html

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Headlines Directory

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Fax: (312) 435-0198
[http://www.enteract.com/~cch/
index.htm](http://www.enteract.com/~cch/index.htm)

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Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: (312) 332-6690
Fax: (312) 332-7040
Email: il@csh.org
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Food Research and Action Center
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, # 540
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foodresearch@frac.org

Housing Action Illinois
11 E. Adams, Suite 1601
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Fax: (312) 939-6822
<http://housingactionil.org>

Housing Assistance Council
1025 Vermont Ave. NW, Suite 606
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 842-8600
Fax: (202) 347-3441
<http://www.ruralhome.org>

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Homeless Services and Supportive
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**National Low-Income Housing
Coalition
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**U.S. Department of Housing
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Fax: (312) 353-5417
[http://www.hud.gov/local/chi/
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