COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
Public Health

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February 9, 2016

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Cynthia A. Harding, M.P.H.
Interim Director

SUBJECT: **HOMELESS POPULATIONS AND EL NIÑO**

This is in response to the January 5, 2016 Board motion instructing the Department of Public Health (DPH) to report back to your Board regarding agencies that are available to provide and distribute emergency supplies, such as raincoats, to the homeless to protect them from the wet weather.

DPH surveyed a number of agencies and compiled a list of activities related to emergency and wet weather supplies for the homeless (Attachment 1). Few agencies surveyed appear to be involved in distributing emergency supplies to the homeless. The vast majority of efforts by these agencies focus on providing homeless individuals and families with referrals to shelters, other housing opportunities, and public services.

In addition, on December 31, 2015, the Civil Grand Jury (CGJ) issued an interim report that gave a number of recommendations to Los Angeles County to improve preparedness for El Niño-related weather conditions for its growing homeless population. The Chief Executive Office - Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is preparing a Board response to the various recommendations proposed by the CGJ, due March 31, 2016. Among the recommendations, CGJ suggests that the County of Los Angeles and each of its 88 cities, at a minimum, should purchase and provide tents, tarps, and ponchos to people who cannot be accommodated in shelters. DPH is working with OEM to review if other jurisdictions provide emergency and wet weather supplies to the homeless and to consider the potential benefit that this effort might provide to homeless people. OEM is also surveying other large metropolitan areas throughout the country to understand their best practices for providing homeless individuals and families with protection from adverse weather.

As DPH continues to coordinate efforts with OEM, we will keep you informed of significant developments. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know, or contact Stephanie Caldwell at (213) 240-8036 or via e-mail at sncaldwell@ph.lacounty.gov.

CAH:sc

Attachments

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Acting Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

Cold Weather Preparation for the Homeless

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)	DCFS does not provide or distribute emergency supplies to the homeless to protect them from wet weather. However, the Skid Row Outreach Project does refer and link homeless individuals and families to shelters who may provide those items, as well as immediate shelter and housing opportunities to protect them from cold weather.
Department of Health Services (DHS)	DHS oversees a number of programs that target the homeless, including Housing for Health (HFH). HFH provides clients who have complex health and/or behavioral health conditions with interim and permanent supportive housing. HFH street outreach staff distribute supplies including rain ponchos and socks; however, the primary goal is to engage clients and assist in shelter/housing placement.
Department of Mental Health (DMH)	DMH outreach teams work with homeless clients to engage them into mental health services. The primary goal, especially during inclement weather, is to help them transition into shelter. However, the purchase of supplies including tents, tarps, ponchos, and other necessities is permissible.
Department of Public Health (DPH) – Emergency Preparedness and Response Program (EPRP)	DPH does not maintain a supply of general emergency items for public distribution. EPRP works with DHS' Emergency Medical Services and with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to coordinate the distribution of vaccine and medication in response to public health emergencies. DPH also conducts preparedness planning and responds to public health emergencies in coordination with a variety of sectors across Los Angeles County to improve preparedness for at-risk populations, including homeless individuals and families.
Community Clinic Association of Los Angeles (CCALAC)	CCALAC doesn't currently provide or distribute emergency or wet-weather supplies to the homeless. However, CCALAC does provide a Disaster Preparedness Program to their clinics that includes provision of appropriate supplies and equipment, and improved communication techniques to provide efficient and effective triage and/or treatment to victims of disasters, terrorist events, or other public health emergencies.
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)	LAHSA's Emergency Response Teams provide and distribute bottled water and homeless resource information to encampment dwellers and other homeless people the teams encounter. The primary goal is to assist individuals and families in securing shelter placement.
Shelter Partnership	The Shelter Partnership distributes emergency supplies to local winter shelters and various community based organizations that serve homeless individuals and families. See attached (Attachment 2) for a list of winter shelters that have recently received emergency supplies from Shelter Partnerships.

ATTACHMENT 2

	Agency	Address	Supervisorial District
1	First to Serve	1177 W. 25th St., Los Angeles, CA 90007	1
2	East San Gabriel Valley Coalition	629 S. Glendora Ave., West Covina, CA 91790	1
3	The Salvation Army Bell Shelter	5600 Rickenbacker Road, City of Bell, CA 90040	1
4	VOA Family Emergency	600 S. Park Ave., Pomona, CA 91767	1
5	Recycled Resources for the Homeless	5619 Monte Vista St., Highland Park, CA 90042	1
6	Pathways To Your Future	6900 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90047	2
7	First to Serve	1713 W. 108th St., Los Angeles, CA 90047	2
8	First to Serve	111 Grosvenor Ave., Inglewood, CA 90302	2
9	Testimonial Community Center	5701 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90062	2
10	Testimonial Community Center	5615 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90062	2
11	Bethel Los Angeles	7900 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90047	2
12	Bethel Los Angeles	5500 S. Hoover St., Los Angeles, CA 90037	2
13	Weingart Center Association	566 S. San Pedro St., Los Angeles, CA 90013	2
14	First to Serve	1300 Federal Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90025	3
15	Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission	12860 Arroyo Dr., Sylmar, CA 91342	3
16	Hope of the Valley Rescue Mission	11067 Norris Ave., Pacoima, CA 91331	3
17	East San Gabriel Valley Coalition	1345 Turnbull Canyon, Hacienda Heights, CA 91745	4
18	East San Gabriel Valley Coalition	1835 Larkvane Rd., Rowland Heights, CA 91748	4
19	Bridge to Home	23031 Drayton St., Santa Clarita 91350	5
20	Grace Rescue Center (Lancaster)	44611 Yucca Ave., Lancaster, CA 93534	5
21	East San Gabriel Valley Coalition	241 W. Valley Center Dr., Glendora, CA 91741	5
22	East San Gabriel Valley Coalition	1700 E. Palopinto, Glendora, CA 91740	5
23	East San Gabriel Valley Coalition	742 E. Bonita Ave., San Dimas, CA 91773	5
24	ECPAC (Friends In Deed)	539 N. Lake Ave., Pasadena, CA 91101	5
25	Ascencia	1219 Los Angeles St., Glendale CA 91204	5