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# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012  
(213) 974-1101  
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

SACHI A. HAMAI  
Chief Executive Officer

October 1, 2019

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Sachi A. Hamai  
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors  
HILDA L. SOLIS  
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
Second District

SHEILA KUEHL  
Third District

JANICE HAHN  
Fourth District

KATHRYN BARGER  
Fifth District

## **CENTER FOR FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT (CFE) (ITEM NO. 2, AGENDA OF MAY 21, 2019)**

On May 21, 2019, your Board instructed the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Director of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), to report back during the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-20 Final Changes as well as future budget cycles, with recommendations on new or existing resources to support the appropriate staffing levels needed to execute the ongoing work of the CFE.

Currently, there are 4.0 positions allocated to the CFE within DCBA at an annual cost of \$489,000. Although these positions were originally financed with one-time grant funds, these grants have expired. To sustain this program, the FY 2019-20 Supplemental Budget recommendations include \$489,000 in ongoing funding. Further, DCBA has identified Cypres funds for two years to offset the cost of 2.0 additional new positions as well as the repurposing of 1.0 position to augment the CFE. We will evaluate the effectiveness of the CFE during the FY 2021-22 budget process to determine if ongoing funding is necessary to sustain the program. Any recommendations will be made within the context of the overall budget and numerous competing priorities and requests.

Please let me know if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Gevork Simdjian at [gsimdjian@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:gsimdjian@ceo.lacounty.gov) or at (213) 893-9736.

SAH:FAD:MM:  
SW:GS:BM:ae

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel  
Consumer and Business Affairs



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Hilda L. Solis  
Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Shelia Kuehl  
Janice Hahn  
Kathryn Barger

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## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS

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*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*



Joseph M. Nicchitta  
Director

Joel Ayala  
Chief Deputy

Rafael Carbajal  
Chief Deputy

December 6, 2019

TO: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Shelia Kuehl  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Joseph M. Nicchitta  
Director

### **STATUS REPORT REGARDING IMPLEMENTING THE COUNTY'S CENTER FOR FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT (ITEM NO. 2, AGENDA OF MAY 21, 2019)**

On September 1, 2016, at your Board's direction, the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) launched the Center for Financial Empowerment (CFE) as a two-year pilot project. On May 21, 2019, your Board adopted a motion authored by Supervisors Kuehl and Solis directing DCBA to implement the CFE as a permanent program within the DCBA. The motion instructed us to:

- In consultation with the Chief Executive Office (CEO), report back on new or existing resources to support the appropriate staffing levels needed to execute the ongoing work of the CFE;
- Work in collaboration with relevant Los Angeles County (County) departments to develop and implement a comprehensive Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) maximization plan;
- As part of the Countywide EITC maximization plan, and in consultation with the CEO and County Counsel, assess barriers utilizing County data to conduct EITC outreach and opportunities for overcoming those barriers so that data can be used effectively as part of an EITC outreach campaign;
- Explore the feasibility of creating a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to increase the CFE's capacity to apply for and accept grants and increase strategic partnerships;

- Develop agreements with relevant partners and nonprofit agencies to support EITC integration and develop a comprehensive plan to recruit Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) volunteers and support year-round EITC outreach campaigns; and
- Develop a County financial coaching certificate program.

This report serves as our first update on these deliverables.

## **STAFFING RESOURCES**

During the pilot period, the CFE was staffed by one Program Chief, one Consumer Affairs Representative III, and one Consumer Affairs Representative II. Through the 2019-2020 budgeting process, the DCBA was able to obtain the following additional positions for the CFE:

- One Consumer Affairs Representative I;
- One Management Analyst;
- One Fuse Fellow; and
- Two Program Managers.

Additionally, DCBA recently appointed Azusena Favela as the Deputy Director of Economic Development, which includes the CFE. Ms. Favela has over 15 years of experience working with the business community, homebuyers and lenders, community organizations, and emerging entrepreneurs. As Deputy Director, she will lead the development and implementation of program policies and initiatives to meet the mission-critical goals of the division, the department, and your Board. The addition of these positions will significantly help to increase the CFE's capacity to meet the ongoing demand for its services and improve the efficiency of the unit.

## **DEVELOPING A COUNTYWIDE EITC MAXIMIZATION PLAN**

The federal and State EITC are refundable tax credits targeting low-to-moderate income workers. The majority of benefits accrue to people with an adjusted gross income under \$30,000. As noted in our pilot demonstration report, the federal and State EITC are vastly underutilized in the County. Each year, millions of dollars go unclaimed by qualifying taxpayers. Both credits are important because they can substantially increase an income tax refund. For most, an income tax refund is the largest lump sum of money an individual or family receives all year. A refund can allow people to pay down debt and grow emergency funds, and can help reduce reliance on high-cost loans.

Furthermore, research from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the Center for American programs, and other sources illustrates that the EITC helps to reduce poverty and support children's development.

Given these benefits and pursuant to your Board's direction, the CFE is working with other County departments to create an EITC maximization plan to ensure that more County clients are aware of the credits and how to claim them. To support this work, DCBA recently hired a FUSE Fellow to develop and implement our plan. FUSE is a national nonprofit that pairs executive-level fellows with local government agencies to tackle strategic projects with the goal of helping urban communities thrive.<sup>1</sup>

DCBA distributed a survey to department heads on August 22, 2019, to identify departmental strategies that may be complementary to EITC outreach. Twenty-two departments responded. Eleven departments indicated that working to promote the EITC and increase utilization would help them achieve their departmental strategic priorities. DCBA held a kickoff meeting with Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services, Department of Public Health, Department of Children and Family Services, and County Counsel on October 17, 2019, to begin brainstorming partnership opportunities. Since then, the CFE has held additional, one-on-one meetings with departments, including the Department of Public Social Services to better understand what data sources may be available to conduct EITC marketing and identify ways to collaborate on outreach. DCBA will continue to work with departments to create a plan to better inform County clients about tax credits and income tax preparation assistance.

Finally, partnership discussions are underway with Golden State Opportunity Foundation, the organization that manages the statewide CalEITC4me coalition, to determine if the CFE can leverage their text-messaging platform to support the initiative.

## **VITA DESERTS AND VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT**

The IRS's VITA program supports low-to-moderate income Americans, including those with limited means, disabilities, and limited English proficiency, by providing free income tax preparation services. In 2019, tens of thousands of IRS-certified volunteers working at more than 3,700 VITA sites across the country prepared over 1.5 million tax returns, all while achieving a 98 percent accuracy rate, the highest in the tax preparation industry.<sup>2</sup> Typically, VITA services are provided by community-based organizations. The program is an important tool for ensuring that qualifying taxpayers claim the EITC and are connected to other local asset-building services.

According to data received from the IRS Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication division, there were 151 VITA sites throughout the County last year. Those sites filed 58,200 income tax returns and helped local taxpayers claim \$19.1 million in federal EITC funds.

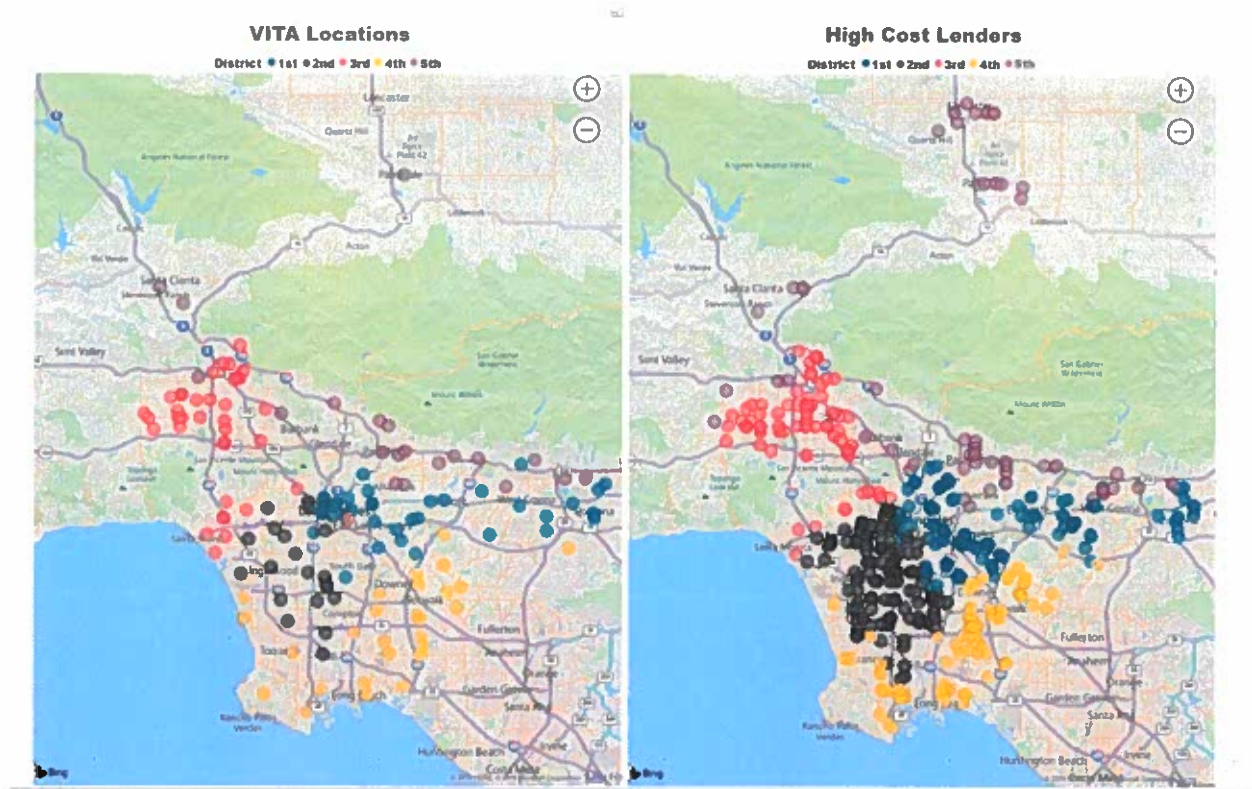
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<sup>1</sup> About Fuse, <https://fusecorps.org/about/>

<sup>2</sup> Prosperity Now blog, June 18, 2019 <https://www.prosperitynow.org/blog/huge-news-thanks-you-vita-about-become-law>



DCBA mapped the location of VITA sites throughout the County and compared it to high-cost lending storefronts using data from the California Department of Business Oversight. Maps and data are provided below.



Supervisorial District	Number of VITA sites per District	Number of VITA sites per District in Unincorporated Areas	Number of HCL per District
District 1	41	1	118
District 2	20	3	122
District 3	41	0	72
District 4	27	2	80
District 5	22	4	60
Total number of sites	151		
Total number of sites in Unincorporated LAC		10	
Total number of HCL			452

Based on the review, the northern region of the County's Fifth Supervisorial District is particularly underserved by VITA services. Countywide, the data and mapping show a need to expand access to affordable asset building services for County residents. For many, such as residents in Antelope Valley, it is more probable to find a high-cost lender

than to find a free tax service provider. This speaks to the need for a permanent, well-trained volunteer force across the County to build the capacity of non-profit organizations to provide VITA services.

With support from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Alliance for Economic Inclusion, CFE has begun discussions with bankers to become strategic partners and a source of VITA volunteers. The CFE has gained the initial support of one local bank and continues to explore partnership opportunities with other financial institutions.

Additionally, the CFE has met with staff from the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office to learn more about the recruitment process for their County Employee Pollworker Program and is working with County Counsel to assess the feasibility of creating a similar program to recruit County employees as VITA volunteers.

### **ESTABLISHING A 501(c)(3)**

Establishing a non-profit organization to support the CFE may help attract, accept, and manage grant funding to advance the CFE's programs and initiatives.

Generally speaking, the process for a County department to create a 501(c)(3) includes the following tasks:

- Obtain authority from the Board of Supervisors;
- Strategic planning to determine the organization's mission and objectives;
- Identifying funding and resources to support the corporation;
- Filing articles of incorporation;
- Naming a board of directors;
- Creating bylaws of the corporation;
- Obtaining an employer identification number from the IRS; and
- Filing a registration form with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts.

The CFE is in the process of evaluating the feasibility of creating a 501(c)(3), including working with a consultant to develop a five-year strategic plan to outline how a 501(c)(3) can support the mission of the CFE. We will update your Board in our next report on the evaluation and plan, and appropriate next steps.

### **DEVELOPING A COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FINANCIAL COACHING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

Financial coaching is widely regarded as an effective tool to help consumers adopt healthy, long-term financial habits and build their assets. Financial coaching services are embedded into many local non-profit asset-building programs, yet there is not a local training entity dedicated to providing skill-building opportunities for financial coaches. Furthermore, there are many untapped opportunities within the County to integrate financial coaching into our social service programs and provide more well-rounded

services to County clients. Establishing a "CFE Training Institute" that provides a local certification program would help us to create a robust network of highly-skilled service providers who are equipped to meet the needs of County constituents.

To accomplish this, the CFE leads a financial capability workgroup composed of senior staff from the following organizations:

- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation;
- Koreatown Youth and Community Center;
- LIFT-LA;
- New Economics for Women;
- East Los Angeles Community Corporation; and
- California State University, Los Angeles – Master of Social Work Department.

The CFE has worked collaboratively with these organizations over the course of several months to:

- Identify the unique challenges that impede the financial wellbeing of County residents;
- Host focus groups with local financial coaches to better understand their needs;
- Assess what is missing from mainstream financial coaching programs; and
- Develop a new financial coaching curriculum that has a regional focus.

The CFE and the financial capability workgroup are finalizing a draft program, and DCBA will begin to identify potential funding sources.

#### **NEXT REPORT IN 120 DAYS**

DCBA will continue to implement this work and provide your Board with a second status update in 120 days.

Should you have any questions, please contact me or Azusena Favela, Deputy Director, at (213) 974-0133 or [afavela@dcba.lacounty.gov](mailto:afavela@dcba.lacounty.gov); or Dawnnesha Smith, Chief, at (213) 974-4120 or [dsmith@dcba.lacounty.gov](mailto:dsmith@dcba.lacounty.gov).

JMN:RC  
AF:DS:rv

c:     Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
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         Public Social Services  
         Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk  
         Workforce Development Aging and Community Services





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Kathryn Barger

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## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS

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*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*



Rafael Carbajal  
Acting Director

Joel Ayala  
Chief of Staff

September 8, 2020

TO: Supervisor Kathryn Barger, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn

FROM: Rafael Carbajal  
Acting Director

### **SECOND STATUS REPORT REGARDING IMPLEMENTING THE COUNTY'S CENTER FOR FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT (ITEM NO. 2, AGENDA OF MAY 21, 2019)**

On September 1, 2016, at your Board's direction, the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) launched the Center for Financial Empowerment (CFE) as a two-year pilot program. On May 21, 2019, your Board adopted a motion authored by Supervisors Kuehl and Solis directing DCBA to implement the CFE as a permanent program within the department. The motion instructed DCBA to:

- In consultation with Chief Executive Office (CEO), report back on new or existing resources to support the appropriate staffing levels needed to execute the ongoing work of the CFE;
- Work in collaboration with relevant Los Angeles County (County) departments to develop and implement a comprehensive Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) maximization plan;
- As part of the Countywide EITC maximization plan, and in consultation with CEO and County Counsel, assess barriers to utilizing County data to conduct EITC outreach, and opportunities for overcoming those barriers so that data can be used effectively as part of an EITC outreach campaign;

- Explore the feasibility of creating a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to increase the CFE's capacity to apply for and accept grants and increase strategic partnerships;
- Develop agreements with relevant partners and nonprofit agencies to support EITC integration and develop a comprehensive plan to recruit Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) volunteers and support year-round EITC outreach campaigns; and
- Develop a County financial coaching certificate program.

The initial report was filed by DCBA on December 6, 2019.<sup>1</sup> In that report, the Department:

- Shared an update on the additional positions that were allocated to the CFE to help improve the team's capacity;
- Provided information on the availability of VITA sites throughout the County; and
- Shared updates on the current progress to develop a local financial coaching certification program in collaboration with local non-profit organizations.

This report serves as a second update to the above-mentioned deliverables and provides an update on the strategic planning process, as well as strategies to work more closely with County departments to increase EITC outreach and utilization among County clients.

## **1. STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Upon the CFE's designation as a permanent program, DCBA entered into a contract with a consultant to support the development of a three-year strategic plan. The consultant conducted 22 stakeholder interviews with senior staff from County departments, Board Deputies, managers from local non-profit organizations, and all members of the CFE Steering Committee. The interviews served as an opportunity to obtain feedback from stakeholders concerning the progress of the CFE and their thoughts on how the CFE may increase its impact.

The following themes emerged from interview responses:

1. The CFE could expand its role in supporting policies that improve the wellbeing of low-to-moderate income County residents. The passage of County-sponsored

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<sup>1</sup> DCBA First Status Report on Implementing the Center for Financial Empowerment:  
[http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1077077\\_2019-12-06StatusReportRegardingImplementingtheCounty\\_sCenterforFinancialEmpowerment.pdf#search="Status Report Regarding Implementing the County's Center for Financial Empowerment"](http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1077077_2019-12-06StatusReportRegardingImplementingtheCounty_sCenterforFinancialEmpowerment.pdf#search=Status%20Report%20Regarding%20Implementing%20the%20County's%20Center%20for%20Financial%20Empowerment)

Assembly Bill 539 (Limon) is an example of the lasting impact that can be achieved through the CFE's partnerships and how the County can influence policy changes that promote consumer financial protections.

2. The CFE is successfully building collaborative relationships across sectors and should continue to identify opportunities to leverage existing County services and systems to align financial empowerment goals.
3. The CFE's strength is serving as a convener and connector. CFE's annual summit is one example of this. CFE should bring together experts across sectors to collaborate on solutions, host learning opportunities, and affect system-changes.
4. CFE-hosted capacity-building trainings have been well received. Expansion of these trainings will improve program integration and create synergy across sectors by providing frequent, reoccurring trainings to County departments and non-profit organizations that help standardize financial coaching and further resource integration across the County.
5. The CFE should increase impact by commissioning research and disseminating it into the field to better understand the challenges of low-to-moderate income County residents and help improve service delivery to that sector.
6. The CFE should narrow its focus and select three priority areas, providing large-scale interventions and program integrations for greater impact.

On February 26, 2020, the CFE hosted a strategic planning session with its Steering Committee to discuss these findings and to begin the process of refining priority areas. Additional information on the CFE's goals and priorities will be provided in subsequent status reports.

As a result of these conversations, the CFE has narrowed its strategic framework to three core areas:

Build Capacity	Convene	Advocate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build capacity of the financial empowerment sector to enhance service delivery to L.A. County residents.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Convene cross sector partners to share best practices, resources, tools, and research to collectively improve systems that promote economic stability and household.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advocate, champion, and collaborate for policies that achieve wealth equity, economic mobility, and consumer protections.</li></ul>

Focus on these core areas will help the CFE strengthen its presence in each field and support its overall goals of building impactful partnerships that improve the financial health of County residents and embedding financial capability into County-run services so that it becomes foundational service component.

The CFE anticipated completing its strategic plan by June 30, 2020. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the Coronavirus a global pandemic which forced DCBA to shift priorities and focus resources on the immediate needs of County constituents. As a result, CFE staff were deployed to the County's Disaster Help Center on March 26, 2020. This shift in priorities caused the strategic plan and other CFE projects to be delayed.

The country is now faced with the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. In a matter of months, the economic devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic has plunged millions of financially vulnerable County residents into deeper financial insecurity. The crisis highlights the existing deep wealth inequities and brings household financial insecurity front and center. A successful local government response will require a combination of short-term recovery and long-term rebuilding strategies that foster economic well-being and opportunities to create prosperity for families hardest hit by the loss of jobs and income. The CFE is currently refining its strategic plan to be responsive to COVID-19 and supportive of existing County efforts. A copy of the finalized strategic plan will be included in an upcoming status report.

## **2. DEVELOPING A COUNTYWIDE EITC MAXIMIZATION PLAN**

The state and federal EITC are refundable tax credits targeting low-to-moderate income workers. Each year, millions of these dollars go unclaimed by qualifying taxpayers in Los Angeles County. The credits help people pay off debt, increase their emergency fund, and can help to reduce reliance on high-cost loans. DCBA engaged a FUSE Fellow<sup>2</sup> in September 2019 to help develop a Countywide plan to maximize uptake of the EITC and other related tax credits which include the California EITC (CalEITC), and California's new Young Child Tax Credit (YCTC). The YCTC adds up to \$1,000 in credits to households with children under the age of 6. Since September 2019, DCBA has continued to meet with County departments and a wide array of stakeholders to explore areas of opportunity for the County to add value in this space and support targeted outreach to County clients.

The maximization plan will include strategies that strengthen collaboration among County departments, foster external partnerships, integrate the use of technology to facilitate targeted outreach, and recruit County employees to serve as volunteer income tax preparers. While the CFE works to fully develop and finalize this plan, the following provides an overview of its suggested strategy.

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<sup>2</sup> FUSE Fellowship Overview: <https://www.fusecorps.org/about/>

Significant inter-departmental and inter-sectoral coordination is necessary to reach tax payers and non-filers who currently do not take advantage of these credits. To align with our strategic framework, we believe CFE's role in this space will entail the following:

Strategic Framing	Suggested Role and/or Activities
<b>BUILD CAPACITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support new solutions and technological innovations to yield more impactful, targeted outreach;</li> <li>• Encourage County employees to serve as volunteer income taxpayers in high-need communities to increase the capacity of the IRS' VITA program;</li> <li>• Facilitate a regional community of practice to provide training and resources to local VITA providers and encourage the sharing of best practices; and</li> <li>• Explore partnership opportunity with Workforce Development Aging &amp; Community Service (WDACS) to embed VITA services into their AJCC program and thereby increase its availability in the County</li> </ul>
<b>CONVENE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead an <i>Equitable Access Group for Local EITC+ Efforts (EAGLE)</i> workgroup of County departments to solicit ideas and resource commitments from all relevant County departments</li> </ul>
<b>ADVOCATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate at the state level for funding, legislative advances, and innovation that could improve the delivery of refundable tax credits to eligible households and/or improve outreach</li> </ul>

As COVID-19 decimates the physical and financial health of low-wage workers, it is even more critical to increase the uptake of EITC and similar tax credits that provide a much-needed infusion of cash for vulnerable families. DCBA, with support from the FUSE Fellow, will work to finalize the plan and begin implementation this fall. A copy of the final plan will be included in the next report to your Board.

### 3. DEVELOPING A COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FINANCIAL COACHING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Financial coaching is a client-driven process whereby individuals work collaboratively with a financial coach to develop personalized financial goals. It is widely regarded as an effective tool to help people adopt long-term healthy financial habits and build assets.



It is also an effective tool to guide people towards support services that can help them improve their well-being. According to research from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, financial coaching results in measurable improvements in financial behavior and overall financial health in objective metrics like savings, debt levels, and credit scores. This research also illustrates that financial coaching can lead to improvements in feelings of financial confidence.

Financial coaching services are embedded into many local non-profit asset-building programs, yet there is not a local training entity dedicated to providing skill-building opportunities for financial coaches. Furthermore, there are many untapped opportunities within the County to integrate financial coaching into its social service programs and provide more well-rounded services to County clients. Establishing a CFE Training Institute that provides a local certification program would help create a robust network of highly skilled service providers who are equipped to meet the needs of County constituents. The need for this service is heightened due to the COVID pandemic. A financial coach can help displaced workers deal with their new financial reality, navigate programs and support services, avoid predatory financial products, and develop plans to help them recover and rebuild.

The CFE has worked collaboratively with senior staff from the following organizations to develop a new financial coaching curriculum that adds a regional lens to this work:

- Cal State Los Angeles – Master of Social Work Department;
- East Los Angeles Community Corporation;
- Koreatown Youth and Community Center;
- LIFT-LA;
- Mexican American Opportunity Foundation; and
- New Economics for Women.

DCBA has identified funding to launch the program next year and plans to procure a training partner by the end of the 2020 calendar year to implement this training institute.

#### **4. ESTABLISHING A 501(c)(3)**

Generally speaking, the process for a County department to create a 501(c)(3) includes the following actions:

- Obtain authority from your Board;
- Strategic planning to determine the organization's mission and objectives;
- Selecting a name;

- Filing Articles of Incorporation;
- Naming a Board of Directors;
- Creating Bylaws of the Corporation;
- Obtaining an employer identification number from the IRS; and
- Filing a registration form with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts.

Establishing a non-profit organization within the CFE could help attract and accept grant funding to advance programs and initiatives. DCBA will continue to explore options to support the growth of the CFE's capacity.

## **5. RESPONDING TO COVID-19**

DCBA was awarded a grant from the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund to participate in its 2020 Financial Navigators cohort. The Financial Navigation program was envisioned to support local government response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its economic fallout. As a Financial Navigators program participant, the CFE will help residents identify and navigate common financial issues related to the current crisis and make referrals to other social services and necessary resources. This program will serve as a complement to the County's existing Disaster Help Center. DCBA is working with the City of Los Angeles to explore partnership opportunities. The local program launch is tentatively scheduled for October 2020.

## **NEXT REPORT IN 120 DAYS**

DCBA will continue to implement this work and provide your Board with a third status update in 120 days that will include our final strategic plan and EITC strategy.

Should you have any questions, please contact myself or Azusena Favela, Deputy Director, at 213-974-0133 or [afavela@dcba.lacounty.gov](mailto:afavela@dcba.lacounty.gov) or Dawnnesha Smith, Chief, at (213) 974-4120 or [dsmith@dcba.lacounty.gov](mailto:dsmith@dcba.lacounty.gov).

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       Public Social Services  
       Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk  
       Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

# CONSUMER & BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Board of Supervisors

February 9, 2021

Hilda L. Solis  
First District

Holly J. Mitchell  
Second District

Sheila Kuehl  
Third District

Janice Hahn  
Fourth District

Kathryn Barger  
Fifth District

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

Director  
Rafael Carbajal

From: Rafael Carbajal  
Director

Chief of Staff  
Joel Ayala

## **THIRD STATUS REPORT REGARDING IMPLEMENTING THE COUNTY'S CENTER FOR FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT (ITEM NO. 2, AGENDA OF MAY 21, 2019)**

On September 1, 2016, at your Board's direction, the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) launched the Center for Financial Empowerment (CFE) as a two-year pilot program. On May 21, 2019, your Board adopted a motion authored by Supervisors Kuehl and Solis directing DCBA to implement CFE as a permanent program within the department. The motion instructed DCBA to:

- In consultation with Chief Executive Officer (CEO), report back on new or existing resources to support the appropriate staffing levels needed to execute the ongoing work of CFE;
- Work in collaboration with relevant Los Angeles County (County) departments to develop and implement a comprehensive Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) maximization plan;
- As part of the Countywide EITC maximization plan, and in consultation with CEO and County Counsel, assess barriers to utilizing County data to conduct EITC outreach, and opportunities for overcoming those barriers so that data can be used effectively as part of an EITC outreach campaign;
- Explore the feasibility of creating a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to increase CFE's capacity to apply for and accept grants and increase strategic partnerships;



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- Develop agreements with relevant partners and nonprofit agencies to support EITC integration and develop a comprehensive plan to recruit Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) volunteers and support year-round EITC outreach campaigns; and
- Develop a County of Los Angeles Financial Coaching certificate program.

This report serves as an update to our last report filed on September 8, 2020.<sup>1</sup>

## **1. STAFFING RESOURCES**

As part of its strategic plan, CFE is currently working to fill three vacancies: two Program Manager positions and one Program Associate position. The Program Managers will support with research, program design and implementation, and support the expansion of the CFE's initiatives. They will also oversee day to day operations of the CFE and supervise staff. The Program Associate will provide administrative support to staff and assist with our public-facing programs. These positions will help deepen the CFE's impact, expand its reach in communities, and support the implementation of the strategic plan.

## **2. DEVELOPING A COUNTYWIDE EITC MAXIMIZATION PLAN**

Refundable tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and California's Young Child Tax Credit are critical opportunities to help lift low-moderate income taxpayers out of poverty. Each year, millions of these dollars go unclaimed by qualifying Los Angeles County residents. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, many low-moderate income workers have faced furloughs, temporary layoffs, and in many cases, permanent job loss. Helping workers to maximize refundable tax credits is even more important now, as tens of thousands of families struggle with financial instability while the pandemic continues. Additionally, California has expanded eligibility for the California Earned Income Tax Credit to Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) holders, beginning in the 2020 tax year, increasing the need for outreach.

The Countywide Maximization Plan was completed in September 2020 and is now being implemented by CFE. The plan aligns with CFE's new strategic framework, which was discussed in the last report:

### **1. Advocate**

- a. Advocate for the expansion of EITC innovation and the removal of systemic barriers that contribute to low filings;

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<sup>1</sup> Second Status Report Regarding Implementing the County's Center for Financial Empowerment (Item No. 2, Agenda of May 21, 2019): [http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1077793\\_2020-09-08ImplementingtheCFEpostCOVIDsecondreportFinal\\_rc.pdf](http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/bc/1077793_2020-09-08ImplementingtheCFEpostCOVIDsecondreportFinal_rc.pdf)

- b. Invest in needed research to better serve target populations; and
- c. Advocate for better data sharing amongst County departments to improve outreach and program integration.

2. Convene

- a. Facilitate a workgroup amongst County Departments and other stakeholders to foster collaboration and continued success.

3. Build Capacity

- a. Support the growth of VITA sites by:
  - i. Recruiting County employees to volunteer as income tax preparers; and
  - ii. Facilitating the creation of new VITA sites.
- b. Use digital outreach resources to improve outreach effectiveness.

CFE launched a new workgroup of County departments called the Equitable Access Group for Local EITC+ Efforts, referred to as EAGLE. The workgroup has three main objectives: (1) identify outreach opportunities within their programs where tax credit information can be shared with County clients; (2) explore opportunities to increase VITA capacity; and (3) advocate for policies that increase EITC access and VITA support. The workgroup has representation from the following departments:

- Public Health;
- Public Social Services;
- Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services;
- Children and Family Services; and
- Consumer and Business Affairs – Office of Immigrant Affairs.

Collectively, we worked with the United Ways of California to develop a Los Angeles County EITC text message campaign. A text message campaign allows us to design an automated, yet interactive marketing tool to facilitate digital outreach since in-person outreach is restricted due to COVID. The EAGLEs developed the following custom keywords for our target populations:

KEYWORD	TARGET AUDIENCE
MYMONEYLA	Transition age youth
TAXCREDITSLA	Workers who earn less than \$56,844 per year
GETMONEY	African American families
INCOMETAX	ITIN workers



The text message campaign was launched on January 29, 2021, to coincide with National EITC Day. By sending a text to 211-211, County residents can estimate their eligibility for tax credits, connect to free online tax filing resources, and obtain information about the availability of VITA services.

Additionally, each department is developing their own implementation plan to identify outreach opportunities where they can share information with clients. In collaboration with Free Tax Prep LA, a short animated promotional video is being created to inform residents about the tax credit and available free income tax preparation resources. We will also work with Free Tax Prep LA to create a PSA-style video featuring local elected leaders that we can share with the public during the first week of the filing season, which starts on February 12, 2021.

In addition to this work, CFE has formalized a relationship with the Department of Public Health (DPH) to advance this work. DPH is working to reduce disparities in infant mortality in the County through the implementation of an African American Infant and Maternal Mortality (AAIMM) Prevention Initiative. The Initiative includes countywide and regional community engagement, provider training, research, public awareness and multiple clinical and community interventions. Utilization of the EITC has been shown nationally to reduce adverse birth outcomes and infant mortality rates by relieving families of stress caused by financial hardship and improving financial security. CFE will partner with DPH to increase EITC outreach in AAIMM-target communities and facilitate opportunities to connect African American communities to free income tax preparation services.

### **3. DEVELOPING A COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FINANCIAL COACHING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

Financial coaching is a client-driven process whereby individuals work collaboratively with a financial coach to develop personalized financial goals. It is widely regarded as an effective tool to help people adopt long-term healthy financial habits and build assets. Although the impact of financial coaching is well documented, there is no consistency in how it is delivered or measured. Additionally, there is no local training entity dedicated to providing ongoing, regional training to service providers that equips them with the information, skills and resources they need to meet the diverse needs of County residents. The CFE has worked with staff at six local non-profit organizations to develop a training curriculum that can help us meet this need. Since the last report, CFE has developed an implementation plan that includes research on certified trainers, curriculum topics, and targeted trainees. DCBA will enter into contract with a trainer to launch the certification program in late spring.

#### **4. ESTABLISHING A 501 (C)(3)**

Generally, the process for a County department to create a 501(c) (3) includes the following actions:

- Obtain authority from your Board;
- Strategic planning to determine the organization's mission and objectives;
- Selecting a name;
- Filing Articles of Incorporation;
- Naming a Board of Directors;
- Creating Bylaws of the Corporation;
- Obtaining an employer identification number from the IRS; and
- Filing a registration form with the California Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts.

Establishing a non-profit organization within DCBA would help the CFE attract and receive grant funding to advance its programs and initiatives. DCBA's has engaged with other departments who have established a 501(c) (3) and will continue to explore options to support the growth of the CFE's capacity.

#### **5. RESPONDING TO COVID-19**

##### *Financial Navigators*

DCBA was awarded a grant from the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund to participate in the 2020 Financial Navigators cohort. The Financial Navigators Program supports local government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic by helping residents address their financial challenges caused by the economic downturn.

Across the Country, even in the best of times, individuals struggle with their finances – almost one in five households have zero, or negative, net worth, and a quarter of families have no retirement savings. Almost 40 percent of adults are not able to cover a \$400 emergency. This current pandemic has brought these financial challenges into focus and compounded it with a number of new issues.

Through the Financial Navigators Program, DCBA staff help individuals and families prioritize their financial concerns, identify next steps, and navigate available local, state, and federal resources that can support their ability to rebound and rebuild.

CFE launched on October 26, 2020. The following is a summary of the program services from October 26 – December 31, 2020:

- Total Financial Navigation Sessions Held: 132;
- Total Topics Discussed: 627;
  - Top 10 topics discussed:
    - Housing Expenses – Renters Assistance;
    - Job Loss – Job Search & Skill Building;
    - Food/Groceries – Pantries & Delivery Services;
    - Emergency Loans;
    - Housing Expenses – Utilities Hardship;
    - Food Groceries – SNAP/ WIC Benefits;
    - Job Loss – Unemployment Insurance;
    - Credit Card – Negotiating Debts;
    - Emergency Loans – Small Business Support; and
    - Credit Cards – Hardship Payments.

This information illustrates the diverse financial challenges faced by residents.

#### *CFE COVID Conversations*

In response to COVID-19, CFE held a series of webinars called *CFE COVID Conversations* to help County and non-profit service providers stay current on trending issues and new resources in response to COVID-19. The sessions covered a wide array of topics such as: *Making Sense of the Moratoriums; Exploring Racial Inequities and Mental Health Challenges Amid COVID-19; and Responding to the Financial Needs of Gender-Based Violence Survivors during COVID-19, to name a few*. Additionally, CFE launched a separate track called *Help for Homeowners* to assist County property owners in understanding their rights under the CARES Act local protections aimed at preventing foreclosures during COVID. These webinars drew almost 1000 participants in 2020. The CFE COVID Conversations will continue throughout the pandemic.

## **5. Miscellaneous**

#### *Children's Savings Account Program*

On August 14, 2018, your Board directed the CEO, in conjunction with the Interim Director of DCBA and the Director of the Center for Strategic Public-Private Partnerships, to report back in writing within 90 days on the feasibility of the County's participation in the Children's Savings Account (CSA) program, currently operated by the City of Los Angeles (City) and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). The proposed program calls for CSAs to be opened for all first graders enrolled in LAUSD schools. The County's role would be to seed the CSAs of LAUSD-enrolled first graders residing in unincorporated areas of the County and cities outside of the City. CFE is actively engaged in the

development of this program and is working with the CEO, County Counsel, the City, and LAUSD to develop a Memorandum of Understanding and program protocols with the above partners. The program is scheduled to launch in the first quarter of 2021.

DCBA will continue to implement this work and provide your Board with a status report in 180 days.

Should you have any questions, please contact me or Azusena Favela, Deputy Director, at (213) 974-0133 or [afavela@dcba.lacounty.gov](mailto:afavela@dcba.lacounty.gov); or Dawwnesha Smith, Chief, at (213) 974-4120 or [dsmith@dcba.lacounty.gov](mailto:dsmith@dcba.lacounty.gov).

RC:JA  
AF:DS:rv

c:     Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
          Chief Executive Office  
          County Counsel  
          Human Resources  
          Women and Girls Initiative



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

# CONSUMER & BUSINESS AFFAIRS

Board of Supervisors

November 12, 2021

Hilda L. Solis  
First District

Holly J. Mitchell  
Second District

Sheila Kuehl  
Third District

Janice Hahn  
Fourth District

Kathryn Barger  
Fifth District

To: Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chair  
Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Janice Hahn  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

Director

Rafael Carbajal

From: Rafael Carbajal  
Director

Chief of Staff  
Joel Ayala

## **REPORT BACK REGARDING IMPLEMENTING THE COUNTY'S CENTER FOR FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT (ITEM NO. 2, AGENDA OF MAY 21, 2019)**

On September 1, 2016, at your Board's direction, the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) launched the Center for Financial Empowerment (CFE) as a two-year pilot program. On May 21, 2019, your Board adopted a motion authored by Supervisors Kuehl and Solis directing DCBA to implement CFE as a permanent program within the department. The motion instructed DCBA to:

- In consultation with Chief Executive Officer (CEO), report back on new or existing resources to support the appropriate staffing levels needed to execute the ongoing work of CFE;
- Work in collaboration with relevant Los Angeles County (County) departments to develop and implement a comprehensive Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) maximization plan;
- As part of the Countywide EITC maximization plan, and in consultation with CEO and County Counsel, assess barriers to utilizing County data to conduct EITC outreach and opportunities for overcoming those barriers effectively and use data as part of an EITC outreach campaign;
- Explore the feasibility of creating a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization to increase CFE's capacity to apply for and accept grants and increase strategic partnerships;



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- Develop agreements with relevant partners and nonprofit agencies to support EITC integration and develop a comprehensive plan to recruit Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) volunteers and support year-round EITC outreach campaigns; and
- Develop a County of Los Angeles Financial Coaching certificate program.

This report serves as an update to our last report filed on February 9, 2021.

## **1. STAFFING RESOURCES**

DCBA has expanded the CFE team to help improve its efficiency and capacity. An Administrative Services Manager and Program Manager recently joined CFE. They will provide direct supervision of staff, assist in the daily operations of the unit, and support the successful implementation of American Rescue Plan programming.

## **2. DEVELOPING A COUNTYWIDE EITC MAXIMIZATION PLAN**

### *Tax Credits*

Refundable tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and California's Young Child Tax Credit are critical opportunities to help lift low-moderate income taxpayers out of poverty. Each year, millions of these dollars go unclaimed by qualifying Los Angeles County residents. CFE hired a Fuse Fellow to help identify and implement strategies to improve EITC outreach and usage. CFE began implementing this work in September 2020, which included the launch of a new workgroup of County departments called the Equitable Access Group for Local EITC+ Efforts, referred to as EAGLE. The workgroup has three main objectives: (1) identify outreach opportunities within their programs where tax credit information can be shared with County clients; (2) explore opportunities to increase VITA capacity; and (3) advocate for policies that increase EITC access and VITA support.

The American Rescue Plan offers an unprecedented opportunity to reduce poverty. The landmark legislation provides the largest Child Tax Credit (CTC) in history. Experts predict that the CTC can cut child poverty by 45 percent nationwide. Additionally, the state expanded the Golden State Stimulus to make Individual Taxpayer Identification Number holders eligible.

On August 10, 2021, your Board directed DCBA's Office of Immigrant Affairs (OIA) and CFE to launch a campaign to inform and encourage immigrant families to apply for the CTC and the California's Golden State Stimulus due to concerns that many eligible families would miss out on these funds due to lack of awareness, non-filing, and misinformation about public charge and the impact to their immigration status.

CFE and OIA worked with the EAGLE group to collaborate on outreach opportunities to leverage our various touchpoints to help raise awareness of these credits. This includes:

Activity	Date	Audience/Location/Outcome
<b>In-person Community Outreach</b>	July, August, September 2021	Participated in community events in Florence/Firestone, Walnut Park, Long Beach, La Puente.
<b>Ethnic Media Townhall</b>	July 29, 2021	Hosted an Ethnic Media Townhall that drew more than 50 media outlets.
<b>Presentations for Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) Community Schools Initiative</b>	August 26, 2021	<p>Presented tax credit information to the following school districts at a LACOE Community Schools virtual convening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baldwin Park</li> <li>• Centennial</li> <li>• Duarte</li> <li>• Ganesha</li> <li>• Glenn</li> <li>• Little Rock</li> <li>• Lynwood</li> <li>• Montebello</li> <li>• Paramount</li> <li>• Santa Monica/Basset</li> </ul> <p>Our social media toolkit was also shared and administrators were encouraged to post information on their respective platforms and newsletters to increase outreach to local parents. Additional training was provided to staff at LACOE's Parent Education and Consultation Program and to Littlerock High School's Parent Advisory Council.</p>
<b>Developed and Distributed a Social Media Toolkit</b>	Ongoing, launched September 2021	Compiled a social media toolkit using an "Immigrant Equity Lens" to promote the CTC and provide tips on how to claim the credit. Distributed to County departments and partner community-based organizations.

<b>Training for Department of Public Health Navigators/<i>Promotoras</i></b>	Sept. 9, 2021	Trained 51 navigators/ <i>promotoras</i> in the Department of Public Health about the CTC and other state and federal tax credits and stimulus payments available to LMI communities and immigrants.
<b>Distributed Collateral Material</b>	October 2021	Worked with a non-profit partner to design and distribute 50,000 promotional postcards to be shared at high-traffic areas such as libraries and parks.
<b>Held a Spanish-language CTC Webinar</b>	October 2021	Held a Spanish-language webinar in partnership with a local community-based organization to increase outreach to monolingual Spanish speakers. The recorded webinar was also shared on our social media platforms and listserv.

### *Cares First Village*

On May 18, 2021, your Board instructed the Director of DCBA, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Office, Department of Human Resources, and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to report back on opportunities to help people experiencing homelessness receive unclaimed tax credits and stimulus payments.

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, federal and state governments enacted a series of fiscal relief bills in response to the economic downturn caused by the public health crisis. Economic impact payments, more commonly known as “stimulus checks,” have been a lifeline for struggling households. These direct payments provide financial relief to qualified individuals and families to help reduce the financial strain caused by the pandemic. The payments helped millions of people pay for critical necessities such as housing costs and food, pay down debt or increase savings. People experiencing homelessness (PEH) are likely to miss out on these payments because one must file an income tax return or use the Child Tax Credit Non-filer Sign-up Tool to access the funds, both of which present barriers to unhoused individuals.

CFE partnered with the Mexican American Opportunity Foundation and Kaimore, two local community-based organizations, to pilot free income tax preparation services at Supervisor Hilda Solis’ Cares First Village<sup>1</sup> to help PEH claim the Golden State Stimulus

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<sup>1</sup> Cares First Village is a 4 acre homeless shelter site located near downtown Los Angeles that opened in April 2021

by the October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline, and to help inform our long-term strategy for addressing the directives in the motion.

CFE is working with its partners to assess the lessons learned and compile a final report summarizing the pilot. Initial findings are as follows:

- Number of income tax returns successfully filed: 58
- Percentage of residents served who were unbanked: 83%
- Total amount of Golden State Stimulus dollars claimed: \$34,800
- Total amount of Federal and State income tax refunds awarded: \$75,539

CFE is pleased to have had the opportunity to work with local CBOs and Cares First Village staff to provide an often-overlooked service to PEH. Direct cash payments are arguably one of the best ways to provide immediate relief to people facing poverty. Because of this support, (qualifying) Cares First Village residents were able to claim federal Economic Impact Payments and the state and federal Earned Income Tax Credit, in addition to the Golden State Stimulus.

### **3. DEVELOPING A COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES FINANCIAL COACHING CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

Financial coaching is a client-driven process whereby individuals work collaboratively with a financial coach to develop personalized financial goals. It is widely regarded as an effective tool to help people adopt long-term healthy financial habits and build assets. Although the impact of financial coaching is well documented, there is no consistency in how it is delivered or measured. Additionally, there is no local training entity dedicated to providing ongoing, regional training to service providers that equips them with the information, skills and resources they need to meet the diverse needs of County residents. The pandemic highlighted the need to integrate financial capability strategies into local government programs to support the multifaceted needs of disadvantaged communities. CFE has met with several training organizations and is in the process of finalizing a partnership with the vendor who best meets the goals of the project. Once the contract is executed, CFE will collaborate with local community-based organizations and County departments to launch a training institute that will work to offer a financial coaching training certification for local providers and serve as a tool to embed a financial capability approach into County-administered programs.

### **4. RESPONDING TO COVID-19**

#### *Financial Navigators*

As reported in the February 9, 2021 report, DCBA was awarded a grant from the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund to participate in the 2020 Financial Navigators cohort.

The Financial Navigators Program supports local government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic by helping residents address their financial challenges caused by the economic downturn. Through the Financial Navigators Program, DCBA staff help individuals and families prioritize their financial concerns, identify next steps, and navigate available local, state, and federal resources that can support their ability to rebound and rebuild.

CFE launched on October 26, 2020. The following is a summary of the program services from October 26, 2020 – November 8, 2021:

- Total Financial Navigation Sessions Held: 962
- Average Client Income: Under \$25,000

Top 10 Areas Where Clients Lived		
Zip code	City/Community	District
90022	East LA	1st
90011	South LA	1st & 2nd
90044	Athens	2nd
90028	Hollywood	3rd
90813	Long Beach	4th
91402	Panorama City	3rd
91406	Van Nuys	3rd
90020	Koreatown/ Mid-Wilshire/Hancock Park	4th
90046	Mount Olympus (City of LA)	3rd
91342	Lakeview Terrace/Sylmar	3rd & 5th

- Total Topics Discussed: 2,824
  - This demonstrates that most people struggle with a myriad of issues and competing financial hardships.
  - Top 10 questions and issues clients faced:
    1. Housing Expenses – Renters Assistance;
    2. Housing Expenses -- Utilities Hardship
    3. Job Loss – Job Search & Skill Building;
    4. Food/Groceries – Pantries & Delivery Services;
    5. Food Groceries – SNAP/ WIC Benefits;
    6. Emergency Loans – small dollar personal loans;
    7. Credit Cards – Hardship Payment Plan;



8. Income Tax Filing {inquiries about free income tax services, stimulus and tax credit issues};
9. Emergency Loans – Small Business Support;
10. Organizing Finances; and
11. Credit Card – Negotiating Debt.

This information illustrates the diverse and serious financial challenges faced by low-income County residents impacted by the pandemic. Additional reporting and recommendations for potential ongoing programming will be compiled after the program sunsets.

## 5. American Rescue Plan Funding

The landmark American Rescue Plan Act represents an unprecedented opportunity for local government to make direct investments into the communities hardest hit by the public health and economic impacts of the pandemic. CFE offered several proposals to provide recommendations on how your Board may be able to use some of the funds to address the negative economic impacts of vulnerable populations. CFE was awarded \$8.4 million dollars in funding to cultivate financial empowerment initiatives to support the Board's overall goal of building back better.

A summary of our programming is as follows:

<b>Breaking the Cycle of Intergenerational Poverty</b> <i>Disrupt the cycle of poverty by building intergenerational wealth in communities with historically limited economic opportunities and relatively poor health and educational outcomes.</i>		
<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) for People Experiencing Homelessness</b>	\$2.3M	Work with homeless services providers to increase tax filings for homeless and formerly homeless individuals and families, prioritizing meeting the deadline for non-filers to receive federal and state stimulus checks.
<b>Financial Coaching Partnerships</b>	\$1.2M	Establish a network of financial ambassadors to provide financial coaching and debt avoidance services for LA County residents impacted by COVID-19.
<b>Grants to CBO's Focused on Financial Wellbeing and Wealth Building in Low-Income and Immigrant Communities</b>	\$3.5M	Grants to community-based organizations and community development financial institutions that serve LA County's low-income communities of color, with a focus on intergenerational wealth-building, financial coaching, and homeownership.

**Addressing Trauma and Violence**

*Address the devastating impacts of violence and trauma, which have been exacerbated by the economic and isolating effects of the pandemic.*

Program	Amount	Description
<b>Small Dollar Loans and Grants for Domestic Violence Survivors</b>	\$1.4M	Provide survivors of domestic violence with small-dollar grants and interest-free loans to pay for relocation expenses, medical bills, and other costs necessary to secure financial independence.

We are in the program design phase of the proposals and looking forward to launching these initiatives in the 2022 calendar year.

## 6. Next Steps

This concludes our report-back on the implementation of CFE. CFE started as a small pilot project in 2016 and continues to grow in momentum and impact. Recognizing the impact and the role CFE can play in both post-pandemic recovery and efforts to alleviate poverty and build wealth, DCBA will provide a yearly update highlighting its efforts and potential opportunities to continue advancing CFE. We appreciate your Board entrusting us to help cultivate this concept and look forward to the ongoing growth and development of the work.

Should you have any questions, please contact me or Azusena Favela, Deputy Director, at (213) 213-5494 or afavela@dcba.lacounty.gov.

RC:JA

AF:DS:ev

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
Chief Executive Office  
County Counsel