

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS HILDA L. SOLIS
AND KATHRYN BARGER**

AUGUST 13, 2019

Foster Youth to Independence Initiative for Former Foster Youth

Los Angeles County serves more than 34,000 children and young people, including more than 2,000 young people in extended foster care, in its child welfare system. As young people exit foster care on their 21st birthday or elect to exit sooner, identifying and accessing stable housing is frequently among their most significant challenges.

In the 2019 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, Los Angeles County found that nearly 4,000 young people were experiencing homelessness, which is a 22% increase over the previous year. More than half (57%) of participants in the Youth Coordinated Entry System report some type of contact with the foster care and/or Probation systems.

Although the countywide homeless services delivery system housed more young people in 2018 than ever before, more young people are falling into homelessness. Los Angeles County must therefore go upstream and prevent homelessness before it occurs. That prevention must begin by serving young people in the foster care system, in part, because they are already in the care of Los Angeles County, and we have a responsibility to

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ensure their wellbeing.

Young people transitioning out of foster care often experience significant trauma throughout their young lives. Housing, coupled with supportive services, can mean the difference between homelessness and long-term success. Providing young people transitioning out of foster care with housing will provide much-needed stability allowing them to focus on school and employment opportunities.

Recently, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced a new opportunity, proposed by young people currently and formerly in foster care, for cross-system collaboration to prevent homelessness among young people with a current or prior history of child welfare involvement. HUD's new Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative offers housing assistance to young people aging out of foster care and who are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

The FYI Initiative will offer up to 25 housing vouchers per year on a first come, first serve basis to local public housing authorities (PHAs) to prevent or end homelessness among young people under the age of 25 who are, or have recently left, the foster care system without a place to live. The vouchers are available to PHAs not already administering Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers. Therefore, the two largest PHAs in Los Angeles County (Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles County Development Authority) are not eligible; however, the FYI Initiative requires partnership between the child welfare agency and local PHAs. Los Angeles County, therefore, as administrator of the child welfare agency, holds a critical role to ensure young people access this necessary and exciting opportunity.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the CEO Homeless Initiative, in collaboration with the Los Angeles County

Development Authority, the Department of Children & Family Services, and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, to identify local public housing authorities (PHAs) eligible to apply for the new housing vouchers made available by HUD and offer technical assistance to the PHAs willing to apply for and operate the new housing vouchers;

2. Direct the Department of Children & Family Services, upon identification of PHAs eligible to participate in the program, to sign the Memorandum of Understanding necessary for PHAs to apply; and
3. Direct the CEO to report back to the Board of Supervisors with updates on the actions in the directives above in ninety (90) days.

WE FURTHER MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct CEO Legislative Affairs to monitor and support legislative and administrative efforts to continue and augment the FYI Initiative or similar efforts.

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