

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN AND  
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February 9, 2021

**Project Roomkey Extensions and Expansion with 100% FEMA Reimbursement**

Project Roomkey was established in March 2020 as part of the State of California’s and County of Los Angeles response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of Project Room Key was to provide non-congregate shelter options for people experiencing homelessness, protect human life, and minimize strain on health care system capacity.

Project Roomkey provides a safe place for isolation for people who are experiencing homelessness and are at high risk for medical complications should they become infected.

Since its inception Project Roomkey has been able to provide temporary housing for over 7000 individuals who are 65 and older and/or with underlying health issues. Initially this program was only to last 3 months with extensions. Because of the high need for these units, the County of Los Angeles in coordination with our partners have pushed Project Roomkey closures out as far as possible. There has been uncertainty regarding the duration of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding and there was a 25% funding local burden imposed by the Trump Administration.

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On Thursday, January 21, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. issued an executive action directing FEMA to reimburse cities and counties for 100% of what they spend on non-congregate shelters through September 2021. This increase from 75% to 100% FEMA funding will only enable the County to extend/expand Project Roomkey if the federal government provides this funding to the County upfront, as the County does not have the ability during the pandemic to fund additional Project Roomkey costs itself and then be reimbursed as much as several years in the future.

COVID-19 infections among our unhoused population are averaging about 60 new cases each week through the winter and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health reported 4,578 total infection cases among people experiencing homelessness as of January 4, 2021.

**WE, THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors direct the CEO and The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to report back in 15 days on opportunities for extending, renewing, and/or expanding county-contracted Project Roomkey sites, with the goal of housing our most vulnerable; including master leasing hotels and motels, and including those with fewer than 100 rooms. The report back should include potential funding sources

**WE, FURTHER MOVE** that the Washington, D.C. advocates send a letter to President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. and the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) urging them to provide upfront the funds needed to extend and expand Project Roomkey or shorten the FEMA reimbursement timeframe.

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