

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY - DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH  
COUNTYWIDE HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION RESOURCE  
DEVELOPMENT  
CITY SHELTER PLUS CARE PROGRAM**

**Guidelines for Case Manager / Housing Liaison Referral Letter**

**Must be on Agency letterhead.**

**First Paragraph**

- Just one or two sentences describing you agency's program(s) (Attaching an agency brochure helps).
- Applicant's entry date into your agency's program.
- Applicant's exit date from your agency's program. (If applicable, explain why the Applicant is leaving your agency's program, and identify the linkage schedule and the next provider to whom Applicant will be linked — agency name, case manager name and phone number).
- Say where the applicant is living at the present time.
  - If he or she is in a shelter or transitional living program, ask the shelter to write a letter on their letterhead (and add their pamphlet, if available).
  - If the applicant is living on the "streets," include information specifying where he or she can be found (e.g., "Ms. Jones resides in the alley directly behind the Baja Fresh Restaurant located at 6043 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood, CA 90028. I have met with her for case management at this location on the following dates: 01/23/04, 02/06/04, 03/10/04 and 04/13/04. She received a police citation for sleeping in the alley on the following dates: 05/23/04, and 05/30/04).

**Troubleshooting**

- If the exit date at a shelter or transitional living program has passed, then explain why the Applicant is still in the program.
- *Example:* "Even though Mr. Smith's residential time at Hugh Heffner's Transitional Living Center has expired, we received permission to allow him to stay here until he is approved for a City Shelter Plus Care Certificate."
- Be mindful if you allow an Applicant to stay at your facility past their expiration date (i.e., identify why and for how long).

**Second Paragraph**

- Narrative outline of the Applicant's homeless history, with **NO** time gaps.
- Identify time periods Applicant can't recall, if any.
- This detailed history should begin from when Applicant began seeing the case manager. If that time is less than two years, then the case manager should include the Applicant's recollection of their homelessness prior to engagement.
- Include (1) the specific date Applicant first became homeless and (2) the event that caused Applicant's to become homeless. If the event is

documented (e.g., eviction papers, motel receipts, etc.) reference them here and include them in the application.

- Identify and explain **all** Applicant telephone numbers and addresses disclosed **anywhere** in the application package, including the address on the Applicant's CDL or other photo ID.
- Explain if the Applicant cannot live at / return to any of these addresses.

### **Third Paragraph**

- Explain why you think this Applicant meets target population for Shelter Plus Care (Remember: the Applicant has to be ill enough to meet the service match).
- Mental illness should only be mentioned (e.g., "Mr. Burnett has a mental illness, attends all appointment regularly at the clinic, and is medication compliant").
- Explain the Applicant's experience with your program.
- Always include strengths and positive points concerning the application.
- Mention Independent Living Skills, especially money management. (Place the person you have chosen for a Shelter Plus Care Certificate into a Community Living Program or Independent Living Skills class).

### **Fourth Paragraph**

- If children are involved, please state: (1) where they are (2) who is supporting them, and (3) if the child is in placement, attach court paperwork indicating who has custody and a letter from the Children Social Worker indicating that the child will be allowed to reside with the applicant in the apartment.
- **Criminal Background Checks:** Criminal background checks are required for all adult family members (18 years and over) that will be residing with the applicant. Provide information concerning the following:
  - If the adult family member has been convicted of any drug or alcohol related offenses, explain and document that treatment (including residential and outpatient substance abuse treatment, 12 step meetings, etc.) s/he has been involved in and completed.
  - If the adult family member has been convicted of a violent offence, explain and document what treatment (including anger management classes, and individual therapy, etc.) s/he has been involved in and completed.
- The Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles HAS NOT ASKED FOR A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK FOR THE APPLICANT. This information is collected elsewhere in the application and does not need to be mentioned in the referral letter.

### **Fifth Paragraph**

- Closing remarks and contact information for the referring clinician or case manager.

**Salutation,**

**Signature**  
**Title**