



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS  
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY YOUTH COMMISSION  
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION  
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 374-A  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012  
<https://youthcommission.lacounty.gov>**

**Thursday, March 28, 2024**



**6:30 PM**

Video for the entire meeting. (24-1217)

**Attachments:** [VIDEO](#)

**I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Land Acknowledgment. (24-1063)

**Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez called the meeting to order at 6:42 p.m.  
County Staff conducted Roll Call, and Commissioner Clarissa Peña read  
the County Land Acknowledgement.**

**Present:** Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Christopher Espino, Commissioner Luisa Flores Urrutia, Commissioner Christian Gudiel, Commissioner Martine Jones, Commissioner Clarissa Peña, Commissioner Brittianna Robinson, Commissioner Evelyn Karina Rodriguez, Commissioner Myriah Smiley and Commissioner Angela Young

**Absent:** Co-Chair Ricardo Ortega Martinez Jr., Commissioner Sherrie Bradford, Commissioner La'Toya Cooper and Commissioner Flo Valenzuela

2. Approval of minutes from the regular meeting of February 29, 2024. (24-1064)

**On motion of Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Robinson, and duly carried, the minutes from the meeting of February 29, 2024, were approved by the following vote:**

**Ayes:** 11 - Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Cristopher Espino, Commissioner Luisa Flores Urrutia, Commissioner Christian Gudiel, Commissioner Martine Jones, Commissioner Clarissa Peña, Commissioner Brittianna Robinson, Commissioner Evelyn Karina Rodriguez, Commissioner Myriah Smiley and Commissioner Angela Young

**Absent:** 4 - Co-Chair Ricardo Ortega Martinez Jr., Commissioner Sherrie Bradford, Commissioner La'Toya Cooper and Commissioner Florencia Flo Valenzuela

**Attachments:** [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

## **II. REPORTS**

### **3. Leadership Report. (24-1065)**

**Co-Chair Hernandez introduced Commissioner Elizondo who provided a report on the Education Coordinating Council (ECC). Currently the ECC is focusing on their strategic plan as well as Youth Engagement and Advocacy. Commissioner Elizondo led a discussion with sub-committees and community partners with a focus on the importance of including youth throughout the strategic plan process. He is also working with the ECC and creating partnerships with community colleges and K-12 partnerships.**

**Co-Chair Hernandez reported that there will be representation by the Youth Commission on the Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) Mental Health and Wellness Symposium to be held on April 20, 2024.**

**Commissioners Gudiel, Jones, Rodriguez and Smiley will be attending and provided background on the symposium and the various exercises to be introduced.**

**Commissioners Gudiel, Robinson and Rodriguez provided an update on the L.A. Rams program held at the Dorothy Kirby Center and Camp Kilpatrick. Commissioner Robinson voiced her concern of youth at the Camps having access to resources when they exit. Commissioner Rodriguez spoke about college pathways.**

**Co-Chair Hernandez provided an after-event update on the Fifth Supervisorial District's Listening Session. The next listening session will be held in the Second Supervisorial District on May 18, 2024.**

### **III. UPDATES AND ACTION ITEMS**

4. Operations Committee update by Committee Chair Joshua Elizondo. (24-1066)

**Commissioner Elizondo, Chair, Operations Committee, provided an update on the videos regarding onboarding commissioners, the application process, and commonly asked questions. A final script has been drafted for the commonly asked questions and will be presented to the whole Commission for review at the May meeting. The videos will be one to two minutes with stock animation. He then reported that there will be two vacancies for at large commissioner seats due to Commissioners terming out in July. Recruitment will begin in May 2024 with recommendations to the Board of Supervisors for approval thereafter.**

5. Youth Engagement Committee (YEC) update by Committee Chair La'Toya Cooper and YEC recommendations to take the following actions:

- 1) Approve sharing Awareness Videos at regular meetings on various topics such as the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, Foster Care and Mental Health Awareness, etc. and video timeframes not to exceed a specified time; and
- 2) Approve revising the October schedule to include the YEC End Year Event. (24-1067)

**This item was tabled in order to take up Item No. 7.**

**Later in the meeting, in the absence of YEC Chair Commissioner Cooper, Co-Chair Hernandez opened the floor to discussion on approving awareness videos at the regular meetings on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, including additional topics such as Foster Care, and Mental Health Awareness, and the video timeframes. Executive Director Tiara Summers clarified that the item up for approval would be to include a CSEC video at every meeting, with the option for another awareness video to be played at each meeting. She also stated that the YEC is recommending a maximum of three minutes for all videos played, and discussion ensued.**

**After discussion, Commissioner Young made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smiley, to approve the Youth Engagement Committee's recommendation to share awareness videos at regular meetings on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), and additional awareness videos, not to exceed a total combined time frame of three minutes.**

**Commissioner Elizondo made a suggestion to have the motion amended to specify the video time frames per video, however no action was taken on this suggestion.**

**After further discussion, the Commission agreed to amend the motion, to approve the Youth Engagement Committee's recommendation to share awareness videos at regular meetings on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), and possibly also additional awareness videos not to exceed a total combined time frame of three minutes. The motion was carried by the following vote:**

**Ayes:** 11 - Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Cristopher Espino, Commissioner Luisa Flores Urrutia, Commissioner Christian Gudiel, Commissioner Martine Jones, Commissioner Clarissa Peña, Commissioner Brittianna Robinson, Commissioner Evelyn Karina Rodriguez, Commissioner Myriah Smiley and Commissioner Angela Young

**Absent:** 4 - Co-Chair Ricardo Ortega Martinez Jr., Commissioner Sherrie Bradford, Commissioner La'Toya Cooper and Commissioner Flo Valenzuela

**Co-Chair Hernandez opened the floor to discussion on revising the October schedule to include the YEC End-Year Event (YEC Event). She informed that the purpose of the YEC Event would be to report out the data findings of the listening sessions conducted throughout the year. The October meeting for the whole Commission would be cancelled in lieu of the YEC Event; currently there is nothing scheduled for the month of October.**

**Discussion ensued and Executive Director Summers stressed the importance of having the full body attend the YEC Event as it will serve as a public Special Meeting and require a quorum.**

**After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Young, seconded by Commissioner Smiley, and duly carried, the Youth Commission approved the cancellation of their Regular Meeting in October, to hold a Special Meeting hosted by the Youth Engagement Committee, by the following vote:**

**Ayes:** 10 - Co-Chair Amanda Hernandez, Commissioner Joshua Elizondo, Commissioner Luisa Flores Urrutia, Commissioner Christian Gudiel, Commissioner Martine Jones, Commissioner Clarissa Peña, Commissioner Brittianna Robinson, Commissioner Evelyn Karina Rodriguez, Commissioner Myriah Smiley and Commissioner Angela Young

**Noes:** 1 - Commissioner Cristopher Espino

---

**Absent:** 4 - Co-Chair Ricardo Ortega Martinez Jr., Commissioner Sherrie Bradford, Commissioner La'Toya Cooper and Commissioner Flo Valenzuela

6. Ad Hoc Committee on DCFS and Probation Report Card, update by Committee Chair Amanda Hernandez. (24-1068)

**This item was tabled in order to take up Item No. 7.**

**Later in the meeting, Co-Chair Hernandez provided an update on the DCFS and Probation Report Card. She reported there was a meeting with the Ad Hoc Committee and stakeholders along with Wendy Wiegmann, Project Director. At that meeting the youth survey questions were reviewed and**

#### **IV. DISCUSSION**

7. Roundtable Discussion with the Department of Children and Family Services on the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Initiative, Housing Choice Vouchers. (24-1072)

**Brandon T. Nichols, Director, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) provided opening remarks and introduced the Housing Team presenters: Angela Parks Pyles, Michael Scoggins, and Robert Castaneda.**

**Mr. Castaneda, Manager, Supportive Housing Division, provided the background and highlighted the following information regarding the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) Housing Vouchers:**

- **The initial Family Unification Vouchers was initiated in 1993. They served to unify families involved with DCFS. There was a 25% carve out for Transitional Aged Youth (TAY), which eventually became the FYI Vouchers utilized today. The purpose of the voucher is to eliminate homelessness and to have youth become independent.**
- **Eligibility age is 18 to 25. The program is for three years with a two year extension if the youth participate in the Family Self Sufficiency Program. This is a financial literacy program run by the Public Housing Authority. The rent paid by youth is placed into an escrow account and the youth is provided those funds when they leave the program.**
- **The vouchers are Countywide and are served by 19 separate housing authorities within L.A. County, DCFS primarily works with L.A. County Development Authority (LACDA), and the City of Los Angeles and Pomona Housing Authorities. DCFS is currently outreaching to others.**
- **There are 220 vouchers available to L.A. County, and only the Housing Authorities can request vouchers, DCFS cannot.**

**Mr. Castaneda answered questions previously submitted by Commissioners as follows:**

**Eligibility and Budget:** The eligibility age is 18 to 25 and may be issued once the youth has left foster care or will leave within the next 90 days, and if at age 16 had been or had the potential of becoming homeless. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has set an income level that would disqualify an applicant from receiving a voucher. A background check is also conducted, and while a violent crime will disqualify a recipient a misdemeanor may not.

**A Plan for Self Sufficiency after the Program:** There is a program called Intensive Case Management Services (ICMS). DCFS contracts with the Department of Health Services (DHS) and it is a voluntary case management program. ICMS workers help guide youth with supportive services and Section 8 Housing Voucher applications. They also work to find landlords that accept Section 8 Vouchers. Once a youth is settled in housing, the ICMS assists with life skills. The Voucher covers 70% of the rent. The recipient is responsible for the balance, plus utilities and self-maintenance.

**Assistance with Voucher Process:** ICMS or DCFS will assist the youth with the application process. The Los Angeles Housing Services Authority (LAHSA) will also assist youth. Youth that face challenges in receiving a voucher can be addressed by LAHSA or DCFS. There are more youth seeking vouchers than are available. The process consists of the application, supporting documentation, a background check, and housing location. It can take three to four months for a youth, and up to nine months for families to obtain housing.

In response to additional questions posed, Mr. Castaneda reported the following:

- **Age requirements are set by HUD and there are other options available for those under age 18.**
- **Income serves to qualify a family or person on the amount of rent they can qualify for. The higher the personal income, the higher the worth of the voucher.**
- **What is the County doing to assist youth with housing? The County does not have funding to subsidize housing. Mr. Castaneda suggested having a roommate to assist.**
- **The County is looking for partners to recruit landlords and development agencies to assist with finding applicable locations to reduce the length of time it takes to find housing. Also, LAHSA publishes a weekly listing of vacancies. The voucher must be used within a year, and the voucher can be lost if a housing has not been secured within that timeframe.**

- DCFS is partnering with the City of Los Angeles Mayor's Fund along with philanthropy to identify properties willing to accept vouchers. Ms. Parks Pyles indicated that she would provide the Commission with the upcoming meeting schedule. She also spoke on the Guaranteed Income Program.
- HUD instituted the time limited voucher. Also, non FYI vouchers cannot utilize ICMS for assistance as it is through a contract with DCFS. Those with other vouchers should contact the Public Housing Authority for assistance.
- The voucher system is not a lottery and is not first come first serve. Applicants are considered on a case-by-case basis and are selected from all life situations.
- The budget for vouchers is set by HUD. DCFS only has a budget for the ICMS that is paid for through the Housing Navigation Maintenance Program (HNMP). This program may potentially be cut in the Governor's proposed budget.
- Most ICMS case managers are community-based agencies. DCFS contracts through DHS who subcontracts with other health and mental health agencies. The caseloads are 10 to 1. The client and case worker will meet where it is convenient for the two of them. The ICMS case manager may assist a client with finding employment or childcare, but there are no reports provided to the public regarding this.

Ms. Parks Pyles suggested that Commissioners work with DCFS on the flyer regarding voucher applications and will provide a packet to the Commission regarding the voucher information and flyer. Discussion ensued regarding supportive services to be built around eligibility. Ms. Parks Pyles spoke about the Youth Homeless Systems Improvement, inter-generational systems change collaborative, who has received a grant for their work. She encouraged the Commission to seek them out.

Kate, California Youth Connection, and Lucero Noyola, members of the public, addressed the Commission.

#### **V. MISCELLANEOUS**

8. Opportunity for members of the public to provide comments to the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. (24-1069)

**No members of the public addressed the Commission.**

9. Commissioner discussion of matters not posted on the agenda, to be considered, and placed on the agenda at a future meeting of the Commission. (24-1070)

**The following topic was suggested for discussion at a future meeting:**

- **Collaboration with the Department of Children and Family Services to work on the DCFS FYI Voucher Flyer.**

10. Adjournment. (24-1071)

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.**