

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS KATHRYN BARGER
AND SHEILA KUEHL

AGN. NO.
April 9, 2019

Employment Innovations to Link Homeless Individuals to Jobs

The CEO Homeless Initiative’s list of Approved Strategies to Combat Homelessness is divided into six categories, including a category of strategies that focus on increasing the income of families and individuals experiencing homelessness. These ‘Increase Income’ strategies are designed to reduce the current homeless population by connecting families and individuals to gainful employment or federal disability benefits, depending on the individual or family’s level of acuity.

Many currently homeless families and individuals, if provided support, have the ability to increase their income to the point where they will be able to retain their housing independently in the future. Empowering a high percentage of homeless adults to ultimately reach income levels that will support independent housing retention is essential to ending the crisis of homelessness in LA County.

A high percentage of homeless adults are able to increase their income through employment. According to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority’s (LAHSA) 2018 Homeless Count data, 46% of the 9,205 people experiencing homelessness for the first time said it was due to a loss of employment or other financial reason.

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Employment opportunities have the potential to dramatically curb the inflow into homelessness and help other individuals exit cycles of homelessness for good.

The County has many employment programs that can be coordinated to maximize gainful employment for people experiencing and exiting homelessness. To best coordinate these efforts, CEO Homeless Initiative recently embarked on a 6-month process through its Employment and Homelessness Taskforce to identify significant shifts needed to be made by system partners in order to effectively create access to employment for people experiencing homelessness.

In order to accomplish this goal, it will be critical to increase the capacity of the major systems (workforce [including education and training], public social services, and homeless) involved in connecting homeless populations to employment. It will also be critical to improve communication and collaboration between these systems to improve their ability to effectively serve people experiencing homelessness and reduce barriers to employment for these individuals.

While efforts are underway to initiate the systems-level coordination outlined above, immediate steps can be taken to create new opportunities to connect homeless individuals to employment.

An Employment Innovation Fund may be established to expedite the implementation of several recommendations made by the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce, including, but not limited to, stipends for homeless participants in high performing intensive vocational training programs, performance-based innovation funds for America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs) and the identification of regional clusters of employment support providers who have

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overlapping service boundaries. Resources distributed through this Employment Innovation Fund will be awarded based on existing performance data and the efficacy of this Fund will be measured through an evaluation framework to ensure that the goal of linking homeless individuals to gainful employment is met.

To complement these County-wide efforts, individual jurisdictions and districts may also create programs that meet the specific needs of their community in order to create viable pathways to jobs for those experiencing homelessness locally. With the support of experts and research collectives, such as the Homelessness Policy Research Institute (HPRI), pilot programs may be designed, implemented, measured and scaled to help individual communities build localized solutions to employing homeless individuals and families in their area.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Direct the CEO to report back in the Measure H FY 2019-20 funding recommendations with funding for a Homeless Employment Innovation Fund that would be administered by the United Way of Greater Los Angeles (UWGLA) and would include funding for:
 - a. Stipends for homeless participants in high performing intensive vocational training and placement programs and/or performance-based innovation funds for AJCCs that have demonstrated success serving homeless clients to support increased collaboration with homeless services providers;

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- b. A pilot with a Coordinated Entry System (CES) lead agency to develop a work readiness assessment and funding to provide flexible funding to low acuity CES clients who could benefit from flexible funding to achieve employment;
2. Delegate authority to the CEO to execute a contract with the UWGLA to administer the Homeless Employment Innovation Fund, subject to Board approval of funding as part of the FY 2019-20 Measure H Funding Allocations;
3. Direct the Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) to provide data to the United Way on existing performance outcomes from WDACS-funded AJCCs on linkages of homeless clients to employment and their success in sustaining employment to inform awards of performance-based innovation funds for AJCCs;
4. Direct the CEO to report back with performance metrics and/or an evaluation framework for measuring the success of these efforts to achieve long-term employment for homeless clients served through this funding;
5. Direct CEO to identify regional clusters based on overlapping boundaries for General Relief (GR), CalWORKs, Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN), Workforce Development Board (WDB) and America's Job Center of California (AJCC), homeless services providers and Community Colleges / Adult Schools to refine and implement recommendations from

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the Employment and Homelessness Taskforce and report back in 60 days on the feasibility of scaling piloted recommendations county-wide; and

6. Direct CEO to coordinate with LAHSA and all relevant County departments including the Department of Mental Health; Public Health; Public Social Services; WDACS; Office of Education; Probation; the Sheriff; and Children and Family Services; as well as key community partners and research collectives, such as the HPRI, to refine, develop and measure new employment pilots to more effectively connect families and individuals experiencing homelessness to employment opportunities and explore the feasibility of scaling successful pilots county-wide.

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