

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN AND  
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February 4, 2020

**Creating the Countywide Youth Commission**

On April 16, 2019 the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Commission for Children and Families (Commission) and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to work in consultation with several County agencies, stakeholders, foster and probation youth with lived experience, and key organizations to explore the feasibility of creating a countywide Youth Advisory Body in Los Angeles County (County). Throughout this exploration, it become clear that young people want to have access to and influence on decisions that affect their lives, as they feel that too often their needs are not being met and that their perspectives, opinions, and voices do not matter within the systems that are intended to serve and support them, their families, and communities.

On December 4, 2019, the Commission completed the report that included: 1). An assessment of current youth engagement strategies (i.e. existing youth advisory councils or processes) provided by County departments and organizations serving our foster and probation youth to determine best practices to work with youth through a “Youth Advisory Body;” 2). a recommendation on where the “Youth Advisory Body” should be housed within the County, including the feasibility of making it a part of the Commission for

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Children and Families; 3). recommendations regarding funding and a staffing plan for the “Youth Advisory Body,” to include input from the Executive Office of the Board in consultation with the Chief Executive Office; 4). engaging a consultant to facilitate the development of this Body; and 5). determining the best way to compensate youth for any and all work they conduct on behalf of the County, including reimbursement for transportation to and from County meetings. A three-pronged approach was implemented, whereby stakeholders were engaged in a variety of ways, a thorough landscape analysis was conducted, and a working group process was employed to develop informed recommendations.

Through an inclusive and time intensive process that consistently incorporated the voice of those with lived experience, we learned that creating a Youth Commission in LA County would be a trailblazing model for other jurisdictions. In a time when the County is engaged in major efforts to reform the juvenile justice system and aspects of child welfare, it is critical that we have those with lived experience be advocates, champions, and change agents as we all seek to improve the systems that impacted their lives from a very young age.

**WE, THEREFORE MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Create a Los Angeles County Youth Commission (Youth Commission), no later than May 15, 2020 to be housed in the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors (Board), that will serve in an advisory capacity to the Board and County departments. The Youth Commission will start with 15 commissioners, with the option to increase its membership to 19; of this membership, one commissioner is to be nominated by each Supervisor, and the remaining commissioners are to be selected and identified

through a self-nomination and interview process. Commissioners shall have lived experience with the child welfare and/or juvenile justice systems, and reflect the geographic profile and demographic characteristics, including racial/ethnic identity, sexual orientation, and gender identity, of those involved with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems;

2. Adopt the following duties and scope of work for the Youth Commission to:
  - a. Make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors (Board) and Los Angeles County (County) departments regarding policies, agency budgets, budgetary processes, programs, and practices that impact children, youth, their families, and communities;
  - b. Propose to the Board and County departments new policy, programs, and services that will positively impact children, youth, families, and their communities;
  - c. Annually, identify at least three focus areas for concentrated review, analysis, and, where appropriate, Youth Commission intervention;
  - d. Be consistent with Board policy, propose new legislation, advocate, and provide recommendations to the Board regarding legislation impacting children, youth, families, and their communities;
  - e. Provide a quarterly report in year one, and then an annual report henceforth, to the Board apprising it of the Youth Commission's activities and achievements during the year and commenting on the state of County services impacting youth. This may include development of a "youth score card" for County departments; and,

- f. Have consistent engagement with community and key stakeholders;
3. To carry out its duties and responsibilities, the Youth Commission shall have the authority to:
- a. Monitor outcomes and the quality of services provided to children, youth, families and their communities as well as conditions of facilities, in collaboration with County departments and other bodies with similar responsibilities. This includes participation in site visits and conducting interviews with youth who are the recipients of these services;
  - b. Receive input from public, private, and community-based stakeholders regarding County administered or contracted services; convey information received to the Board of Supervisors and relevant County departments; and, where appropriate, make associated recommendations. This includes incarcerated youth and children in foster care; and,
  - c. Collaborate with County departments, other County bodies, and community-based organizations to strengthen existing youth-focused initiatives and create new ones, as necessary;
4. The Youth Commission may establish committees or work groups to focus on key issues; these committees or work groups may include members who are not on the Youth Commission, such as outside experts, advocates and community members, as well as County Department Heads, County Executives, or Commissioners, but must be led by a Commission member. The Youth Commission shall establish a Standing Operations Committee, which shall be responsible for administration of the process of nominating new Youth Commission members, and a Youth Engagement Committee,

which shall be responsible for ensuring that the voices of youth under age 18 inform the work of the Youth Commission;

5. Direct each youth-serving County department to identify a liaison in order to ensure that the Youth Commission has an opportunity to inform departmental initiatives during all phases of development and implementation;
6. Direct the Departments of Mental Health, Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services, Probation, Children and Family Services, Public Social Services the CEO's Center for Strategic Partnerships, Department of Public Health's Office of Advancement of Early Care and Education, the Treasurer and Tax Collector and other relevant County departments to provide or develop resources necessary for the success of the Youth Commission and Commissioners in this role, such as trauma-informed, youth-centered programming and training materials and a mentoring program. These resources may also include funding, meeting space, staff support, and other in-kind services;
7. Direct the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors to report back to the Board with a recommended funding and staffing plan for the Youth Commission. The funding plan should include a proposed budget for youth compensation, transportation, and other costs; and Youth Commission staffing and administrative support, including a full-time Executive Director with experience promoting and facilitating healthy youth development and leadership with the target population and an individual with lived experience with the child welfare and/or juvenile justice system via the Career Development Intern (CDI) program. The Executive Office of the Board should immediately work with key

stakeholders, the Commission for Children and Families and the Department of Human Resources to begin recruitment for the Executive Director, but no formal offer shall be made without Board approval of the funding plan;

8. Direct County Counsel to develop the Youth Commission ordinance and bylaws and submit to the Board for approval. Youth Commission ordinance and bylaws should be informed by the “Youth Advisory Body Work Group” recommendations; and
9. Require the same training as all other commissions and partner with County departments, community-based organizations, and philanthropy to offer additional training, supportive services and mentorship for members of Youth Commission to enhance the personal and professional growth and development of the Youth Commissioners.

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