

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS KATHRYN BARGER
AND HOLLY J. MITCHELL

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**REPORT BACK ON HOMELESS PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES
FOR TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH AND OLDER ADULTS**

In response to the humanitarian crisis of homelessness in Los Angeles County, the Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion on January 10, 2023, declaring a local emergency for homelessness. Such action “created expedited and streamlined processes targeting contracting and procurement; hiring; housing; services; spending; communications and messaging; and public outreach and education.”

On February 7, 2023, the Board subsequently adopted a framework which included three Persons Experiencing Homelessness (PEH) missions: encampment resolution, housing, and mental health and substance use disorder services. Noting the urgency in helping individuals and families to stay housed and curb inflows into homelessness, on October 3, 2023, the Board also designated “Eviction Prevention” as the fourth mission. It also directed the CEO to report back in 60 days with an “assessment of the [CEO-Homeless Initiative’s] capacity and authority to coordinate, align, and steer each Department’s work to address homelessness and support the Emergency Proclamation, moving the County toward an integrated, unified, cross-departmental homelessness response.”

Homeless Prevention services have been designed to assist rent-burdened low-income families and individuals resolve crises that would otherwise cause them to lose their homes and fall into homelessness. These services are varied and can include short-term rental subsidies, housing conflict resolution, assistance with mediation with landlords and/or property managers, and legal defense against evictions. There are also County-administered programs that aim to help individuals avoid becoming homeless after exiting institutions such as jails, hospitals, and foster care.

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) administers the Homelessness Prevention program, which provides people with short-term rental and legal assistance to maintain their housing or find new housing to avoid entering the emergency shelter system. This is coupled with their Problem Solving program, which aims to assist at-risk individuals and families in identifying viable temporary or permanent housing while exploring other resources within their own network of relatives and friends.

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In addition to LAHSA's programs, the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) has several programs to help families obtain housing, including Bringing Families Home, the Family Reunification Housing Subsidy, and the Prevention and Aftercare Program. Meanwhile, its Supervised Independent Living Program helps young adults (ages 18 to 21) exiting the foster care system, giving them financial and emotional support to transition into living on their own.

In Fiscal Year 19-20, the Board approved the DHS Housing for Health (HFH) pilot program which has partnered with the Department of Mental Health Services and the California Policy Lab (CPL) at UCLA to create the Homeless Prevention Unit (HPU). This pilot project uses a multi-disciplinary, problem-solving approach to target interventions to utilizers of county services who are at highest risk of becoming homeless. The CPL has an established data-sharing partnership with Los Angeles County that provides access to anonymized data from eight Los Angeles County agencies for the express purpose of developing models to identify clients of County services who are at high risk of homelessness. The HPU team led by DMH and HFH are responsible for determining the programs or resources most appropriate to those individuals and helping coordinate proactive outreach to connect individuals to those programs and/or resources in order to address their needs and prevent their homelessness. This program has experienced successes focuses primarily on families and individual adults.

Since 2019, the Board has also taken bold actions to expand the Countywide eviction defense program offering rental and legal assistance. On September 15, 2020, Stay Housed L.A County (SHLA) was launched to provide comprehensive eviction defense program that incorporates outreach, education, and limited legal services. On July 11, 2023, the Board approved a motion to establish a Right to Counsel ordinance and universal access to legal representation through the Stay Housed Los Angeles initiative. The motion called for the Los Angeles County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), County Counsel, and other impacted County departments to report back with eligibility requirements, sustainable funding sources, and an ordinance to codify that will make available, for the first time, legal representation at no-cost for qualified tenants facing eviction in unincorporated communities. This report back is expected this Spring.

On June 29, 2023, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) publicly released the results of the 2023 Homeless Point in Time (PIT) Count which showed an estimated 75,518 people were living on the streets. This was disheartening as it indicated a nine percent increase in homelessness from the 2022 annual homeless count and meant there has been a continued, steady growth trend of people becoming homeless. This trend is consistent with LAHSA's 2020 statement about steeply rising inflows; it estimated that an average of 207 people exit homelessness every day—while 227 people become homeless. Furthermore, the socio-economic impact of COVID 19 continues to contribute to the housing instability of the at-risk households who are at the brink of falling into homelessness.

Equally as concerning are the statistics surrounding demographics of those who are falling into homeless, with noticeable increases in homelessness among youth. Estimates from the 2023 Los Angeles Continuum of Care Youth Count suggest that youth homelessness saw around a 40% increase from 2022 to 2023 bringing the total to 3,894 youth who are living on the streets. Furthermore, the Transitional Age Youth unsheltered count doubled. In addition to an increase of youth homelessness, another key population group that has seen steady growth has been senior with an approximate 11% increase in homelessness from 2022 to 2023. Around 5,000 of this group are ages 64 and older. Many of these older adults face difficult challenges associated with health issues and rising medical costs, fixed incomes based on pensions, savings, and social security, and more difficulty navigating technology pathways to prevention-based resources.

An action plan is needed for this Board to expeditiously enhance and scale up homelessness prevention work across the County. Prevention efforts, given its upstream focus, will also directly impact the success of the existing three emergency PEH missions that is primarily focusing on the homeless rehousing system. Furthermore, the unique needs and considerations associated with the transitional age youth and older adults necessitate the County to take swift actions to prevent homelessness in these subpopulations.

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WE, THEREFORE MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Chief Executive Office – Homeless Initiative, in collaboration with Department of Children and Family Services, Department of Public Social Services, Department of Aging and Disabilities, Department of Health Services, Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, and other relevant County departments and agencies to:

1. Report back in writing within 120 days with an analysis on current homeless prevention strategies and programs serving older adults and transition age youth within LA County. This report back shall also include:
 - a. Desired program outcomes including client outcome data by programs for older adults and transition age youth;
 - b. Coordination among inter-departmental and agency programs aimed to achieve alignment and amplification of mainstream and homeless response system resources to prevent homelessness; and,
 - c. Future efforts to scale up homeless prevention efforts efficiently and effectively countywide with demonstrable improved client outcomes in Fiscal Year 2023-24;
 - d. Recommendations designed to swiftly target and enhance homeless prevention support for older adults and transitional age youth populations within Los Angeles County.
 - e. Input from LAHSA’s lived experience advisory boards (LEAB and HYFLA) on any enhancements or gaps in current prevention programming serving older adults and transition age youth.

2. Work with the Board-established Prevention and Promotion Systems Governing Committee to prepare a live presentation focused on the homelessness and housing domain that will be brought before the Board of Supervisor’s by June 4,2024. The presentation shall include a Timeline and action plan for short- and long-term solutions through prevention-based programs and resources.

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