



Chief Executive Office.

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES


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August 9, 2024

To: Supervisor Lindsey P. Horvath, Chair
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REPORT BACK ON COORDINATING FAITH-BASED OUTREACH IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY (ITEM NO. 18, AGENDA OF JANUARY 23, 2024)

On January 23, 2024, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed the Chief Executive Office (CEO), in consultation with the Center for Strategic Partnerships (CSP) and relevant departments, to report back with a feasibility analysis to create a Community Engagement Office (Office) for Los Angeles County (County) that would coordinate outreach efforts with Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs)/Houses of Worship (HoWs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), strengthen existing County relationships with FBOs, and assist with capacity building efforts. The Board also directed the CEO to complete a landscape analysis of existing faith-based partnerships within the County, encourage fostering the development of a faith-based network, and explore contracting options.

Between January and March 2024, the CEO convened meetings with existing County faith-based collaboratives and faith-based leaders to assess existing programs housed within County departments, gather information on current engagement efforts with the faith community, explore strategies to expand existing partnerships, and to identify service gaps and capacity needs.



Landscape Inventory

Extensive collaboration is already occurring between the County and the faith community to coordinate and provide information about County services and resources, support regional work that takes into consideration the local needs of the populations that are served by the faith community, and explore the envisioned functionality of the Office. A list of these collaboratives is included in Attachment I.

Between October 2023 and February 2024, the Faith Collaborative to End Homelessness, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, and CEO-Homeless Initiative (CEO-HI) hosted capacity-building workshops for faith leaders in each Service Planning Area to educate the faith community about the various resources available to support members at risk of or experiencing homelessness. These workshops also provided an opportunity for participants to network with other faith leaders, as well as County departments and homeless services agencies.

Network of Councils

The CEO connected with a few non-County faith collaboratives to better understand the extent of the roles, responsibilities, and information sharing occurring, and to discuss best practices. The information compiled should help inform the development of this type of Office, along with efforts to establish more formal working relationships that would need to be made. Holding convenings to help strengthen trust and build confidence with the faith community should also be considered (Attachment II).

The Los Angeles County Faith Alliance (LACFA) is a network of interfaith communities composed of a diverse group of religious faith leaders and is in the beginning stages of building its internal structure. FosterAll, a community-based organization, is functioning as its initial facilitator.

LACFA is interested in hosting Los Angeles County Faith Leader Appreciation event planned for October 2024. This event represents an opportunity for FBOs and HoWs to connect, engage, and explore expanding inter-faith partnerships and enhance these relationships. The annual event will meet the directive in the October 3, 2023, "Faith Leader Appreciation Month" Board motion to host an annual event to highlight faith leaders in the County.

The Clergy Community Coalition is a group of inter-faith religious leaders and community leaders in the City of Pasadena that meet to receive updates on new funding opportunities, information on new resources and services, and serves as an opportunity to network. There is also a revolving fund account that receives donations from local organizations, individuals, and partnering businesses to sustain organizational capacity and assist with community needs.

Equity in County Contracting and Legal Provisions

The Internal Services Department confirmed several Equity in County Contracting efforts are underway to assist with capacity building needs, including the creation of a Centralized Contracting and Procurement Office that is exploring strategies to address some of the contracting barriers raised by FBOs/HoWs through a simpler contracting process. A summary of these efforts is listed in Attachment III.

County Counsel confirmed that there is no prohibition on contracting with FBOs, CBOs, or HoWs. The County may contract with FBOs provided that FBOs do not engage in any religious activities in connection with the performance of the agreement. Agreements with FBOs should include provisions that prohibit religious activities, and any services or benefits provided must not be limited to the FBO's congregation or members.

Potential Office Structure

Preliminary information was gathered to assess the feasibility for creating the Office. Some of the responsibilities of the Office could include liaising between FBOs, CBOs, and HoWs, assisting with capacity building efforts, coordinating and disseminating information regarding County and community resources and services, continuing to develop strategies to strengthen existing partnerships, and serve as an opportunity to discuss any gaps or issues in communities. Any Office that may be created should be involved in facilitating communications between existing faith-based collaboratives to inform them of other relevant work.

The staffing plan that was originally included in the June 2023, "Coordinating Faith-Based Outreach in Los Angeles County" Board report was further reviewed. The ongoing annual cost of funding for the proposed three (3) staff positions would be approximately \$625,000 to \$700,000, and additional one-time and ongoing expenses would also be incurred. The staffing cost estimate would need to be further assessed by CEO Classification and Compensation and your Board's Fiscal Resilience Process. CSP stands ready to convene and engage partners to explore philanthropic support, as needed.

CEO explored several options where the Office could reside within the County. Listed below are a few options that can be considered:

- The CEO could play a role in facilitating or coordinating outreach efforts, exchanging information about County services and resources, and liaising between the faith community and the County. However, it would be difficult for the CEO to lead or fully operationalize this effort. If the Office were to be established within the CEO, there are some challenges that would need to be addressed prior to implementation;

- CEO does not have the programmatic expertise nor capacity to train or assist prospective bidders with securing County competitively bid contracts or provide technical assistance to those seeking federal, State or philanthropic funding opportunities. Any open solicitation bids and contracting information would need to be shared widely with a variety of interested parties and other community members, requiring additional outreach efforts;
 - Staffing assistance from departments would be needed to help lead and carry out the work of the new Office; and
 - CSP would need to explore if philanthropic funding could be used to help pay for the staffing costs to sustain the Office.
- The Department of Mental Health (DMH) is prepared to lead this effort if funding is identified. DMH already has extensive experience working with the faith community and currently leads the Faith-Based Advisory Council (FBAC) made up of various religious affiliations and clergy. The FBAC is a Countywide effort and currently serves as a bridge between the faith community and the County to collaborate, share, and exchange information about County services and resources. The DMH and FBAC are working closely together to create a faith leader appreciation event that will be held in October 2024.

Should the Board consider creating a Community Engagement Office, identification of funding and resources to create such an office may fall under the fiscal resilience tiering process for prioritizing fiscal motions during the 2024-2025 budget process.

Should you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact me or Carrie D. Miller at (213) 262-7823 or cmiller@ceo.lacounty.gov.

FAD:JMN:CDM
LB:kdm

Attachments

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
County Counsel
Mental Health

Existing County Faith-Based Collaboratives

Department	Description
<p>Chief Executive Office – Homeless Initiative (CEO HI)</p>	<p>In 2022, CEO HI created the Faith Collaborative to End Homelessness (FCEH), which consists of representatives from CEO HI, various County departments, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), faith leaders, homelessness liaisons, and representatives from elected County offices. The FCEH meets to cultivate partnerships with faith-based organizations (FBOs) across Los Angeles County and engage in collaborative planning to best align homeless services provided by FBOs within the County’s homeless services delivery system.</p>
<p>Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)</p>	<p>The mission of the DCFS LA County Faith in Motion Initiative (LAC FIM) is to establish collaborations and partnerships between DCFS and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) that will strengthen communities, support healthier families, and improve self-sufficiency. Recognizing the importance of LAC FIM, DCFS created a centralized Faith-Based Section that works closely with DCFS regional offices and specialized programs to expand faith-based partnerships between DCFS and FBOs. As an extension of the Faith-Based Section, there are Faith-Based Liaisons (FBLs) in all DCFS regional offices responsible for working with their local faith community to improve outcomes for vulnerable children, youth, and families.</p> <p>DCFS partnerships with FBOs are invaluable and critical to promoting family and youth well-being. A DCFS faith partner is any stakeholder who represents an FBO, or supports the faith community, committed to collaborating with DCFS through the Faith-Based Section, local regional offices, or specialized programs. Faith partners are valued for their ability to inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower youth and families. There are various ways for interested FBOs and faith partners to support LAC FIM and become more involved in supporting youth in foster care and their families, such as recruit foster and adoptive parents, join CarePortal, host a visitation center, support father engagement, become a Cultural Broker, and support transition age youth (TAY) among others. The DCFS Faith-Based Section and FBLs work collaboratively with faith partners in coordinating caregiver recruitment and appreciation events, trauma-based trainings, kinship care support, holiday events, workshops, grocery and clothing distributions, Back-to-School events, and special outings for foster youth.</p> <p>LAC FIM involves collaboration among DCFS and faith partners to create new services, while building on existing efforts, leverages expertise, and increases access to important resources. An important component of LAC FIM is the Los Angeles County Faith Collaborative,</p>

	<p>comprised of a diverse group of leaders and stakeholders, which includes FBOs, houses of worship, community-based organizations (CBOs), philanthropy, and County departments. The Faith Collaborative meets three times per year to discuss information about community resources, available trainings on child welfare, lived experience testimonials by former foster youth, and networking opportunities to increase resource sharing and leveraging amongst diverse faith partners. During these meetings, they always have a foster youth speaker with lived experience, and attendees learn how the faith-based community can get involved, to better understand their role in supporting DCFS initiatives and practices.</p>
<p>Department of Mental Health (DMH)</p>	<p>DMH has a faith-based advocacy network for the collaboration of faith organizations, holding monthly meetings with representation from multiple faith sectors. The Faith-Based Advisory Council (FBAC) and DMH gather diverse clergy members, FBOs, CBOs, and mental health professionals to engage in mutual learning, raising awareness of and access to mental health services, sharing mental health information and resources, offering consultation, and discussing how best to reduce stigma and integrate spirituality in promoting hope and mental health wellness.</p> <p>DMH convenes annual conferences with the faith community to discuss addressing difficult topics (like suicide), has advanced service area level efforts to do more in-person meetings, and has held quarterly clergy meetings (to reach out to the individual service areas).</p> <p>DMH also manages the Mental Health Community-Based Incubation Academy that provides mentorship, training, and technical assistance to small and mid-sized grass roots community-based organizations (CBO's) who are interested in providing prevention services to the County's most vulnerable residents, geographically sited in the communities they serve. The next cohort is scheduled to start July 1, 2024.</p>
<p>Fire Department</p>	<p>The Los Angeles County Fire Chaplains Program is a ministry of presence that provides support during an emergency or a crisis to Fire personnel and their families. They also provide information on behavioral health resources and spiritual care, serving as a bridge to FBOs and CBOs. The Fire Department also has a wellness program, which includes both the chaplain service and peer support service. These services are culturally competent to the Fire Department community.</p>

<p>Probation Department (Probation)</p>	<p>The Probation Department (Probation) has the VISTO program (which has been in existence for over 25 years, under the oversight of Community Relations staff), where different groups of volunteers come to Probation facilities, including Protestant and Catholic groups. Those groups do their own recruiting, background checks, and training of volunteers, and have different events (e.g., car shows, yoga/wellness, mass, etc.) for those in the Probation facilities/camps. VISTO volunteers perform civic, charitable, and humanitarian services within Probation. By providing and cultivating educational, cultural, recreational, spiritual, and specialized services, VISTO volunteers work to transform the lives of youth in Probation’s care and within the communities.</p> <p>There are 246 faith-based volunteers enrolled who are active in the program, most of whom serve in the capacity of mentors and chaplains. Probation also has a chaplain program and is in the process of updating their departmental training programs.</p>
<p>Sheriff Department (LASD)</p>	<p>The Sheriff Department (LASD) has a Chaplain Program made up of non-sworn personnel and funded through fundraising efforts. The LASD Chaplains Program is a group of men and women, ordained in their faith, and trained religious leaders who volunteer their time to provide for the spiritual and personal needs of LASD personnel and their families. The Chaplains help provide information on resources and try to connect those they serve to access those resources.</p>

Non-County Faith-Based Collaboratives

Name of Collaborative	Description
<p>University of Southern California (USC) - Center for Religion and Civic Culture (CRCC)</p>	<p>The USC Center for Religion and Civic Culture advances the understanding of religion and society and supports faith and community leaders in becoming full partners in the work of positive social change. Their work has shown that spirituality is the force that compels many people to be engaged with the grand challenges of our time. Religious traditions provide a moral vision for a more just world, as well as the institutional and social capital required to create positive changes in society.</p> <p>USC CRCC has produced reports from different community-based projects and shed light on some best practices.</p> <p>Opening the Gates (https://crcc.usc.edu/report/opening-the-gates-l-a-congregations-confronting-gang-violence/). This is a report on the Institute for Violence Prevention (circa 2012). Chapter 6 is a good description of faith leaders coming to understand their (potential) role in their communities and how they can realize the potential for partnerships and collaboration with others in their communities.</p> <p>Community Transformation (https://crcc.usc.edu/report/community-transformation-outlining-a-process-for-change/). This is a report from a project in which several congregations were mentored in developing their own community development corporations. Some of these were large and some were small, but they all learned how to work more effectively in their communities without giving up their religious mission.</p>
<p>Riverside County (County of Riverside) Faith-Based Collaborative</p>	<p>Faith in Motion is held within their Public Social Services Department (DPSS) and has a collaborative partnership with all communities of faith in the Coachella Valley. Services 100+ communities of faith in Riverside County that guide parents from the point of gathering information, to the selection of a foster family agency and state certification, to adoption and beyond.</p>
<p>San Bernardino County (County of San Bernardino) Faith-Based Collaborative</p>	<p>The San Bernardino County/Behavioral Health/Office of Cultural Competence and Ethnic Services houses the Faith-Based Collaborative. The goals of the Faith-Based Collaborative are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stigma reduction. • The importance of integrating faith into behavioral health treatment. • Understanding the role faith plays in the recovery process. • Increasing awareness of local behavioral health services. • Continue building rapport with the community.

	<p>San Bernardino County hosts the “National Day of Prayer for Behavioral Health Recovery and Understanding Conference” to raise awareness of the role of spirituality in behavioral health. The event is held yearly. Some of the conference topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding Mental Health Friendly Congregations. • Providing outreach and creating opportunities for engagement. • Visiting identified FBOs and establishing relationships. • Providing education on departmental services and resources. • How to integrate spirituality into behavioral health services and how increase access to care. <p>Some FBO partners throughout San Bernardino County include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith Advisory Council on Community Transformation (FACCT) • Inland Empire Concerned African American Churches (IECAAC) • Children and Family Services Faith in Motion
<p>City of Los Angeles (LA City) Faith-Based Collaboratives</p>	<p>The City of Los Angeles has a Faith-Based Collaborative that exists within the Office of the City Clerk.</p> <p>There are hundreds of religious institutions throughout the City of Los Angeles and these settings facilitate an opportunity to reach a wide captive audience, which includes Angelenos of all ages, faiths, backgrounds, and ethnicities. The Outreach team seeks to build trust and communication with religious leaders by providing accurate, non-partisan civic engagement information, to foster a long-term relationship for continued partnerships.</p> <p>LA City’s website https://clerk.lacity.gov/clerk-services/elections/outreach-and-media/outreach-programs/faith-based includes information on current events that faith partners are hosting or to inform LA City of upcoming events being held by faith partners.</p>

Equity in County Contracting (ECC) Efforts

The following information is a list of efforts that are currently underway by Internal Services Department (ISD) of capacity building efforts.

- 1) Creation of Centralized Contracting and Procurement Office: The Centralized Contracting and Procurement Office is working to address issues around adequate and timely compensation and reimbursement, Indirect Cost rate, streamlining to address contracting inefficiencies and reduce administrative burden on the vendor community (including prohibitive insurance costs for contractors), and invoicing and related processes. This office will continue to explore recommendations and/or best practices for contracting with FBOs/HoW.
- 2) Identification of Certification Barriers: Identified barriers to certification as a County Local Small Business Enterprise (LSBE), Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE), or Social Enterprise (SE) that qualified businesses, CBOs, and nonprofits experience, as well as recommendations to address those barriers. To address barriers to certification, ISD and DEO will (among other efforts) continue to enhance vendor websites, streamline processes, and collaborate to provide training/technical assistance to increase qualified businesses', CBOs', and nonprofits' awareness of and ability to participate in the County's preference programs. Potentially, FBOs/HoW can be certified under one of the above designations (LSBE, DVBE, and/or SE).
- 3) Board Policy Revision: Revised Board Policy 3.035 (Preference Program Payment Liaison and Prompt Payment Program) to expand the Prompt Payment Program to include County certified Social Enterprises and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises in addition to Local Small Business Enterprises (collectively, Preference Program Enterprises, or "PPEs"). This policy provides access to a technical assistance liaison (a single point of contact) to address payment delays/issues and provides for payment for goods and services within 15 calendar days of receipt of an approved, undisputed invoice. Potentially, FBOs/HoW can be certified under one of the above designations (LSBE, DVBE, and/or SE) to be eligible to receive prompt payment and access to the technical assistance liaison under the subject policy.
- 4) Contract Advances Pilot Program: Developed a contract advances pilot program to mandate contract advances for a specified set of contracts with CBOs. The Program is applicable to community-based private nonprofit agencies contracted for social services under DEO's Master Agreement (MA) or other eligible Net County Cost (NCC)-funded programs where the funding source(s) allow for advances, providing advances of up to 15% of the contract amount, upon Contractor's written request for such advance. Pilot program will offer cash advance opportunities to approximately 25 social enterprises that DEO contracts with for Measure H-funded services. Pilot program will apply to about \$3.3 million in total funding, allowing for up to \$500,000 in cash advances. FBOs/HoW can potentially be approved to qualify under the subject MA, which is available to SEs.

- 5) Revolving Loan Fund (RLF): Developed initial recommendations for designing a revolving loan fund (RLF) to provide capital support to small businesses and nonprofits that may not be able to access traditional sources of lending and capital. DEO has contracted with a consultant to provide guidance and strategy related to the RLF and other potential departmental funds and capital access programs. The consultant will develop the design for the RLF. DEO will explore funding options and will return to the Board with a final recommended program design, funding level, and possible funding sources. Potentially, loans may be made available through the County under this RLF framework for FBOs/HoW to obtain.
- 6) Best Practices for Unbundling Contracts: ISD developed and published Best Practices for Unbundling Contracts to guide departments through the process of dividing a large contract into multiple smaller contracts as a viable procurement strategy to create additional contracting opportunities for small, local, CBO/nonprofit, and diverse business enterprises. ISD continues to highlight and train on County efforts to unbundle service contracts by incorporating best practices for unbundling contracts into various training opportunities for County staff (e.g., Orientation to Basic Principles of County Contracting and Request for Statement of Qualifications and Master Agreement Training), as well as highlighting unbundling efforts at vendor events.
- 7) Additional Recommendations/Efforts: Potentially expanding Community Business Enterprise (CBE) designations to include FBOs/HoWs. FBOs/HoWs can be added to DEO's distribution lists to be included in various County communications that include resources and notification of County solicitation opportunities.
- 8) ISD will continue to address challenges related to County contracting in continued efforts to streamline the County contracting process and address barriers to contracting with the County, including those faced by FBOs/HoW.