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AGN. NO.
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Exploring a Prohibited Predatory or Aggressive Solicitation Zone and Oversight Measures Around DPSS and Other County Offices

The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) provides vital benefits and services to hundreds of thousands of Los Angeles County (County) residents each month, including CalFresh, CalWORKs, General Relief, and Medi-Cal. These programs serve low-income and vulnerable residents. DPSS offices may experience high volumes of foot traffic, particularly during peak hours and at the beginning and end of the month.

Unfortunately, we have recently received reports of some individuals and vendors engaging in predatory or obstructive practices outside certain offices, which can disrupt County operations and interfere with public access to services. DPSS has also received anecdotal concerns from customers stating that some solicitors have asked for copies of documents containing sensitive information, including copies of their EBT card, WD2 wage statements, Social Security Award letters, and/or Unemployment/Disability statements, in order to qualify for vendor-offered products and services. This practice potentially subjects customers to EBT theft or exposing their personal information for nefarious purposes. DPSS customers are reminded of the importance of not sharing their personal information with solicitors/agencies by DPSS workers and through social media channels. In addition, recent reports have also raised concerns about intermediaries who

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may have targeted low-income neighborhoods to recruit or influence claimants, with some individuals who were allegedly being paid or coerced to pursue claims against the County. This practice, known as “capping,” is illegal and such practices raises concerns about fairness, integrity, and the exploitation of vulnerable populations. These predatory schemes erode public trust and underscore the urgent need for enhanced oversight, enforcement, and preventative regulations.

DPSS lacks enforcement authority over areas outside its physical premises, such as adjacent sidewalks or shared-use public spaces. As a result, effective protection of residents will require collaboration with the City of Los Angeles, as well as other municipalities where DPSS offices are located. To safeguard residents seeking County social services from coercive, confusing, or exploitative solicitation, it is in the public interest to explore the feasibility of establishing a Prohibited Predatory or Aggressive Solicitation Ordinance to reduce these risks, ensure safe and equitable access to County buildings, and deter solicitation practices that could undermine service delivery.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), in consultation with County Counsel, the Sheriff’s Department, and the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA), and other relevant departments, to report back within 60 days on the feasibility of establishing a Prohibited Predatory Solicitation or Aggressive Solicitation Ordinance around DPSS and other County offices in Los Angeles County. The report should include:

1. **Legal and Operational Framework:** Review of current legal and operational framework and recommended changes to the legal and operational parameters including consideration of an ordinance prohibiting predatory solicitation, including

allowable distance, scope of prohibited conduct, enforcement mechanisms, and penalties for violations;

2. **Activity Assessment:** A survey and review of the types and frequency of predatory or obstructive activities occurring outside DPSS offices or other critical County locations, including identifying high-traffic times and geographic “hot spots”;
3. **Public Education and Signage:** Strategies for community outreach, public education, and visible signage to inform the public, clients, and vendors about prohibited activities and delineated restricted areas, as appropriate;
4. **Intergovernmental Coordination:** A plan for coordination with other municipalities such as the City of Los Angeles and other municipalities (e.g., Pasadena, Glendale, Pomona, and Compton) where DPSS offices are located, to explore joint action or parallel ordinances ensuring countywide consistency in protecting residents from predatory practices;
5. **Coordinated Enforcement:** Identification of opportunities for coordinated enforcement with County departments for civil enforcement or with local law enforcement agencies;
6. **Pilot Implementation:** Feasibility of a pilot program to test coordinated enforcement and outreach protocols at identified high-traffic DPSS locations, with particular attention to maintaining public access, safety, and health;
7. **Long-Term Strategy:** Recommendations for sustainable, longer-term strategies to deter predatory activity around DPSS and other County offices, including partnerships with cities, community-based organizations, and potential state legislative or

regulatory solutions to strengthen protections against coercive or exploitative solicitation; and

8. **Alternative Solutions:** Recommendations for alternative regulation solutions outside of the Prohibited Predatory Solicitation or Aggressive Solicitation Ordinance including additional and/or supplementary solutions available to protect people waiting in line.

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