

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR HILDA L. SOLIS

JUNE 30, 2026

Implementing Fire Safety Protocols to Address Homeless Encampments Within Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

On August 10, 2021, the Board adopted a motion prohibiting homeless encampments in unincorporated areas designated by the State as Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZs). Enforcement of these directives has relied on the Los Angeles Sheriff Department’s (LASD) Homeless Outreach Services Team (HOST) and various County partners including the Department of Public Works (DPW), the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD), the Department of Homeless Services and Housing (HSH), the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). LAHSA’s 2025 Homeless Count estimates 2,035 unhoused individuals live within VHFHSZs countywide.

In March 2025, the California State Department of Fire and Forestry Protection released updated maps designating new areas across the State as VHFHSZs. In Los Angeles County, more than 440,000 acres were added to the County’s hazard zones, including a 30 percent increase in acres zoned in the highest severity rating. That is why the Board of Supervisors passed a motion to identify additional resources to enforce the prohibition of encampments in VHFHSZs. A report back from that motion was published

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Mitchell	_____
Horvath	_____
Hahn	_____
Barger	_____
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on March 23, 2026, proposing a standardized protocol to protect people experiencing homelessness in VHFHSZs during severe weather events. That protocol establishes a three-tiered weather-based response framework—Tier 1 (Extreme Weather, including Red Flag Warnings and Particularly Dangerous Situation designations), Tier 2 (Notable Impending Weather, including Wind Advisories and Extreme Heat Warnings), and Tier 3 (No Imminent Weather Warnings)—each with defined engagement levels ranging from mandatory evacuation to routine outreach and wraparound services.

Across the County, this protocol could help prevent devastating fire emergencies, including in newly designated VHFHSZs such as Whittier Narrows. As one of the County's largest and most popular recreation areas, Whittier Narrows continues to see various encampments situated among brush and debris. In 2025, the County initiated an encampment resolution and Pathway Home effort to provide services and transitional housing for approximately 80 unhoused individuals in the region following repeated fires and public safety incidents. As part of this effort, more than 100 tons of debris were successfully removed from the area. In the eight months since the interventions, encampments have begun to reemerge in Whittier Narrows, posing ongoing environmental and safety risks for residents and nearby communities. Recent fires in May and June occurred in proximity to encampments in Whittier Narrows demonstrating the need to keep these VHFHSZs clear of encampments to reduce fire risk and provide unhoused individuals with pathways to housing and stability. LACoFD

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has also identified the need for a fire road in Whittier Narrows to better navigate the difficult terrain during a fire emergency.

Full implementation of this proposed protocol would require additional resources and impact several departments requiring, at a minimum, an estimated additional \$11 million. HSH has identified the need for four additional full-time outreach staff to expand VHFHSZ coverage, with estimated costs of \$581,000. In addition, HSH estimates the level of investment necessary to ensure adequate emergency housing support and evacuation of this high-risk population during wildfire events to be approximately \$533,000. Additionally, partnering departments identified the following needs for their work to address encampments including but not limited to \$400,000 for DPW, \$840,000 for DPR, \$3.1 million for LACoFD, and \$5.8 million for LASD. Additional ongoing costs may be needed for future years' implementation of the protocol. In the aftermath of the Eaton and Palisades fires and the January 2025 Windstorm and Critical Fire Events in the County and the January 2023 Homelessness emergencies, it is imperative that the County ensure it has the resources to prevent fires in all of its VHFHSZs.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct the Departments of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Homeless Services and Housing, and the Los Angeles County Department of Fire, and request the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department to submit budget requests for the FY 26-27 Supplemental Budget, as outlined in the

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- March 23, 2026 report to support implementation of the proposed protocol for severe weather in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones of Los Angeles County.
2. Direct the Chief Executive Office to evaluate the budget requests submitted in response to Directive 1 and consider any available one-time and ongoing resources in the FY 26-27 Supplemental Budget to support the implementation of the proposed protocol to protect people experiencing homelessness in VHFHSZs during severe weather events and expand the existing collaborative efforts to address encampments in in all newly designated VHFHSZs. Any additional Net County Cost (NCC) funding for implementation would be subject to the County's Fiscal Resiliency Protocol.
 3. Direct the Chief Executive Office Legislative Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations branch (CEO-LAIR) to send a five-signature to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), with a copy to the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation, requesting additional federal coordination, staffing, and resources to address brush clearance, vegetation management, fire-fuel reduction, and encampment-related fire risks within Very High Hazard Severity Zones on or near USACE-maintained facilities in Los Angeles County, including periodic maintenance updates or risk assessments to support County outreach, safety protocols, and interagency coordination.

AGN. NO. _____

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