

MOTION

There is a crisis of homelessness in the City of Los Angeles. According to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's (LAHSA) 2017 Homeless Count, the City has experienced a 20 percent increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness since 2016. This includes 25,237 homeless individuals who are unsheltered on any given night. The City has one of the nation's largest homeless populations, but its ratio of shelter or crisis housing for people experiencing homelessness is among the lowest in the country. According to federal data, there is approximately one bed for every four homeless individual.

As part of the response to this crisis and to address the threat to public health and safety, including to people experiencing homelessness, the City is exploring strategies to expand the availability of temporary emergency shelters and other crisis housing options.

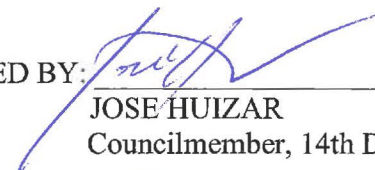
The City of Los Angeles' ordinance that codifies the minimum health and safety standards required of emergency homeless shelters which are established pursuant to the City's declaration of a shelter crisis (LAMC Section 91.8605) was enacted in the 1980s. LAMC Section 12.80 imposes those minimum health and safety standards on existing municipal buildings used as temporary emergency shelters. Subsequently, the City updated these guidelines (Ordinance No. 184836) to make it easier for temporary emergency shelters to be established and align the City's shelter crisis regulations with State law.

Effective January 1, 2018, California Government Code Section 8698.4 allows the City, upon a declaration of a shelter crisis, to authorize emergency housing, including homeless shelters, and to suspend the provisions of any local building approval procedures or state housing, health, habitability, planning and zoning, safety standards, procedures, or laws for homeless shelters. Cities can take these actions provided that it adopts, by ordinance, health and safety standards and procedures for homeless shelters consistent with ensuring minimum public health and safety standards and compliance. The draft ordinance must be submitted to the State's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review and approval. Additionally, the City must develop a plan to address the shelter crisis. The new law is effective through January 1, 2021.

Inasmuch as the City's current shelter crisis declaration expires on April 19, 2018, and given the need to further expand emergency shelter and crisis housing, the City should take advantage of the new legal authority established by California Government Code Section 8698.4 before the City's current shelter crisis declaration expires. In order to do so, the relevant departments should develop an ordinance for the City Council's review. Upon the Council's approval of the draft, it can be submitted to HCD for the State's approval.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council direct the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), the Los Angeles Fire Department (LAFD) and the Housing and Community Investment Department (HCID), with the assistance of the City Attorney, to develop a code amendment to the City's current emergency homeless shelters health and safety standards (LAMC 91.8605) that is responsive to the State code (California Government Code 8698.4) in order to expand opportunities to create additional emergency shelters, and report to the Council with a proposed ordinance within 30 days.

PRESENTED BY:


JOSE HUIZAR
Councilmember, 14th District

SECONDED BY:



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