



June 1, 2016

To: Homeless and Poverty Committee

From: Peter Lynn, Executive Director, Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority

Subject: **LOS ANGELES HOMELESS SERVICES AUTHORITY – EMERGENCY SHELTER SYSTEM; CRISIS AND BRIDGE HOUSING**

The Budget and Finance Committee Discussing the Mayor’s Proposed Budget for FY2016-17 approved by City Council included requested reports:

**Peter Lynn**  
Executive Director

**Board of Commissioners**

Mike Neely  
Chair

Shane Goldsmith  
Vice Chair

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Sarah Dusseault

Noah Farkas

Wendy Greuel

Kerry Morrison

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Booker Pearson

Kelvin Sauls

*R 51. Instruct the Los Angeles Homeless Services Agency to report to the Homelessness and Poverty Committee with steps/benchmarks/timelines of transformations to the nature of shelters. The report should include the changes to the nature of shelters, including changes to the hours of operation use, allowing pets, being able to stay with a partner, etc. The report should further address how many more people will be served with these new types of shelters and how services should be expanded to different locations outside the current sites.*

AND

*R 52. Instruct the Los Angeles Homeless Services Agency (LAHSA) to report to the Homelessness and Poverty Committee on how to accommodate pets, storage and 24-hour access into the Winter Shelter program. The report should include whether LAHSA has data on the transition of homeless individuals from Winter Shelters into rapid-rehousing or permanent housing, and how successful it is as a first step into more permanent housing solutions or as an access point to other supportive services.*

Bridge Housing is shelter that provides individuals with stability so they can more easily maintain contact with their CES Housing Navigator, as they are assisted in their efforts to enter permanent housing. All year-round shelters will operate 24-hours per day, provide three meals per day, and allow participants to store items during the day.

There are new city funds in the [2016 LAHSA RFP for Coordinated Entry System for Individuals and Youth](#) which will support additional Bridge Housing beds as well as CES Housing Navigators. CES Housing Navigators will provide services to the shelter participants with the explicit goal to find a permanent housing placement for the homeless participant. LASHA projects through the increased funding, to provide approximately 191 new beds in new locations. Programs awarded through this RFP will have an initial contract term of October 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. Contracts may be renewed for up to two subsequent years.

Consistent with City Homeless Strategy 7A, Housing Shelter System Personnel Need for Bridge Housing Conversion, LAHSA has implementing the Housing First concept in all funded programs. LASHA contracts includes harm reduction policies which are intended to prevent a participant’s termination from the program based solely on his or her inability to stop using drugs or alcohol or failure to take prescribed medications. Crisis Housing programs incorporating a harm reduction model must utilize all interventions possible, short of

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termination from the program to enable the participant to reduce or minimize their risky behaviors while at the same time assisting them to move into and become stabilized in permanent housing. Harm reduction is not intended to prevent the termination of a participant whose actions or behavior constitute a threat to the safety of other participants and staff. Organizations must develop a set of policies and procedures to be implemented in the event of such behavior on the part of a participant.

Service animals play an important role in ensuring the independence of people with disabilities, and it is therefore LAHSA's policy to welcome any animal trained to assist a person with a disability. All Agencies must be committed to having policies, procedures, and practices to permit the use of service animals by clients with disabilities. However some are not able to make this accommodation. LAHSA and its providers recognize the importance of animal companionship to many people experiencing homelessness and are working with our partners to make pet crates, grooming, and spay/neuter services accessible to our shelter providers. LAHSA will facilitate programmatic modifications such as pet care responsibility in order to accommodate an increase in pet resources in the shelter environment. In collaboration with the Department of Animal Services, LAHSA is implementing City Homeless Strategies:

- 9G, Emergency Shelter for Homeless Individuals with Pets
- 9H, Proposals to Assist Homeless Individuals and Their Pets
- And with EWDD 9I, Employment and Life Skills development for Homeless Pet Owners.

It is LAHSA's policy that all shelters are low barrier to the greatest extent possible based on the limitations of the facility, and to make reasonable accommodations as they are able. LAHSA is working with our partners to create policies and procedures for accommodating partners to be sheltered together.

The Winter Shelter program (WSP) is different from the year round program in that the facilities are generally rented for just a portion of the year, some with leasing restrictions against 24-hour operation as well as animals. The WSP is a transport the clients to the shelter and back to the pickup location program, which impacted the access of clients with pets. However, pets were accommodated at sites when possible. During the 2015-2016 Winter Shelter program, 24-hour access was provided during times of severe winter weather – either low temperatures or significant rainfall. LAHSA also worked with the county and city to provide expanded capacity during extreme weather which had 24-hour access.

There were more than 10,000 homeless individuals served County wide during the 2015-2016 winter shelter season. During that time, 107 people were placed into permanent housing (1%), 298 were placed into temporary housing (3%), and more than 3,000 people were surveyed using the CES tool (31%). This season resulted in unprecedented collaboration between winter shelter providers and CES Housing Navigators. The successes from this increased collaboration has informed the program design of LAHSA's year round shelter programs as laid out in the RFP referenced above.

## **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

This memorandum is provided for informational purposes only. There is no fiscal impact.