


CLA MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 2, 2019

TO: Honorable Members Rules, Elections, Intergovernmental Relations
and Neighborhoods Committee

FROM: Sharon M. Tso 
Chief Legislative Analyst

Council File No. 19-0002-S119
Assignment No. 19-06-0699

SUBJECT: Resolution to Support AB 960 (Maienschein)

CLA RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt Resolution (O'Farrell/Harris-Dawson) to include in the 2019-2020 State Legislative Program SUPPORT of AB 960 (Maienschein), which would which would expand the reasons for which a family may be considered homeless for the purposes of CalWORKs benefits; authorize a county to waive the 16-day and once-per-year limits on CalWORKs temporary shelter assistance; and expand the types of housing for which a CalWORKs payment may be made by to include shared housing.

SUMMARY:

Resolution (O'Farrell/Harris-Dawson) reports that under the current CalWORKS Assistance Program, CalWORKS families have a 16-day limit on CalWORKs temporary shelter assistance benefits and are unable to access CalWORKs permanent housing assistance if they obtain housing through a sublease or shared housing agreement. Additionally, families may not be granted CalWORKs eligibility due to a reported inability to pay rent past due. Resolution notes that AB 960 (Maienschein) seeks to improve the effectiveness of CalWORKs homeless intervention programs by addressing these limitations places on families struggling with housing instability. The Resolution notes that by granting program eligibility to families that are unable to pay rent past due, AB 960 (Maienschein) may help contribute to homelessness prevention efforts by decreasing the frequency of evictions due to late or unpaid rent.

The Resolution notes that elimination of the existing 16-day limit on CalWORKs temporary shelter assistance benefits, as proposed in AB 960 (Maienschein), would prevent otherwise-eligible families from being refused access to temporary housing due to emergencies or the pursuit of employment.

Additionally, the Resolution states that AB 960 (Maienschein) would address reports of otherwise-eligible individuals being unable to access CalWORKs permanent housing assistance because they obtained housing through a sublease or other shared housing arrangement, which is currently prohibited by law. The bill would also promote CalWORKs program effectiveness by removing the requirement that a person in the business of renting properties have a history of renting properties in order to receive payments.

Therefore, the Resolution recommends support of AB 960 (Maienschein) to amend the CalWORKs Program.

BACKGROUND:

The California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Program is a public assistance program that provides cash aid and services to eligible families that have a child or children in the home. The CalWORKs Homeless Assistance (HA) Program was established to help CalWORKs families meet the reasonable costs of securing housing. Currently, CalWORKs HA can provide payments for temporary shelter for up to 16 consecutive calendar days, as well as payments to secure or maintain housing, including a security deposit and last month's rent, or up to two months of unpaid rent. The CalWORKs HA Program is administered through CalWORKs at the county level.

Under current law, CalWORKs recipients who are determined to be homeless and requesting permanent housing assistance through the program must secure housing with a commercial establishment or person in the business of renting, or who has experience renting properties. This requirement excludes other innovative ways by which CalWORKs families may secure housing, and thus serves as a barrier to California's efforts to address its shortage of affordable housing.

CalWORKs HA recipients and eligible applicants are determined to be homeless or at-risk for homelessness, as defined in the Welfare and Institutions Code 11450. Homelessness includes, but is not limited to:

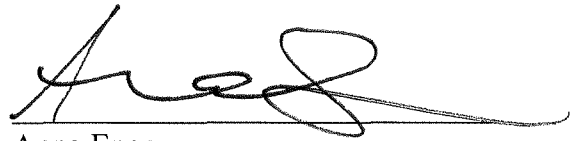
- Lacking a fixed or regular nighttime residence; and either
 - residing in a shelter; or
 - residing in a place not designed as a regular sleeping accommodation; or
 - in receipt of a notice to pay rent or quit.

AB 960 (Reyes) would expand CalWORKs HA Program eligibility to make the program's benefits accessible to families who are not homeless but are clearly at-risk for eviction and/or housing instability, and also to families who have the opportunity to secure a non-commercial regular nighttime residence, such as a sublease or living arrangement with a friend. Thus, the provisions outlined in AB 960 (Reyes) align with the City of Los Angeles's exploration of innovative housing strategies, such as a shared housing program, as described in the City's Comprehensive Homeless Strategy.

BILL STATUS:

02/21/19	Read first time. To print.
03/04/19	Referred to Com. on HUM. S.
03/20/19	From committee chair, with author's amendments: Amend, and re-refer to Com. on HUM. S. Read second time and amended.
03/21/19	Re-referred to Com. on HUM. S.
04/01/19	From committee: Amend, and do pass as amended and re-refer to Com. on APPR. (Ayes 8. Noes 0.)
04/24/19	In committee: Set, first hearing. Referred to APPR. suspense file.
05/16/19	From committee: Amend, and do pass as amended. (Ayes 16. Noes 0.) (May 16).
05/28/19	Read third time. Passed. Ordered to the Senate.

05/29/19 Senate. Read first time. To Com. on RLS. for assignment.
06/06/19 Referred to Com. on HUMAN S.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Enger', written over a horizontal line.

Anna Enger
Legislative Analyst

Attachment: Resolution

RESOLUTION *RULES, ELECTIONS & INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS*

WHEREAS, any official position of the City of Los Angeles with respect to legislation, rules, regulations or policies proposed to or pending before a local, state or federal governmental body or agency must first have been adopted in the form of a Resolution by the City Council with the concurrence of the Mayor; and

WHEREAS, Under the CalWORKs Assistance Program, CalWORKs families may be considered homeless for purposes of receiving additional family assistance if the family has received an eviction notice, if the family lacks a fixed and regular nighttime residence, if the family's primary nighttime residence is a shelter, or if the family is residing in a public or private place that is not an appropriate sleeping place for human beings; and

WHEREAS, AB 960 (Maienschein) would remove the existing 16-day limit on CalWORKs temporary shelter assistance, which may cause families to be refused access to or lose their temporary housing due to emergencies or even the pursuit of employment; and

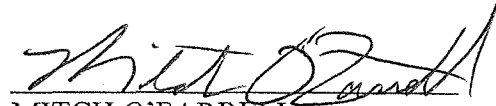
WHEREAS, AB 960 (Maienschein) would grant eligibility for CalWORKs benefits during instances in which a family is unable to pay rent past due, and would thus aid the family in avoiding housing instability; and

WHEREAS, There have been reports of otherwise-eligible individuals being unable to access CalWORKs permanent housing assistance because they obtained housing through a sublease or other shared housing arrangement, which is currently prohibited by law; and

WHEREAS, AB 960 (Maienschein) would stabilize housing for Los Angeles's poorest families with children while also improving the effectiveness of the CalWORKs program's homelessness interventions;

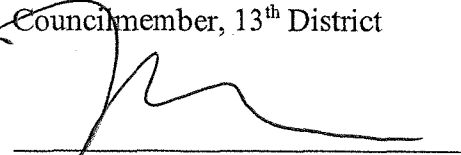
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with the concurrence of the Mayor, that by the adoption of this Resolution, the City of Los Angeles hereby includes in its 2019-2020 State Legislative Program SUPPORT for AB 960, which would expand the reasons for which a family may be considered homeless for the purposes of CalWORKs benefits; authorize a county to waive the 16-day and once-per-year limits on CalWORKs temporary shelter assistance; and expand the types of housing for which a CalWORKs payment may be made by to include shared housing.

Presented by:



MITCH O'FARRELL
Councilmember, 13th District

Seconded by:



AE

JUN 26 2019