


**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

Date: April 24, 2020

To: Honorable Paul Krekorian, Chair  
Budget and Finance Committee

Attn: Erika Pulst, Legislative Assistant II  
Office of the City Clerk

From: Laura Trejo, General Manager  
Department of Aging 

Subject: **LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF AGING RESPONSE TO  
PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 BUDGET**

The Mayor's proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 for the Los Angeles Department of Aging (LADOA) is responsive to the needs of older adults and operation of the Department in assuring the continued funding for important service programs. The Department also recognizes that due to COVID19 crisis, the City faces challenging fiscal times as well. The Department is appreciative of the proposed budget's continued baseline funding for senior services that includes senior nutrition programs, the Echo Park Mini-MPC, the Estelle Van Meter Mini-MPC, the homeless seniors Older Workers Employment Program, and the Evidence Based Health Promotion Programs.

LADOA is in the midst of adapting existing programs and implementing new services and delivery infrastructure in response to the COVID19 health crisis which is nothing less than an existential threat to the life, safety, and service needs of older adult Angelenos. The Department has operated since 1983 with a mission to serve older adults in the City, and especially now, with the stakes so high, our management and staff team, our aging services network, City family, and wide array of community stakeholders are working together to protect our older adults and assist their family caregivers in the midst of an unprecedented pandemic. Although May 15<sup>th</sup> is the date the Stay Safe order may be lifted, there will be an impact on Department operations into the next fiscal year.

For seniors staying at home, the two needs that arose were for food insecurity and dealing with social isolation. Prior to the pandemic, the continuing annual support by the City Council with City General funds to supplement the senior nutrition programs have eliminated waiting lists and addressed increased operating costs. The impact of the COVID19 on the seniors in the nutrition program were immediate. In a snapshot comparison, on February 24th, 5,050 meals were served and on April 22nd, 7,284 meals. The 44% increase reflects the surge of new seniors participating in the nutrition programs.

## **Response to COVID19 Crisis**

The Department is responding with ingenuity, staff dedication, and adaptability with an intense mission focus on protecting nutrition services for the City's older adults in the midst of the COVID19 health crisis and working with the Department's contracted service providers (as they closed their on-site congregate meal program). They are protecting both their current older adult client base as well as new clients who are becoming aware of Aging's service provider network for services (especially nutrition services). The response which was launched immediately after the Multipurpose Senior Center (MPC) closures was to convert Congregate (C-1) meals to Home Delivered Meals with a cadre of existing MPC staff (both the usual nutrition staff as well as other program staff), City Disaster Service Workers, Department of Aging staff, and other volunteers to not just ensure the modified meal program but exponentially expand this program with a huge surge of new clients. The nutrition programs were increased from a regular five days per week to seven days per week. The Mayor's Office launched a senior meals program for low income seniors to address the increase in demand that was exceeding the current delivery infrastructure and funding available to eliminate new waiting lists. Additionally a second meal per day is being provided to all seniors in the nutrition programs. The Department is very appreciative of the response of the Mayor's Office, the City family as a whole, and the California Department of Aging (for expediting processing of 2.4 million dollars in emergency federal nutrition funding by sending an advance check).

The Department is addressing the social isolation effects on seniors by utilizing the Purposeful Aging LA: an Age Friendly Cities and Communities initiative (PALA) to review current goals that can impact on the situation. The senior services providers have been conducting programs via telephone and increased their telephone reassurance services. Case managers are conducting care planning reviews and service authorization by phone as well. LADOA's has converted its Aging Mastery Program to online with Zoom and Google hangouts for seniors and family caregivers; our social workers are also conducting group peer counseling online as well. Our PALA staff are also putting together a network for telephone reassurance programs. These remote service delivery systems are worth further development and enhancement as more of the older adult population adapt smartphone use and the power of the internet makes service available to more people.

## **De-funded Program - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Mini-Multipurpose Center (LGBTQ-MMPC)**

There is one program that was not funded in the Mayor's Proposed Fiscal 2020-2021 Budget. The Department requested \$520,000 in General City Purpose funding to continue the LGBTQ-MM (it was funded in the Fiscal Year 2019-2020 adopted budget), but was not continued in the Proposed Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Budget. The Department completed its RFP in early March and selected an awardee, the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center, and is waiting for contract authority. The need for the LGBTQ-MMPC continues as this emerging Citywide program would provide the full array of nutrition, social

services, and transportation services with a Mini-Multipurpose operating with a focus on LGTBTQ cultural competencies and identifying as LGBTQ friendly. There is a continuing and critical need for providing unique older adult service needs for an older adult population which has faced social isolation and fear of discrimination.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (213) 202-5645.

LT:JD:mn:z/Budget memo to B&FC 20-21