



## City of Long Beach

Working Together to Serve

## Memorandum

Date: September 26, 2016

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager *T.M.W.*

From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services /s/

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **State of Homelessness in Long Beach**

---

On May 24, 2016, the City Council requested the Department of Health and Human Services, Homeless Services Division (HSD) to report on the current state of homelessness throughout the city. A full report will be submitted in November 2016. In the interim, the HSD is providing a status update, which includes the number of people who are currently experiencing homelessness, the number of beds available in Emergency Shelters (ES), Transitional Housing (TH) projects, and Permanent Supportive Housing/Rapid Re-Housing (PSH/RRH) projects dedicated to those who are experiencing homelessness. This memorandum also provides a brief summary of the other services specifically dedicated for a sub-population of people who have a mental health illness or who experience substance use disorders, as well as information related to requests for outreach-related services.

This information, and other information to the City's response to homelessness, will be further discussed at the October 4, 2016 study session on the state of homelessness.

### Continuum of Care

The Homeless Services Division is the lead agency for the centralized coordination of care in Long Beach, known as the Continuum of Care (CoC). These coordination efforts actually stretch beyond the border to regional partners due to the migratory nature of those who are experiencing homelessness and the overall complexity of the issue. The CoC is comprised of service providers dedicated to aligning service delivery through a comprehensive system, designed to meet homeless community members where they are, and get them back to self-sufficiency and stable permanent housing. The HSD plans, coordinates, and monitors the CoC; conducts the Biennial Homeless Point in Time Count; and operates the Multi-Service Center (MSC). The MSC coordinates street outreach, centralized intake and assessment, case management, and linkage to supportive services (child care, domestic violence programs, employment and skills training, HIV and medical treatment services, mental health services, veteran services, and shelter and housing placement).

As the lead agency, the HSD applies annually to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funding to support the CoC portfolio of service providers. The total renewal amount awarded for Fiscal Year 2015 (FY 15) was \$7.6 million. These dollars are allocated specifically for Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing/Rapid Re-Housing, supportive services and Coordination of Services, also known as the coordinated entry system (CES). The HSD receives \$508,000 through the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) to provide Emergency Shelters, Rapid Re-Housing and outreach, as well as smaller allocations of funding (\$600,000) through Los Angeles County to support regional efforts.

Though the CoC is an expansive system encompassing all stakeholders in Long Beach dedicated to addressing homelessness, 11 agencies are sub-contracted and receive funding through the HSD to provide these services.

### Homeless Count

Under CoC regulations, the City is required to conduct a biannual unsheltered/sheltered homeless count. The last count in Long Beach was conducted in January 2015, and the next count will be conducted on January 26, 2017. As of January 2015, the point in time count was 2,345, of which 94 were unsheltered Veterans and 731 were chronic unsheltered individuals.

### Available Resources

#### **Housing**

Housing options funded within the City include:

- Emergency Shelter (ES): temporary shelter (lodging) for those experiencing homelessness in general or for specific populations of the homeless. Requirements and limitations may vary by program and are specified by the funder.
- Transitional Housing (TH): temporary lodging that is designed to facilitate the movement of individuals and families experiencing homelessness into permanent housing within a specified period of time, but no longer than 24 months. Requirements and limitations may vary by program and are specified by the funder.
- Rapid Re-housing (RRH): provides housing relocation and stabilization services and short- and/or medium-term rental assistance as necessary to help an individual or family experiencing homelessness move as quickly as possible into permanent housing and achieve stability in that housing.
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH): permanent housing and supportive services to assist persons with a disability (individuals with disabilities or families in which one adult or child has a disability) who are experiencing homelessness to live independently.

The following table provides the number of beds for individuals and families that are available across the city by component type. This includes CoC funded and unfunded partners:

<u>Shelter Type</u>	<u>Singles</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Funder(s)</u>
Emergency Shelter	167	90	257	ESG; Long Beach Rescue Mission; Women's Shelter of LB
Winter Shelter	200	0	200 seasonal	LA County
Transitional Housing	232	105	337	CoC
Permanent Supportive Housing	929	523	1,452	CoC; 704 VASH (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing)
Rapid Re-Housing	148	129	264	ESG, SSVF for Veterans, CoC
Other Permanent Housing	120	0	120	LB Savana Housing (Veterans)

The Long Beach Housing Authority annually sets aside 70 Housing Choice Vouchers dedicated to those who are experiencing homelessness in the city. There are also 704 VASH Vouchers dedicated for Veterans. The CoC utilizes these vouchers in service delivery through the Coordinated Entry System. Due to the 2 percent vacancy rate/housing crisis in Long Beach, many people who currently have vouchers are not able to find available units to lease. Vouchers expire after 180 days.

From January 1, 2016 through August 31, 2016, a total of 1,738 persons were in shelters, transitional housing or permanent housing. Of the total, 1,139 were individuals and 599 were persons in families.

### **Mental Health/Substance Use Treatment**

Through the CoC, the City funds 155 Permanent Supportive Housing/Rapid Rehousing beds through Mental Health America for individuals with mental illness. In addition, the L.A. County Department of Mental Health (DMH) provides assessment and treatment to those referred to their services. County mental health services are provided directly by the County and are not managed through the City. However, one DMH Clinical Support Supervisor is co-located at the MSC to conduct preliminary evaluations for mental health services and link clients to the broader system of care.

No substance abuse prevention or treatment services are funded by the City or the CoC. L.A. County funds substance abuse treatment services, but there is little access to service in Long Beach. At this time, only 14 detox beds are available in Long Beach, located at Tom Redgate Memorial Recovery Center. A person who is referred to detox competes with others in the County for a bed and also must have a 30-day supply of any medications they currently are taking, get medical clearance prior to admission, and must be currently enrolled in MediCal. There are two treatment programs in Long Beach -- Safe Refuge (previously known as the Substance Abuse Foundation) and the Salvation Army. Participants must work to participate in the Salvation Army programs. All referrals to these programs are conducted via "warm hand-off" by case managers through the Coordinated Entry System. Space is limited and there is no guarantee that participants will meet qualifications to participate in these programs.

### **City Outreach Efforts**

In an effort to meet people where they are, a multi-disciplinary team made up of City staff, partner agencies including mental health and Veteran service providers, Quality of Life police officers, and the Downtown Long Beach Association conducts outreach across the 52 square miles of Long Beach. Outreach efforts were designed to proactively address the needs of those experiencing homelessness residing in locations not meant of human habitation. However, over the last several months, the requests to the HSD for outreach and response in the City has increased significantly, to nearly 40 requests per week. Currently, there are only 1.5 City-funded staff currently available to respond to the daily calls for service.

State of Homelessness in Long Beach  
September 26, 2016  
Page 4

Please let me know if you require additional information prior to the provision of the full report in November.

CC: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY  
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY AUDITOR  
TOM MODICA, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER  
ARTURO SANCHEZ, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER  
ROBERT LUNA, CHIEF OF POLICE  
AMY J. BODEK, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES  
CRAIG BECK, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS  
MARIE KNIGHT, DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE  
REBECCA JIMENEZ, ASSISTANT TO THE CITY MANAGER