

Date: March 15, 2021

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services 

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Status Update – Laura’s Law**

At its March 19, 2019 meeting, the City Council requested City Manager to provide an update on Laura's Law and an explanation of how it is being applied and funded by the County of Los Angeles. This memorandum provides an update on this request.

In July 2014, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors voted to fully implement Laura’s Law. This law expanded access to Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT). Prior to that time, the County had a small program that was voluntary. The Los Angeles Department of Mental Health provides the AOT-LA services offered under Laura’s Law. AOT eligible individuals are outreached in an effort to voluntarily engage them in Full-Service Partnership (FSP) services. If the person refuses services, AOT-LA may petition the court to order the individual into psychiatric outpatient treatment, namely FSP. AOT-LA Program expands inter-agency collaboration among courts, County Counsel, Public Defender, Patients’ Rights, and local law enforcement.

Referring Parties

To refer someone to the AOT-LA program, the referring party must be one of the following:

- Co-habitant aged 18 or older
- Close relative - parent, sibling, spouse, child over age 18
- Director of client’s residential care facility
- Hospital director
- Licensed Mental Health Treatment Provider
- Peace Officer
- Parole Officer
- Probation Officer

Those in Long Beach meeting these criteria can refer a person with serious mental illness to the AOT-LA services.

Eligibility for Referral

To be eligible to be referred into the AOT-LA program under Laura’s Law, a person must be:

- 18 years of age or older
- Seriously mentally ill

- Unlikely to survive safely in the community without supervision
- Have a history of non-compliance with treatment that is demonstrated by:
 - Two or more hospitalizations or incarcerations within the last 36 months; or
 - Within the last 48 months, one or more acts and/or attempts to cause serious physical harm to self and/or others
- Is substantially deteriorating
- Likely to result in grave disability or serious harm to self or others without treatment
- Has failed to engage in available treatment
- Would benefit from AOT-LA, which is the least restrictive placement necessary to ensure the person’s recovery and stability.

AOT Services

AOT services include:

- Extensive outreach and engagement for a minimum of 30 days
- Screening and assessment
- Linkage to psychiatric treatment, primarily FSP providers
- May petition for court-ordered psychiatric treatment
- Participation in court hearing and follow-up on court mandate

The Los Angeles Department of Mental Health provides direct mental health services for Long Beach, as well as funds local and regional nonprofit organizations to provide services for Long Beach residents. Services provided by the Department of Mental Health AOT-LA program are funded primarily through the State of California Mental Health Services Act (MHSA).

If you have additional questions, please contact me at kelly.colopy@longbeach.gov, or by phone at extension (562) 570-4016.

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