

Date: May 2, 2023

To: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager *T.M.*

From: Kevin Riper, Director of Financial Management *KR*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Sidewalk Vendor Safety and Security**

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On June 15, 2021, the City Council approved a request intending to provide assistance to improve the safety and security of sidewalk vendors within Long Beach.

A multi-departmental working group, including Development Services, Economic Development, Financial Management, Health and Human Services, Police, and Public Works Departments, was engaged to develop recommendations for ways sidewalk vendors can improve their own safety during operations within the City of Long Beach (City) and to work through the development of a Sidewalk Vending Program for Long Beach (Program). The Program will be consistent with Senate Bill (SB) 947 Safe Sidewalk Vending Act and SB 972 Revised California Retail Code and all other applicable State and local regulations. A report to the City Council is anticipated in Spring 2023 with the recommendations from the working group.

From a safety perspective, the information provided below addresses core operations of a sidewalk vendor, including: location, how transactions are processed, and hours of operation. In addition, resources are provided to assist vendors in operating their business and to help close the digital divide.

### **Recommendations from the Long Beach Police Department**

The Long Beach Police Department provides the following guidelines to assist sidewalk vendors to conduct business within Long Beach and to enhance their awareness of safe practices to better empower them to be their own advocates.

- **Location and Set-up**
  - Conduct business in well-lit areas.
  - Stay on major streets and avoid alleys or narrow pathways.
  - Conduct business near buildings with working security cameras and/or security guards nearby.
  - Select sidewalk vendor space to be in a position with the vendor's back against a wall to prevent a person approaching from directly behind the vendor.
  
- **Individual Safety Recommendations**
  - Work in pairs.

- Be ALERT and aware of your surroundings, and do not allow distractions from electronic devices, such as cell phones or tablets, that are not part of the sales activity.
- Do not wear visible jewelry.
- Install surveillance camera(s) on sidewalk vendor equipment (i.e. cart, table, or display).
- Use personal safety and location finder applications on your digital device.

▪ **Payment Processing Recommendations**

- Avoid pulling large amounts of money from pockets to receive payment or provide change to customers.
- Consider making a money drop to the trunk of personal vehicle or residence to avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Install a locking money box to sidewalk vendor cart (i.e. welding to side of cart).
- Consider using digital payments (i.e. Cashapp, Venmo, Zelle).

**Digital Inclusion Initiative Supports**

Having equitable access and use of the Internet, technology, and digital skills is critical for sidewalk vendors and their personal safety as well as the potential growth and success of their business. As part of the City's Digital Inclusion Initiative, City staff are working closely with cross-sector partners to ensure that communities most in need have equitable access and use of digital inclusion resources and services citywide. Sidewalk vendors may qualify for low-cost Internet services and/or computer resources. More information about specific digital inclusion resources and services are included in the multilingual Digital Inclusion Resource Guides available on the City internet site at [www.longbeach.gov/ti/digital-inclusion/resources/](http://www.longbeach.gov/ti/digital-inclusion/resources/). The following are also available and additional information can be found on the referenced website:

▪ **Low-Cost Internet Services**

The human-I-T Connect Program provides qualified low-income households on limited budgets with low-cost Internet offers in their area. Proof of low-income status varies based on the Internet service provider. The cost ranges from \$10 to \$25 a month.

▪ **Low-Cost Computer Resources**

The human-I-T Equip Program provides non-profits and low-income households with desktops or laptops for as low as \$100. All computers come with a one-year free warranty, one year of free technical support and free shipping.

▪ **Free Community Literacy Training**

The human-I-T Include Program provides a free self-paced online course on basic computer skills.

## **Business Assistance from the Economic Development Department**

The Economic Development Department has many programs to assist micro-businesses and first-time entrepreneurs, including business navigation and small business loan programs. Businesses can contact the BizCare hotline for assistance accessing City and other resources, with assistance available in multiple languages. Call 562-570-4BIZ (4249) or email [4Biz@longbeach.gov](mailto:4Biz@longbeach.gov), Monday through Friday 8am-5pm. In-person assistance is also available at BizCare Pop-Ups 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month. Find the latest Pop-Up schedule at [www.longbeach.gov/bizcare](http://www.longbeach.gov/bizcare).

## **Human Trafficking Concerns**

Concerns have been expressed that some sidewalk vendors may be victims of human trafficking. If anyone is being forced to engage in any activity, including sidewalk vending, and cannot leave, they should text 233-733 (Be Free), call 1-888-373-7888, or call 1-888-539-2373 to access help and services in Los Angeles County. Additional information can be found in the attached flyers from County of Los Angeles Department of Consumer and Business Affairs.

If you have any questions, please contact Tara Mortensen, Business Services Bureau Manager, at (562) 570-6357, or at [tara.mortensen@longbeach.gov](mailto:tara.mortensen@longbeach.gov).

### ATTACHMENTS

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