

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE REPORT relative to the establishment of a Right to Counsel Ordinance and program; and related matters.

Recommendations for Council action, as initiated by Motion (Raman – et al. – Harris-Dawson.):

1. INSTRUCT the Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD), with assistance from the City Attorney and any other City departments, as needed, to report within 60 days with recommendations for the establishment of a Right to Counsel ordinance and program, subject to the availability of funds, for tenants facing eviction in the City. The recommendations should build upon the Los Angeles Housing + Community Investment Department's November 1, 2019 Report regarding recommendations for a City of Los Angeles Eviction Defense Program, in addition to lessons learned from the establishment and implementation of the COVID-19 Response Eviction Defense Program, and should utilize the National Coalition for a Civil Right to Counsel's Model Legislation as a model for best practices for the development of a City ordinance. Specifically, the recommendations should consider including the following:
 - a. Coverage for tenants at 80% of the Area Median Income or below who live in the City.
 - b. Full legal representation for any judicial or administrative proceedings to evict or terminate the tenancy or housing subsidy of a covered individual, including first appeals at the discretion of contracted legal service providers.
 - c. A requirement that landlords provide notice to tenants of the right to counsel when tenancies are initiated and attached to any termination notice in the primary language of the tenant.
 - d. A requirement that the LAHD work with designated community groups to engage and educate tenants about their rights and provide tenants with navigation services.
 - e. An annual reporting requirement on the number of individuals served, case outcomes and engagement and education efforts.
 - f. An implementation time line of no more than five years, prioritizing vulnerable individuals based on zip codes and/or criteria developed by the LAHD in collaboration with contracted legal service providers and community based organizations.
 - g. As in the Right to Counsel ordinances in other jurisdictions, a provision clarifying that the Right to Counsel program be established and operated "subject to appropriation" of the necessary funds.
2. INSTRUCT the LAHD, with assistance from the City Administrative Officer (CAO), Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), the City Attorney and any other City departments, as needed, to report within 60 days with a detailed cost breakdown for the Right to Counsel ordinance and program and staffing needs, in addition to a prospective year-by-year spending plan for the implementation of the program subject to funding becoming available.
3. DIRECT the LAHD to engage housing providers when developing recommendations to establish the Right to Counsel ordinance and program.

Fiscal Impact Statement: Neither the CAO nor the CLA has completed a financial analysis of this report.

Community Impact Statement: None submitted

SUMMARY

At the meeting held on March 1, 2023, your Housing and Homelessness Committee considered a Motion (Raman – Blumenfield – Et al.) relative to the establishment of a Right to Counsel Ordinance and program; and related matters.

After an opportunity for public comment was held, the Committee moved to approve the recommendations contained in the Motion, with and additional amendment proposed by Councilmember Lee, as detailed above, as amended. This matter is now forwarded to the Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,



HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE

<u>MEMBER</u>	<u>VOTE</u>
RAMAN:	YES
BLUMENFIELD:	YES
HARRIS-DAWSON:	YES
RODRIGUEZ:	YES
LEE:	YES

LV 3.1.23

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-