

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

Recommendations for Council action, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE MAYOR:

1. ADOPT the recommended Right to Counsel 5-year phase-in plan through the expansion of the Eviction Defense Program (EDP), as detailed in the October Los Angeles Housing Department (LAHD) report, attached to the Council File.
2. REQUEST the City Attorney, with the assistance of LAHD, to prepare and present a Right to Counsel Ordinance, contingent on the availability of funding, to:
 - a. Provide legal service to qualifying tenants at or below 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) who reside in the City of Los Angeles.
 - b. Provide legal representation to qualifying tenants for any judicial or administrative proceedings to evict or terminate a renter's tenancy or housing subsidy.
 - c. Require landlords to notify tenants of the Right to Counsel (RTC) Program, using a curated City form, at the onset of a tenancy and attach to any termination of tenancy notice in the tenant's primary language.
 - d. Provide that the RTC Program shall be established and operated "subject to appropriation" of necessary funds.
 - e. Disallow services for tenants who reside in the same dwelling unit with their landlord or master tenant in order to avoid potential conflict with other statutes.
3. INSTRUCT the LAHD to administer, implement, and monitor the expanded EDP/RTC Program, including:
 - a. Work with designated community groups to engage and educate tenants about their rights and provide tenants with navigation services.
 - b. Provide a five-year implementation timeline prioritizing vulnerable individuals based on zip codes or criteria developed by the LAHD in collaboration with legal service providers and community-based organizations.
 - c. Report on the number of individuals served with legal assistance, case LAHD Right-To-Counsel Report Back outcomes, and education efforts to assist the public-facing eviction.

- d. Report with a detailed yearly spending plan for the implementation of the Program subject to the availability of funding.
 - e. Provide landlords with any notices, in various primary languages, that are required to be issued to tenants.
4. INSTRUCT the LAHD to report in regard to alternate methods (other than by Zip Code) for determining areas which are most in need of RTC Program services.
5. AUTHORIZE Resolution Authority for the following new positions to support the implementation and administration of the RTC Program, subject to allocation of the positions by the Board of Civil Service Commissioners and subject to pay grade determination by the City Administrative Officer (CAO):

Class Code	Class Title	No.
8504	Housing Planning and Economic Analyst	1
1461	Communications Information Representative	1
9184	Management Analyst	1
1368	Senior Administrative Clerk	1
1358	Administrative Clerk	1

6. AUTHORIZE the Controller to:

- a. Transfer \$413,657.29 within the LAHD United LA Fund No. 66M/43, from Account No.43Y00B, Administration to the following accounts:

Account No.	Account Title	Amount
43Y143	LAHD	\$246,921.34
43Y299	Reimburse the General Fund	<u>166,735.95</u>
Total:		\$413,657.29

- b. Increase appropriations in the amount of \$246,921.34 for the following accounts within LAHD Fund No. 100/43:

Account No.	Account Title	Amount
1010	Salaries, General	\$214,714.21
6030	Leasing	<u>32,207.13</u>
Total:		\$246,921.34

- c. Expend funds not to exceed \$413,657.28 upon proper written demand of General Manager, LAHD, or designee.

7. AUTHORIZE the General Manager, LAHD, or designee, to prepare Controller instructions and make necessary technical adjustments consistent with the Mayor and Council actions, subject to the approval of the CAO, and instruct the Controller to implement these instructions.

Fiscal Impact Statement: The LAHD reports that there is no impact to the General Fund at this time. The actions recommended in the October 6, 2023 LAHD report, attached to the Council File, will be funded by the United to House LA (Measure ULA) allocation in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24 budget.

Community Impact Statement: Yes

For:
Historic Highland Park Neighborhood Council

(Personnel, Audits, and Hiring Committee waived consideration of the above matter.)

Summary:

On November 29, 2023, your Committee considered a October 6, 2023 LAHD report relative to the establishment of a Right to Counsel Ordinance and program. According to the LAHD, adoption of an RTC ordinance would establish Eviction Defense Program/Stay Housed LA (EDP/SHLA) as a permanent program, codify services, and ensure that eligible tenants living in the City have a right to access critical legal services to prevent displacement and homelessness by increasing the availability of legal representation services for low-income renters facing eviction citywide.

In its report, the LAHD has also discussed a framework for implementing a phased-in EDP/RTC program citywide. Adoption of an RTC ordinance would establish EDP/SHLA as a permanent program, codify services, and ensure that eligible tenants living in the City have a right to access critical legal defense services. Eviction defense services have proven to be a critical resource for vulnerable tenants during the pandemic and an effective tool that prevents homelessness. The LAHD will continue monitoring the EDP services, as currently implemented, and prepare to scale up operations when continued ULA funding is assured.

The LAHD will improve EDP/SHLA services by leveraging existing City programs, expanding on tenant outreach and legal assistance programs to widen the programs' reach and effectiveness further; and, building strategic partnerships with community-based organizations to expand the education and awareness campaign on tenant rights in the City of Los Angeles. Lastly, the LAHD recommends an annual reporting requirement on the households/individuals served, case outcomes, and engagement/educational efforts. After consideration and having provided an opportunity for public comment, the Committee moved to recommend approval of the

recommendations contained in the LHD report, as amended. This matter is now submitted to Council for its consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

Housing and Homelessness Committee

COUNCILMEMBER	VOTE
RAMAN:	YES
BLUMENFIELD:	YES
HARRIS-DAWSON:	YES
RODRIGUEZ:	YES
LEE:	YES

ARL

11/29/23

-NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL COUNCIL ACTS-