

Communication from Public

Name: Tommy Newman

Date Submitted: 01/12/2022 03:21 PM

Council File No: 21-4118-S16

Comments for Public Posting: On behalf of the United Way of Greater Los Angeles, I write to request your support for a temporary moratorium on all LAMC 41.18 enforcement while the City of Los Angeles, and in particular its homeless services providers and unhoused residents, reels from the devastating and highly contagious effects of the COVID-19 Omicron variant. This surge has resulted in new coronavirus cases on a scale unseen since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. According to LA County DPH, as of today there are over 200 homeless service settings experiencing active outbreaks and under quarantine – which is double the amount since Jan 1. Last week, there were a reported 918 new cases of COVID-19 amongst people experiencing homelessness - the highest single week of the entire pandemic. As part of the Street Engagement Strategy, outreach workers and LAHSA staff have worked hard to offer shelter and other resources to individuals in these locations. However, recent surge has resulted in staff shortages across service providers, which hinders the ability of outreach workers and case managers to provide support for people experiencing homelessness. In March 2020, City Council took swift and critical action to allow people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to shelter in place, and increased hygiene stations in encampments to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Similar urgent public health actions are necessary now to protect people living outside and inside congregate shelters - all of whom are particularly vulnerable to the life-threatening impacts of this deadly virus. We ask that during this critical time and to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, the Council continue resolutions related to LAMC 41.18 designated locations for 60 days, temporarily pause all 41.18 enforcement of designated areas for a period of 60 days and request report backs from LAHSA in partnership with LA County DHS and DPH on updates on the surge and progress on mitigating the spread of COVID-19 amongst people experiencing homelessness. This request is not about going backwards – this is about pausing where the city is right now with regards to 41.18 in the interest of public health and protecting the lives of people experiencing homeless, homeless service setting staffers, and the general public. Thank you for your leadership and support in this urgent matter. Sincerely, Tommy Newman
Vice President, Engagement & Activation United Way of Greater

Los Angeles

Communication from Public

Name: Rachel Kassenbrock

Date Submitted: 01/12/2022 06:00 PM

Council File No: 21-4118-S16

Comments for Public Posting: My name is Rachel Kassenbrock, and I am the Director of Communications at LA Family Housing submitting a general public comment. On behalf of LA Family Housing, I urge this Council to pass a temporary moratorium on any 41.18 enforcement. In March of 2020, as the pandemic was taking hold in Los Angeles, City Council took critical public health actions to protect people experiencing homelessness by allowing unsheltered residents to shelter in place and pausing CARE/CARE+ clean-ups and enforcement. With cases rising every day, we must take similar urgent action now. Last week there were 918 new COVID cases amongst unhoused Angelenos -- the single highest weekly total since early in the pandemic. What's more, 196 homeless service settings have had active COVID outbreaks. Many of these locations are where unsheltered individuals would otherwise be referred to for housing or services. At LA Family Housing, five of our interim housing sites are on quarantine and cannot accept any new participants. What's more, we're experiencing extreme staffing shortages -- of all our staff who are currently out sick with positive COVID cases, 80% are direct service staff who provide services at our interim housing sites. With vaccination rates lower than the overall population and a higher likelihood for underlying health conditions, unsheltered Angelenos are particularly vulnerable to the Omicron variant. Now is not the time to be referring people to congregate shelters, where they can be exposed to or potentially spread Omicron. By continuing to enforce and expand 41.18, we are endangering the lives of those already at the margins, and at a time when limited resources are further reduced. Please implement a temporary moratorium on all 41.18 enforcement until this current Omicron surge has dissipated. Thank you.

Communication from Public

Name: Va Lecia Adams Kellum, PhD

Date Submitted: 01/12/2022 10:14 AM

Council File No: 21-4118-S16

Comments for Public Posting: I am Dr. Va Lecia Adams Kellum, writing on behalf of St. Joseph Center to urge you to implement a temporary moratorium on all 41.18 enforcement. Almost two years ago, when the pandemic was first taking hold in Los Angeles, the City Council took critical steps to protect public health, including allowing people experiencing homelessness to shelter in place. It is imperative that you treat the current Omicron-fueled surge with similar urgency. Our unsheltered neighbors have vaccination rates that are lower than the overall population and they are much more likely to have underlying health conditions. This makes them particularly vulnerable to the Omicron variant. We are seeing this play out in the numbers — last week we had 918 newly reported cases of COVID amongst people experiencing homelessness and we currently have 196 homeless service settings and shelters with active COVID outbreaks. These startling figures make clear that this is the wrong time to send people to congregate shelters, which is where they are most likely to be directed as a result of any enforcement actions. Continued implementation of 41.18 during this current Omicron surge will endanger the lives of people who are already at risk and already marginalized. I urge you to implement a temporary moratorium on all 41.18 enforcement until this threat is significantly reduced.