

MOTION

Since the advent of Mayor Garcetti's A Bridge Home program in 2018, dozens of temporary and long-term shelter sites have helped thousands of Angelenos, many of whom had not slept in a bed in years, move indoors from the street. These shelters represent a transformative shift in LA's approach to homelessness – in reducing street homelessness and offering a bed, a bathroom, and a door to so many, they both have improved neighborhoods and saved lives. But Los Angeles is still very new to the work of shelter provision, and the operation of these new facilities has come with opportunities for policy improvement and issues that demand to be addressed with urgency.

All shelter sites require residents to sign a participant agreement, violation of which can lead to an exit from the shelter program. While the participant agreement is designed for the protection of shelter staff and other residents, program exits due to participants' breach of this agreement cause some of the most vulnerable individuals with mental health and substance use disorder diagnoses to end up back on the street – where the process of moving indoors must resume again with an even higher degree of difficulty.

Security is of vital importance in facilities where dozens of individuals who were, until recently, experiencing unsheltered homelessness share collective space. Every effort must be undertaken to both keep residents of shelter sites as safe as possible and also limit scenarios where individuals are forced from shelter back onto the street.

Greater investments in security staff training and the presence of clinical personnel with behavioral health expertise would be productive steps toward improving safety and retention at shelters. A full examination of how violations of participant agreements are treated across shelter locations, as well as any policies related to assigning individuals to a new shelter site or otherwise following up on their case after an exit, is also warranted.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council instruct LAHSA, with the assistance of the Chief Legislative Analyst, the City Administrative Officer, and the Los Angeles Housing Department, to report back within 60 days regarding:


- Contractual obligations of interim housing providers regarding exit policies due to breach of participant agreement;
- Required training for contracted and subcontracted security staff at interim housing sites, including Inside Safe operations;
- Recommendations for required cultural competency training and instruction for staff working with people experiencing homelessness, suffering from a mental health disorder, and/or a substance use disorder;
- Number of reported altercations with clients including Security Staff at interim housing sites through the LAHSA grievance process;

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- Aggregate number of exits, per month and annually, from interim housing sites, including Inside Safe operations, due to breach of behavior policy;
- Percentage of exits due to breach of behavioral policy from interim housing sites in comparison to other types of exits (permanent housing, self exit, institutional setting);
- Percentage of individuals exited due to breach of behavioral policy from interim housing sites that are offered and/or move into alternative shelter options at time of exit;
- Estimated costs for clinical personnel such as psychiatrists associated with Street Medicine teams or Department of Mental Health clinical staff to oversee, advise and coordinate with security and interim housing program staff on mental health and behavioral issues; and
- Recommendations for how the City can enter into an agreement with the County to provide clinical staff to oversee, advise and coordinate with security and interim housing program staff regarding mental health and behavioral issues. This should include accountability measures to ensure that City funds are spent as intended, and consequences for breach of this agreement.

PRESENTED BY:



For NITHYA RAMAN
Councilmember, 4th District

SECONDED BY:



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