

New York City recently passed Local Law 35, which requires mental health professionals to be available in New York Department of Homeless Services shelters for families with children, requiring a ratio of one full-time mental health professional for every 50 families. This mandated service will provide early diagnosis, treatment, and referrals to emergency medical and psychiatric care providers for families and children experiencing homelessness. New York City, unlike the City of Los Angeles, directly oversees agencies that administer public health, medical, mental health, and homeless services, housing programs, and correctional programs; and is able to establish a minimum level of mental health services and require annual reporting of services offered and outcomes of participating New York City shelters.

For Los Angeles City, Federal and State law place the responsibility for providing mental health services and substance use disorder services, and other health programs, with Los Angeles County, with funding for these services distributed directly to the County. At the same, for Fiscal Year 2023-24, the City of Los Angeles is providing \$2,250,000 to bring on five additional County of Los Angeles Department of Health Services Multi-Disciplinary Teams and \$3,000,000 for street medicine teams to operate specifically within City boundaries. In addition, the Mayor has proposed to commit \$23,478,975 to a pilot substance use disorder treatment program, with \$7.8 million to be used to reimburse treatment providers, already contracted with the County, for additional time and services beyond what is currently provided by the County and/or by eligible benefits (e.g. Medi-Cal).

Over the course of nearly 60 years, the City has entered into several other agreements with the County, including the Joint Powers Agreement creating the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA), and the Roadmap Agreement established through the United States District Court overseen by the Honorable Judge David O. Carter, which resulted in the City establishing and operationalizing more than 6,700 beds for people experiencing homelessness (PEH) in Los Angeles.

LA Alliance for Human Rights et al. v. City of Los Angeles et al. is a case that can reinforce the framework for the City to provide shelter and housing, while the County provides services to people experiencing homelessness. The settlement between the City of Los Angeles and the Plaintiffs from June 2022 establishes the City's commitment to create shelter and housing, and defines "City Shelter Appropriate PEH" as people who do not have serious mental illness and are not chronically homeless with a substance use disorder or chronic physical illness. By defining City Shelter appropriateness, the settlement inversely identifies populations that will require greater involvement from the County to care for: unsheltered higher-acuity individuals, individuals who are justice-involved, and the need to transition non-City Shelter Appropriate individuals currently in City shelters to County programs that meet their needs.

The September 12, 2022 Alliance Agreement of Terms signed by the City Administrative Officer and the Chief Executive Officer of the County, while non-binding, establishes services that the County is expected to provide related to specialized outreach teams. It also prioritizes City

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residents for placement in permanent supportive housing units and access to County Homeless Initiative-funded high service interim beds. While this Agreement of Terms has yet to be approved by the City Council and Mayor, it is worth pursuing as it sets minimum terms and expectations for County services while additional services are sought for non-City Shelter Appropriate PEH.

The implementation of this and any future plans will require assessments to be conducted of sheltered and unsheltered PEH to determine appropriate levels of care. It will also require an assessment of the City's contract with the County for the delivery of health, mental health, and substance use disorder services. A trauma-informed assessment tool to diagnose severe mental illness, substance use disorder, chronic physical illness or disability, and specific Mental Health/DSM-5 conditions e.g. hoarding disorder, schizophrenia, and psychotic disorders that can affect housing stability, will need to be developed.

I THEREFORE MOVE to INSTRUCT the City Administrative Office (CAO) and the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) to report on methodology to determine adequate level of service for people experiencing homelessness (PEH) in the City and assessment tools or methodology for prioritizing this population for City or County shelters and services.

I FURTHER MOVE to INSTRUCT the CAO and CLA to report on mechanisms and strategies to require a minimum level of health, mental health, and substance use disorder services to meet the needs of unsheltered PEH and at interim and permanent supportive housing sites in the City, with options for the City to receive funding directly from the State and Federal government to administer these services.

I FURTHER MOVE to INSTRUCT the CLA and the CAO, in consultation with the City Attorney, to review the contracts and agreements that stipulates conditions for the County to adhere to, and report on recommendations to renegotiate and/or to improve access to, increase the availability of, and expedite the delivery of health, mental health, and substance use disorder services in the City, and within the context of any future actions related to the LA Alliance settlement.

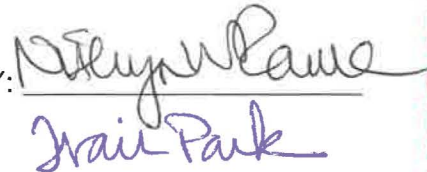
I FURTHER MOVE to INSTRUCT the CAO and REQUEST the City Attorney to provide regular updates to the City Council on the progress in amending the contracts between the City and the County for the delivery of healthcare, mental health, and substance use disorder services in the City and on the implementation of LA Alliance settlement discussions/agreement.

PRESENTED BY:



BOB BLUMENFIELD  
Councilmember, 3rd District

SECONDED BY:



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