



**MARCH 24, 2020**

**To the City of Long Beach Mayor, City Council, City Manager, and the Department of Health and Human Services:**

We are writing to ask for immediate assistance for residents experiencing homelessness in Long Beach, with particular focus on our unsheltered population.

These recommendations reflect the needs of service providers, crisis shelters, supportive housing developers, and other advocacy organizations working to aid people experiencing homelessness in Long Beach. These recommendations go above and beyond what the City has already publicly disclosed it is doing to aid people experiencing homelessness, as relayed by Mayor Garcia on March 16th, 2020 and in the Press Telegram on March 23rd, 2020.

In line with what is being done in the City of Los Angeles and other communities, the following are recommendations to the City of Long Beach to aid our unsheltered population and people experiencing homelessness in Long Beach:

Immediately:

**1) Drastically increase efforts to shelter people who are currently unsheltered in the City of Long Beach**

- Make use of clean and safe hotel and motel rooms to quarantine and protect our unhoused population from the spread of COVID-19. This should be the highest priority. Especially engage union facilities where healthcare is being provided to workers.
- Open vacant city, state, and county-owned buildings, vacant lots, and other public properties and provide items needed to slow/stop the spread.
- Activate temporary daytime rest centers across the City with proper social distancing and hygiene accommodations, using City owned buildings that are currently vacant

**2) Provide additional service and sanitation resources to our residents experiencing homelessness**

- Supply the city's service providers and case workers with additional personal protective equipment, sanitation supplies, and resources, blankets, and food to aid the unhoused
- Implement 24/7 restroom access in parks, beaches, and government properties with unarmed attendants.
- Set up sanitation and shower trailers near shelters, food kitchens, service provider sites, and Homeless Services "hot spots" and encampments across the City.

- Supply dumpsters, showers, hand washing stations, vermin abatement, laundry vouchers, soap, and water to every informal settlement in Long Beach. Expand trash pick up and sidewalk cleanings (not sweeps).
- 3) End any and all sweeps of informal settlements across the City**
- Halt all citations and towing of parked cars and RVs that are used for shelter, and expand safe parking options wherever possible.
- 4) Mobilize as many funding sources as can be found to help assist those experiencing homelessness and provide shelter**
- Utilize the Mayor's Fund to End Homelessness to help provide this emergency assistance, services, food resources, and housing
  - Utilize the State's funding allocations to the Long Beach Continuum of Care and the City of Long Beach to further this emergency response
  - Advocate at the federal level for the \$15.5 billion for HUD Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) to help local communities minimize the number of people living in encampments and identify space for self-quarantine
  - Streamline the processes of distributing the funds, allowing the Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services to access emergency funds where needed as rapidly as possible

As the crisis continues:

- Provide reliable transport for those who are unhoused to the hotel shelter
- If cases are confirmed for those experiencing homelessness, establishing a field medical center with triage care for those experiencing homelessness to receive care and isolate from others
- Increase General Relief and SNAP benefits, putting a moratorium on the "job search" requirements for both to increase the number of people able to access these resources
- Identify preparations for after the crisis to help place unhoused individuals into rapid rehousing and/or supportive housing, and connect them with necessary services to help make sure people don't exit from shelter back onto the street
- Ensure the community has regular and ongoing access to sources of free meals including food banks and community kitchens, with appropriate sanitation protocols

These recommended emergency measures for those experiencing homelessness in Long Beach due to COVID-19 Crisis are in an effort to reduce the rate of exposure of COVID19 in our community, encourage sanitation in our unhoused communities, and use all existing housing opportunities to shelter as many as possible with the goal of safe and supportive environments. By helping shelter those without it in Long Beach, we can ensure that everyone in our community stays safer and healthier, decreasing the risk of the virus spreading rapidly throughout our community.

Signed,

Everyone In - Long Beach

Long Beach Forward

Long Beach Gray Panthers

Linc Housing

Urban Community Outreach

Housing Long Beach

Khmer Girls in Action

Long Beach Residents Empowered (LiBRE)

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA)

Good News Church

Long Beach Interfaith Community Organization (ICO)

East Yard Community for Environmental Justice

Long Beach Coalition for Good Jobs and a Healthy Community

Tommy Newman,

Director of Public Affairs, Everyone In LA, United Way of Greater Los Angeles

Jane Close Conoley,

PhD. President, California State University Long Beach

Rev. Jane Gould,

Rector, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Long Beach

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Jordan Wynne,

Long Beach Continuum of Care Board Member

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