



Safety Practices within Homeless Services

Homeless Services Advisory Committee Meeting

November 2, 2022

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Aspects of Safety

Aspects that Create Safety



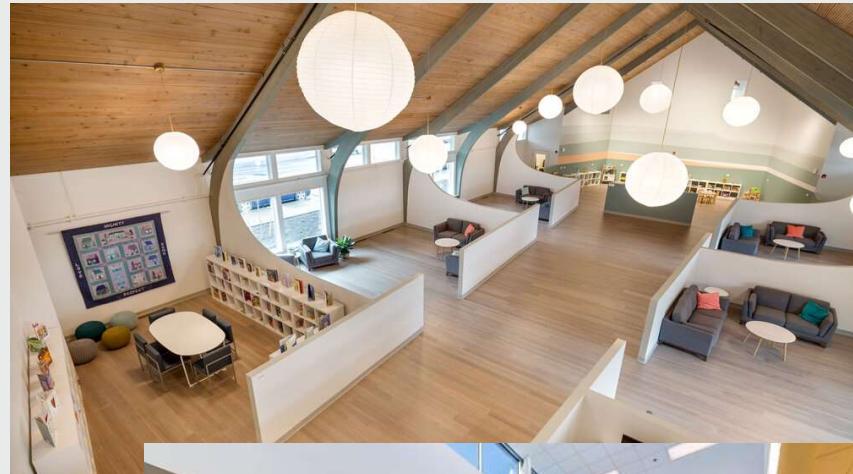


Environment

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Trauma Informed Design

- The physical environment and how it is designed impacts how people interact a building
- Choosing softer colors and bringing in natural lighting
- Ensuring that the space is open and visible but that there are spaces for privacy and safety
- Availability of comfortable seating
- Ensuring that there is adequate space
- Higher ceilings and wider walkways

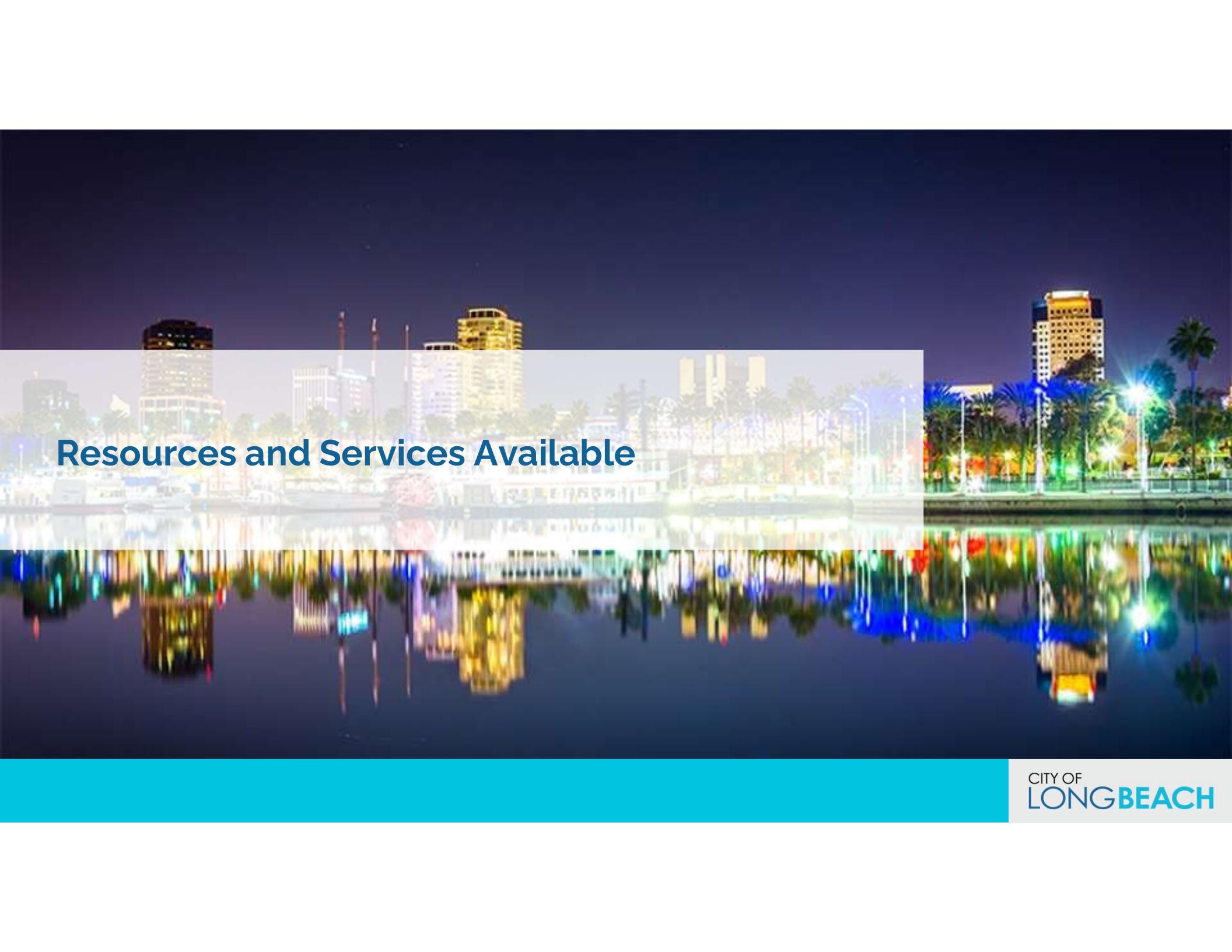


Space Set-up

EVERYONE
is welcome here



- People should know where they are going within the space and how to ask for support
- Signage should be up and affirming of the people coming in for services
- People should have things that provide some relaxation or engagement while waiting
- Allowing for space that is engaging both within an indoor space and outside space
- Space where people can socialize with one another

A wide-angle, nighttime photograph of a city skyline reflected in a body of water. The sky is a deep, dark blue. The city lights are reflected in the water, creating a colorful, mirrored effect. In the foreground, there are palm trees and some low-lying buildings. In the background, there are several tall, modern buildings, some with lit windows. The overall atmosphere is bright and colorful.

Resources and Services Available

The Impact of Resources

- People become naturally upset if they are looking for resources and those resources are either not available or are inadequate
- The longer people have to wait the more likely they are to become frustrated
- When frustrated people are more likely to act from a place of anger/hostility
- The longer people spend on the street the more they are exposed to trauma and mental health issues become exacerbated
- More resources and clearer communication can reduce frustration and anger



Services



- As resource abundance such as shelter beds and housing matter so do the services that are attached to those
- Mental Health
- Substance Use services
- Healthcare
- Community Integration and Connection
- Conflict Resolution
- Spirituality
- Food
- Employment

Quality of Services

- Customer service is important nobody wants to be somewhere where they feel people don't want them there or the person providing the service doesn't want to be there.
- The homeless response system runs from a deficit. The choice is often split between providing really good services to fewer or providing adequate services to more people. Both choices have impacts on how people engage and interact with various parts of the system
- Although programs may not be funded to provide a full array of service to participants programs should work to link people to broader community systems and partner to give access to a wide range of services
- Services should be affirming of who people are. People should not have to feel ashamed or that they must change who they are in order to access services and services should acknowledge each person as an individual



Policies and Procedures

Policies and Procedures in Outreach

- Always go out to engage people in pairs
- If something does not feel safe leave the area
- If you are uncertain of an area that you are going to be outreaching, ask to be escorted by law enforcement officers
- Stay outside of people's personal areas
- One person should be the main person engaging while the other person monitors the surrounding area
- Utilization of field communication
- Discuss areas of difference depending on outreach agency P&Ps



Policies and Procedures in Access Centers

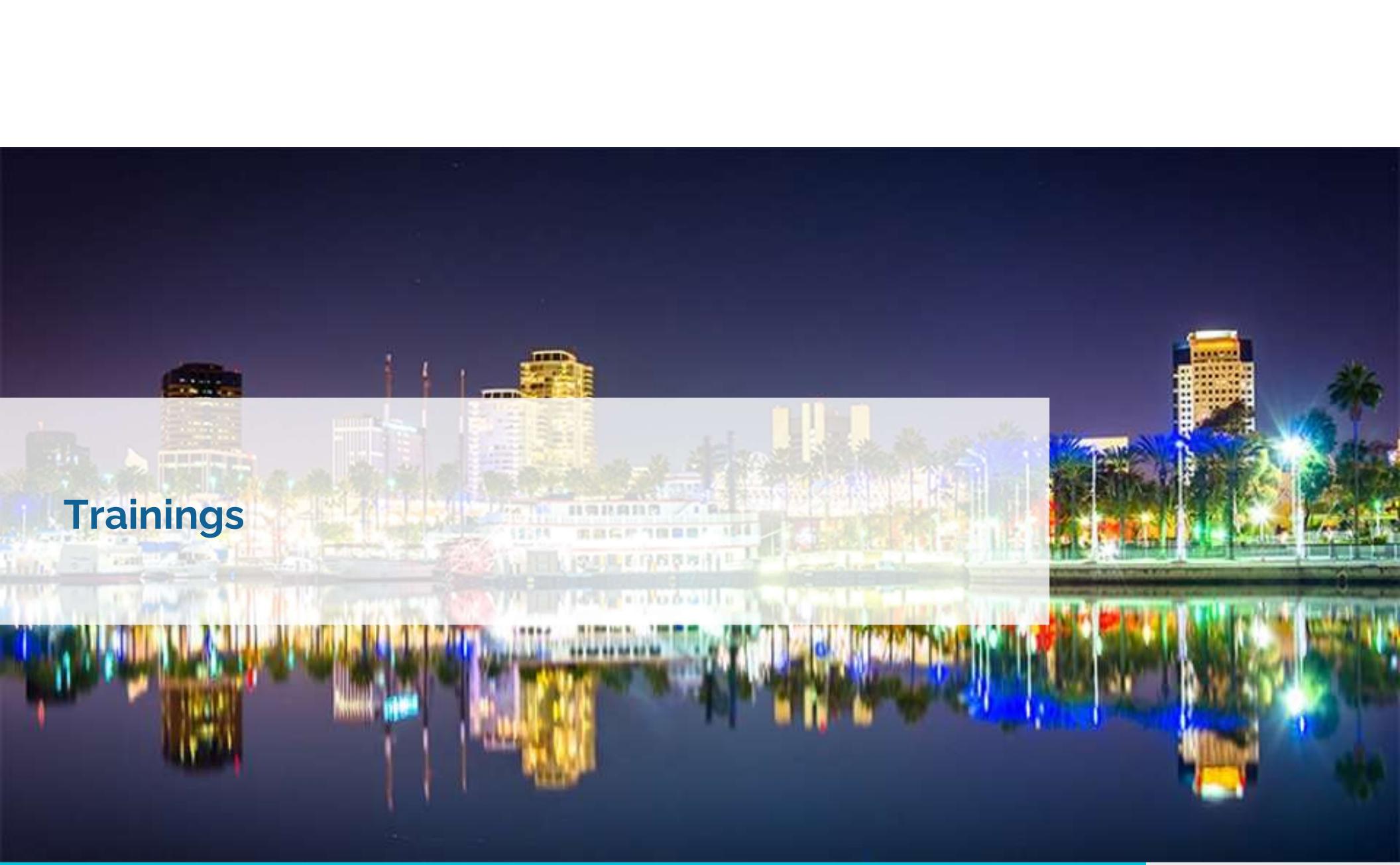
MULTI SERVICE CENTER

- Setting occupancy limits to ensure the amount of people is reasonable
- Determining the amount of people that can reasonably be seen during a day
- Having a check-in and greeting/screening process
- Process for determining when someone will be asked to leave and what constitutes someone being asked to have a break from services
- Recognizing and responding to mental health crisis or other escalations
- Providing engagement outside of space

Policies and Procedures in Shelter

- Determining spacing and elements of separation for bed areas
- Curfew hours and what are the flexibilities
- Determining what constitutes behavior that will lead to consequences and or termination and how those are handled
- How is dispute mediation handled within a shelter program?
- How are people screened both upon intake and moving forward?
- Discuss areas of differences depending on shelter agencies P&Ps



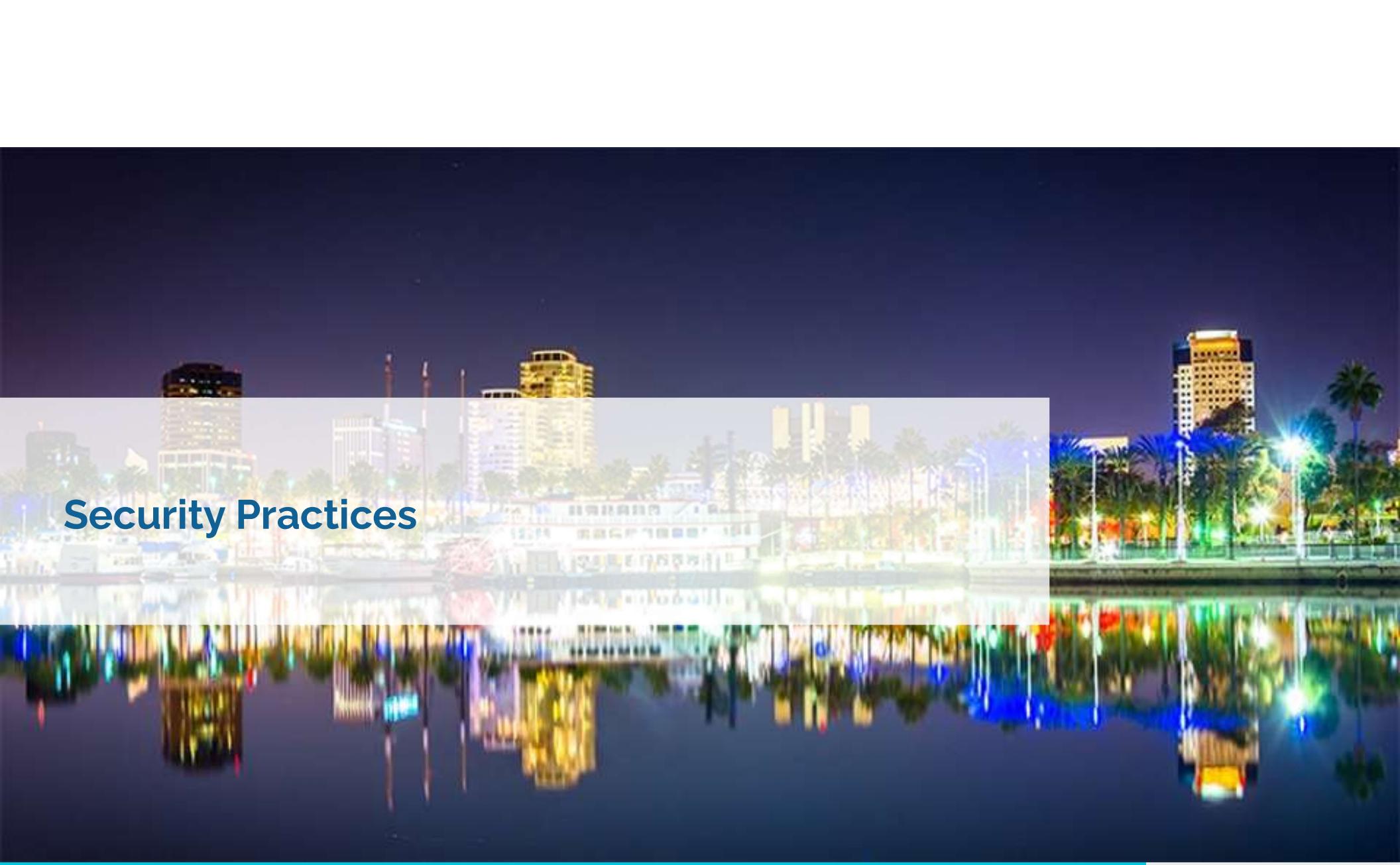


Trainings

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Different Trainings

- Ensuring that staff are receiving ongoing training in various skills and approaches increases effectiveness and assists in reducing the likelihood of incidents escalating. Common trainings include:
 - Non-Violent Crisis Intervention
 - Motivational Interviewing
 - Mental Health First-Aid
 - Customer Service Training
 - Disengagement Techniques and Basic Self-Defense
 - Crisis Response, including Active Shooter Training
 - Defensive Driving
 - Street Safety and Scanning of Environment



Security Practices

Security in Programs

- Contracted vs. on staff security (ambassador model)
- What role is security assigned within each program and differences that exist
- Screening procedures and how much people are checked; metal detectors, wands, bag checks
- Utilization of amnesty boxes within a program
- Safety and help buttons within spaces
- Utilization of cameras
- Locking doors and control of access





Thank you

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