
Homeless Services Advisory Committee Community Capacity Building Subcommittee

Date: March 30, 2023

Item: Disabled Resource Centers Mayor's Fund Application

Staff Analysis:

The staff reviewed the proposal by Disabled Resource Center on March 3, 2023, by Dolores Nason.

Disabled Resource Center (DRC) is an Independent Living Center that serves people with any disability and is one of 28 ILCs located in the state of California, affiliated with the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), helping people with all disabilities, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or type of disability. DRC was founded in 1976 and has since been helping its clients, or "consumers." Located on Spring Street in Long Beach, DRC, on average serves about five people a month. As a California ILC, DRC offers eight core services, as mandated by DOR: Information and Referral (I&R); Individual and Systems Advocacy; Independent Living Skills; Peer Counseling; Transition and Diversion; Personal Assistance Services; Housing; and Assistive Technology. Additionally, all services are offered free of charge.

The project proposal requests \$10,000 in reimbursement to fund the immediate housing of consumers. As many unhoused homeless have a disability of some sort, (frequently mental health and/or behavioral health disorders), this is the population that DRC counselors are working with and are best suited to serve. They focus on assisting persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness with immediately accessing a safe and clean temporary sheltering environment. They provide immediate shelter through hotel stays for up to five days, with meal vouchers for three meals a day, and all-day bus passes. After the third day, DRC follows up and evaluates their progress and whether they need to have extended motel stays, while DRC simultaneously looks to place their consumers into transitional housing with one of their many collaborative agencies in Long Beach. DRC's program goals are to assist their consumers with obtaining transitional housing and, hopefully, permanent housing.

This proposal aligns with the intent of the Mayor's Fund for Homeless Action as it follows the housing first approach by providing the critical need for immediate shelter. City staff requested additional clarification from DRC, included below. Staff recommends approval for this funding application as it provides immediate shelter and connection to other housing resources.

As of March 31, 2023, the Mayor's Fund for Homeless Action has a balance of \$138,102.91 with \$83,602.81 in available funds.

Clarifying Questions via E-mail:

1. How are you being referred consumers?

We received referrals from our partner community agencies, for example, Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services, Centro CHA, and the Long Beach Multi-Service Center, along with the State Department of Rehabilitation and the Social Security Administration.

2. How many people do you think you can provide temporary motel stays with the \$10,000?

20 people for 5 nights each at \$100.00 per night

30 people for 3 nights each at \$100.00 per night

3. How long are the motel stays for?

From 3 to 5 days per person (see above)

4. Are case-management and programs provided to people in the motels?

Yes, along with case management, information and services to other programs are given to those persons receiving voucher assistance. The case management process includes Independent Living Services to try and stop the cycle of homelessness.

5. How can we ensure that these people are experiencing homelessness within the City of Long Beach and not the outside cities?

Our partner agencies that work within the City of Long Beach refer them to us.

6. Are they being tied into the City of Long Beach Continuum of Care for housing assistance and resource help?

Yes, everyone that comes to the agency for services is informed and connected to other resources and services.

7. When I read your proposal, it seems like the hotel stays given to people immediately and then on the third day DRC follows up and evaluates their progress.

The motel/hotel stays last an average of 3-5 days per person. DRC's follow-up with the voucher recipients is timely and ongoing, not just limited to the third day of receipt of motel/hotel vouchers. DRC's Housing Coordinator screens all persons applying for homelessness/crisis assistance and provides individualized case coordination services. All services are free of charge.

8. What happens to consumers within those 2 days?

The stays are not for 2 days. During those 3-5 days in the motel/hotel, the counselor is working with the consumers to find them transitional housing with other agencies that we work with in Long Beach and surrounding areas. These agencies often call upon DRC for emergency, immediate short-term housing, and we share motel/hotel vouchers with them. In turn, they will try to open up their transitional housing for us when needed. Additionally, the Transition Center often provides transitional housing. In the meantime, we sign the consumers up for permanent housing, which usually involves waiting lists (i.e., Section 8, etc.).

We continue to work with “the whole person” in an effort to break the chains of homelessness, DRC’s first step is to find out how and why the person became homeless, and then work to rectify that condition. As an integral part of the Homelessness Prevention Program, voucher recipients agree to participate in Independent Living Skills instruction, which can encompass the Center’s entire program menu, from Social Security benefits counseling to transitional housing funding to enrollment in Medi-Cal (via Covered California). We also offer an Employment Services Program through the California Department of Rehabilitation.

9. Is there any interaction if they do not go back to DCR with the bus pass?

Part of the consumer’s agreement to receive housing vouchers is that the consumer agrees to come back to the Center to receive Independent Living Skills training. Although it is up to the consumer to come back, DRC also follows up with the consumer.

10. Also, what happens after the 3rd or 5th day, where are these consumers transferred to?

DRC provides emergency motel/hotel housing vouchers only up to 5 days per person. After that time, DRC serves consumers with specific applicable programs of the Center and/or referrals to other community networking partners.

For an example of a specific applicable program of the Center, DRC’s Diversion and Transition Services, a program mandated by the Department of Rehabilitation, assists persons with disabilities not only to avoid placement in institutions, but also to transition to home or community-based residences, thus offering an alternative to homelessness. The Diversion and Transition Program is coordinated by the Housing Coordinator.

For an example of a referral to DRC’s community networking partners, DRC connects consumers to the Long Beach Multi-Service Center, for referrals to shelters and other social service programs.

As we said above, while the consumers are in the shelter for 5 days, we are looking for transitional housing, so that when they leave the motel/hotel, they go into the transitional housing until permanent housing is located for them. The consumers return to the Center

for their Independent Living Skills training and all the while we are making arrangements for their transitional housing.

The Independent Living Skills counselor recommends what further assistance the consumers need at the Center, such as taking computer training, signing up for Benefits Counseling, and applying for SSI and/or SSDI.

11. What will happen if interim housing is not found for the individual after 5 days

In that case, we would need to submit an invoice, to provide additional hotel/motel lodging, until we find them interim housing.

Of course, we would be working with the Long Beach Multi-Service Center and Catholic Charities as additional resources.

12. Would the additional lodging come from another funding source?

In the unlikely event that we cannot find the consumer transitional housing, we would use our other funding, such as the Emergency Food and Shelter Program, that this would happen if your grant has any limitations.

Website:

<http://www.drcinc.org/contact.html>