




To: Honorable Members of the Los Angeles City Council

From: Dr. Abbilyn Miller, Chief Program Officer, LAHSA 
Abbilyn M Miller (Jan 12, 2024 15:56 PST)

Date: January 12, 2024

CC: Nathaniel VerGow, Deputy Chief Program Officer, LAHSA
Paul Rubenstein, Deputy Chief External Relations Officer, LAHSA
Miguel Fernandez, Acting Director, Interim Housing, LAHSA

Re: **Report on a new Inclement Weather Shelter Program (Council File 12-1690-S18)**

The following memorandum is in response to a follow-up directive raised at the Housing & Homelessness (H&H) Committee on November 1, 2023 under [Council File 12-1690-S18](#). The purpose of this report is to provide the H&H Committee with additional programmatic information about LAHSA's proposed Inclement Weather Shelter Program (Program), such as program goals, activation criteria, services available to participants, procurement process, and funding needed for program continuity.

I. BACKGROUND

For almost thirty years, the City of Los Angeles (City) and the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) have partnered together to increase the inventory of interim housing resources available during the cold and severe weather of the winter season between November and March. This period typically witnesses the most severe weather events; however, in recent years a growing need for similar weather-related emergency responses outside the winter season has emerged. This need was most apparent during Tropical Storm Hilary, which brought significant rain and high-speed winds to Los Angeles County in August 2023. In response to the storm, LAHSA and the City activated an emergency response that included the opening of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Park short-term shelters and issuance of motel vouchers.

Following Tropical Storm Hilary and in anticipation of future similar weather events or other natural disasters that will invariably prompt the need for an emergency response of rapid mobilization of increased interim housing resources, LAHSA requested (and the City of Los Angeles approved) funding for the development of an Inclement Weather Shelter Program. For Fiscal Year 2023-2024, the City authorized \$1,785,742.70 for the Inclement Weather Shelter Program under the [Nineteenth Report: COVID-19 Homelessness Roadmap Funding Recommendations](#). This included \$1,028,265.70 designated for the response to Tropical Storm Hilary, and \$757,477 for future inclement weather events for the fiscal year.

II. INCLEMENT WEATHER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Goals

Through the Inclement Weather Shelter Program, the City and LAHSA will have the ability to rapidly mobilize an increased inventory of short-term interim housing resources to respond to extreme weather events or natural disasters. Like the services the Augmented Winter Shelter Program offers during the

winter months, the Inclement Weather Shelter Program expands capacity of our inventory of interim housing resources for a short period of time – generally a few days to a week – during weather or natural disaster events that take place year-round, rather than the typical November to March months. The goal is to provide indoor respite to people experiencing homelessness when weather conditions pose greater imminent health risks if people remain unsheltered.

The primary objective of the Inclement Weather Shelter Program is to increase the number of people who can access interim housing during activations. The specific number of people who can be served in any activation varies and is impacted by factors such as the duration of the activation, the number of interim housing beds or motel vouchers brought online, and the regional coverage of the activation. In addition, the Inclement Weather Program aims to achieve 5% exits to alternate interim housing or permanent housing.

Activation Criteria

The Inclement Weather Shelter Program will be activated in consultation with, and at the approved direction of, the Mayor's Office of Housing and Homelessness Solutions within the City of Los Angeles. Activation decisions will be informed by the City Emergency Management Department, who leads emergency response coordination within the City of Los Angeles. This mirrors the current protocols for activation of the Augmented Winter Shelter Program.

The following criteria are proposed as conditions in which the Inclement Weather Shelter Program may be activated. The Inclement Weather Shelter Program can be activated if one or more of the following conditions are met:

- ***Excessive Heat:*** The National Weather Service issues an Excessive Heat Warning for the City of Los Angeles area. These warnings are generally issued when the maximum heat index temperature is expected to be 105° or higher for at least two (2) days, and nighttime air temperatures will not drop below 75°.
- ***Excessive Cold:*** The National Weather Service (NWS) forecast calls for three (3) days of low daytime temperatures (50 degrees or less) accompanied by night wind chill temperatures of 32 degrees or less.
- ***Excessive Rain:*** The National Weather Service forecast calls for 1 inch of rain in 24 hours; the forecast calls for three (3) consecutive days of ¼-inch rainfall or more accompanied by temperatures at or below 50 degrees; or the National Weather Service issues a flood watch or warning.
- ***Wildfires or other Fires:*** The City of Los Angeles Fire Department and/or City Emergency Management Department reports wildfire/fire activity or wildfire/fire threat alerts, for which the location or severity of the fire poses an imminent danger to people who remain unsheltered.
- ***Landslides or Mudslides:*** The City Emergency Management Department report landslide or mudslide activity or threat alerts, for which the location or severity of the slide poses an imminent danger to people who remain unsheltered.
- ***Conditions not previously identified by the plan but for which it would be prudent to activate based upon critical need such as severe smog/smoke/poor air quality¹, earthquakes, floods, or public emergency declarations.***

¹ In response to [Council File 20-1172](#) (Blumenfield - Rodriguez).

Through the Inclement Weather Shelter Program, additional interim housing resources will be activated. This may include issuance of hotel/motel vouchers, temporary expansion of capacity at existing interim housing program facilities, opening of pop-up interim housing sites at Recreation and Park Department facilities or other City-owned/operated facilities, and/or opening of pop-up interim housing sites at other approved sites. The specific resources brought online for each activation will be recommended by LAHSA and informed by factors such as:

- The scale of projected need for the activation.
- The region that is activated and facility options available within that region.
- The availability of Recreation and Park Department or other City-owned/operated facilities during the period of the activation; for example, based on other uses for the facilities during that time.
- The availability of approved, qualified services providers with capacity to operate pop-up facilities.
- The cost efficiency of various available options to maximize impact.

Communication of Activation

During City Emergency Management Department hosted activation calls various City/County partners are informed of the inclement weather and report out their various efforts to respond. Upon instructions to activate by the Mayor's Office during the activation call, a public notice will be released through Constant Contact to over 10,000 individuals who have agreed to receive notices from LAHSA. The public notice will include information on the activation and direct individuals to LAHSA's website where information on the nature, duration, locations, and other relevant information will be posted. In addition, the LAHSA's Government Affairs Department will distribute flyers with information on activation to local elected offices. Outreach leadership is informed of the activation during the City Emergency Management Department hosted activation call. Outreach supervisors and workers are informed via email and daily coordination calls.

Services Offered to Participants

Facility-Based Resources

When facility-based resources are utilized as part of the Inclement Weather Shelter Program activation, people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in eligible activation regions will be able to access these programs by (1) receiving transportation from an outreach team to the site location; (2) calling centralized referral services for transportation assistance to the location; or (3) showing up (self-referral) at site locations.

Facility-based resources will be operated by contracted interim housing service providers who have been approved via the procurement process described in the 'Procurement of Services for the Inclement Weather Shelter Program' section below. All interim housing programs within the Inclement Weather Shelter Program will operate using a low-barrier, Housing First, and trauma-informed approach. While in the program, participants will have access to three meals per day, restrooms, and showers. Interim housing providers will have on-site staffing 24 hours per day to monitor site safety, connect participants to emergency or other needed services, and provide participants with support in connecting to alternate interim housing when the activation ends. Prior to the close of the activation period, participants will be offered a referral to available alternate interim housing programs within the region. If participants are interested in the referral, transportation to the alternate interim housing program will be provided.

Motel/Hotel-Based Resources

When motel/hotel vouchers are utilized as part of the Inclement Weather Shelter Program activation, people experiencing unsheltered homelessness in eligible activation regions will be able to contact centralized referral services to request access to a motel/hotel voucher. In addition, outreach teams will also directly engage people experiencing unsheltered homelessness to aid in navigating this process and connecting to available motel/hotel-based resources. People who access the program will be able to remain at the motel/hotel during the period of the activation. Prior to the close of the activation period, participants will be offered a referral to available alternate interim housing programs within the region. If participants are interested in the referral, transportation to the alternate interim housing program will be provided.

Transportation Resources

Transportation to the inclement weather sites will be provided by outreach teams, ride sharing services, taxis, and others. Outreach teams engaging unsheltered individuals will be able to transport them to the sites in their own vehicles. In addition, individuals seeking to access inclement weather sites will be able to request transport to the site by dialing 2-1-1. During demobilization, LAHSA staff will coordinate participant's transport to their next housing destination. LAHSA staff will utilize the outreach teams, 2-1-1 LA transportation services, the service provider's resources, and seek the support of the Department of Transportation as needed to transport participants to their next housing destination.

III. PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES FOR THE INCLEMENT WEATHER PROGRAM

Shelter Operations

As noted, activations of the Inclement Weather Program may include issuance of hotel/motel vouchers; temporary expansion of capacity at existing interim housing program facilities; opening of pop-up interim housing sites at Recreation and Park Department facilities or other City-owned/operated facilities; and/or opening of pop-up interim housing sites at other approved sites.

For issuance of hotel/motel vouchers, no on-site services are offered, and no procurement is needed. For temporary expansion of capacity at existing interim housing program facilities, eligible under an existing procurement process, LAHSA will identify interim housing providers who are willing and able to expand the capacity at their existing facilities or operate pop-up shelters, as identified by the City Mayor's Office, in response to the severe weather.

For the opening of pop-up interim housing sites at Recreation and Park Department facilities, City-owned/operated facilities, or other approved sites, the on-site services will be provided by contracted service. Procurement for these services will take place via a competitive Request for Bids process, which LAHSA will be releasing in January 2023 to ensure contracting can take place by the Program's next start date of April 1, 2024.

Meal and Hygiene Vendors

Given the emergency nature of the pop-up interim housing sites, meals, hygiene products, port-a-potties, mobile showers, and other essential supplies may need to be secured within a very short time through various vendors. To manage the complexity of needs at each site and the need to respond rapidly, LAHSA will be following its internal procurement process for securing vendor services.

IV. INCLEMENT WEATHER PROGRAM FUNDING

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

For Fiscal Year 2023-2024, the City authorized \$1,785,742.70 for the Inclement Weather Shelter Program under the Nineteenth Report: COVID-19 Homelessness Roadmap Funding Recommendations. This included \$1,028,265.70 designated for the response to Tropical Storm Hilary (adults and family services), and \$757,477 for future inclement weather events in this Fiscal Year. At present, the full \$757,477 allocated for future implement weather events remains available for activations during the Program period of April 1 through June 30, 2024.

The \$757,477 in available funding can support approximately 3 activations of 4 days each, as outlined in the budget template below. Please note that line-item details and number of activations or days that can be covered with this funding are subject to change, based on factors such as the days of a given activation, the types of interim housing resources mobilized for a given activation period, and the number of people served during an activation period. The table below is for sample purposes to illustrate how the currently approved funding may be allocated during activations.

Inclement Weather Shelter Program April 1 - June 30, 2024 Template Budget		
Budget Category	Budget	Template Notes
Referral and transportation services	\$ 90,000	Increased staffing for centralized referral and transportation services for 3 activations of 4 days each
Pop-up interim housing facility operations	\$ 238,500	Based on 3 activations of 4 days with 265 beds mobilized for each activation
Motel/hotel vouchers	\$ 127,076	Based on 3 activations of 4 days each with 80 vouchers issued per activation, as well as emergency temporary demobilization extensions if needed
Meal & hygiene vendors	\$ 158,100	Based on approximately 3 activations of 4 days each with 265 beds mobilized for each activation and assumption of porta-a-potty or mobile shower vendor at 1 site per activation
LAHSA direct program staffing	\$ 45,000	LAHSA direct program and overtime staffing to support mobilization, operations, and demobilization of pop-up interim housing facilities during 3 activations of 4 days each
Total Program Request	\$ 658,676	
LAHSA Administration Rate	\$ 98,801	15% allowable LAHSA administration/operations Cost
Budget Total	\$ 757,477	

Currently, LAHSA is not requesting additional funding for the current fiscal year. Should one or more activations in Spring 2024 draw down the available budget, however, LAHSA will submit a funding request with the intent of having funding available should any additional emergency activations be needed before the close of Fiscal Year 2023-2024. It is important to note for the City's consideration that the costs associated with the types of resources available (IH bed vacancies at existing sites, Department of Recreation and Parks sites, or hotel/motel vouchers) when an activation occurs can vary. To be cost-effective, LAHSA will consider mobilizing all IH beds before standing up the other two options, or in concert with them.

With that consideration, LAHSA has provided a summary of the comparison of IH inventory options during a weather activation. These calculations assume services for 50 individuals through 3 models: (1) leveraging of existing vacancies within City, which would require expanding eligibility and allowing direct referrals during activation; (2) opening of 1 Department of Recreation and Parks (RAP) site (costs would be multiplied for each 50-person RAP site opened); and (3) utilization of hotel/motel vouchers through 2-1-1 and HETs.

Fiscal Year 2024-2025

LAHSA has submitted a budget request for the Inclement Weather Program, under a modified name, for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. This budget request was submitted to the City of Los Angeles as part of the regular budget request submission process for Fiscal Year 2024-2025. **The modified program name in the request is Emergency Response Program.**

The Emergency Response Program would merge the Augmented Winter Shelter Program (November 1 through March 31 of each year) with the Inclement Weather Program (July 1 – October 31 and April 1 through June 30 of each year) under one program name and process. The program design outlined through this Memorandum will be applied to the Emergency Response Program, except it will be open to activations all year round to respond to weather related or natural disaster emergencies. The funding request for FY 24-25 is an increase from FY 23-24 to provide sufficient resources for a year around response effort.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

Following the completion of the Request for Proposals (RFP), LAHSA will have a list of service providers who have unfunded beds, are willing to operate a pop-up shelter, and a list of possible facilities that could be used for pop-up shelters. LAHSA will work with providers who are not yet certified to contract with LAHSA to obtain all necessary documents to be certified. LAHSA will enter into agreement services providers who have unfunded beds to utilize the beds in the event of an activation.

In the event of activation, LAHSA will utilize these beds to bring people indoors. In the event LAHSA is directed to mobilize pop-up shelters, LAHSA will select providers from the proposers who offered to operate pop-up shelters and enter into agreement with them for the duration of the activation. Concurrently, LAHSA staff will evaluate the facilities proposed as part of the RFP. The evaluation will assess habitability, safety, and compliance with local regulations. LAHSA staff will work to ensure the facilities have all the necessary Fire Clearances and meet Building and Safety standards before they are utilized for shelter.

Following this process, LAHSA will have a list of facilities ready to function as pop-up shelters. In the event LAHSA is directed to mobilize pop-up shelters, LAHSA will enter into an agreement to utilize these facilities and pair them with service providers who are willing to operate pop-up shelters. LAHSA will contract for meals, cots, and supplies to pop-up shelters. Service providers who are part of the program will be reimbursed \$75.00 per bed per night. Facilities will be reimbursed at \$10 per bed per night. Following the end of the activation, LAHSA will work to link participants to other housing resources (interim and permanent) so that they don't exit to unsheltered destinations. Communication of the activations will follow the process outlined above in this document. Transportation of participants to and from the site will follow the process outlined above in this document.

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