

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Aimee Williams  
**Date Submitted:** 02/24/2026 11:26 AM  
**Council File No:** 20-1084-S4

**Comments for Public Posting:** Honorable Council President and Councilmembers, I write to provide public comment on the Housing and Homelessness Committee Report concerning contracts for Homelessness Prevention Program Services, which include Bet Tzedek Legal Services as a subcontracted legal services provider within the StayHousedLA coalition. I wish to thank the committee and councilmembers for the opportunity for us to continue to serve the community by offering free eviction defense legal services as part of our coalition of committed housing advocates. This step is very encouraging in the broader mission to implement the Right to Counsel ordinance to prevent homelessness through increasing legal representation for tenants facing eviction. I wish to also draw your attention to two areas of concern in the current contract as offered. The first is the requirement for disclosure of client's addresses as part of the reporting on the contract. This is a change from current reporting requirements, which include case data reporting that is anonymized for client's identities. As attorneys, we are bound by the California Rules of Professional Conduct, including Rule 1.6, which requires us to keep confidential and not reveal information about our clients that could lead to disadvantage or prejudice to them. Given that the services anticipated under the contract are only for eviction defense legal services, a client's address is key information that could be used to identify and reveal information about them that would normally be kept secret under attorney-client confidentiality. As an attorney responsible for supervising junior attorneys in this practice, I have real concerns about our ability to maintain our ethical obligation of confidentiality in light of that provision. It is further concerning in the era of threats to data privacy, and data misuse, that Council would require a step that weakens our ability to protect our client's identities. I urge the council to consider whether the oversight purpose of reporting address information, which was not previously required as part of the regular reporting to the Housing Department, can be met by other means, which do not require us to risk attorney-client confidentiality and imperil our client's data privacy by requiring disclosure of addresses, and thereby revealing that they were a tenant subject to an eviction action. Secondly, I wish to voice my concern about the onerous financial reporting requirements foreshadowed in this contract.

Unlike past contracts, this contract seeks reporting of costs per case, which, given that eviction defense is a volume practice imposes an onerous new requirement on the non-profit legal service providers that did not previously exist. Concerns about public waste of funds are misplaced when the average cost per case for attorney services is approximately \$7,500 – a modest amount in publicly funded attorney services that come before this body - and the savings for cities on overall spending through adoption of a Right to Counsel program are well established. The issue is not one of transparency, but the best use of funds. Requiring non-profit agencies to engage in many more hours of financial analysis and reporting will mean that less funds go towards representing tenants, and may our ability to expand these services under the Council's own mandate. We look forward to continuing to serve tenants and local communities facing housing insecurity under this contract, should we be given the opportunity to do so. We respectfully request that the terms of the contract be closely examined for unintended consequences and unnecessary burdens on non-profit legal aid and community organizations. Sincerely, Aimee Williams Associate Vice President of Justice for Tenants, Homeowners and Unhoused Individuals Bet Tzedek Legal Services

February 24, 2026

**RE: Public Comment: Council File: 20-1084-S4 – Authority to Execute Contract for Homelessness Prevention Program**

Honorable Council President and Councilmembers,

I write to provide public comment on the Housing and Homelessness Committee Report concerning contracts for Homelessness Prevention Program Services, which include Bet Tzedek Legal Services as a subcontracted legal services provider within the StayHousedLA coalition. I wish to thank the committee and councilmembers for the opportunity for us to continue to serve the community by offering free eviction defense legal services as part of our coalition of committed housing advocates. This step is very encouraging in the broader mission to implement the Right to Counsel ordinance to prevent homelessness through increasing legal representation for tenants facing eviction.

I wish to also draw your attention to two areas of concern in the current contract as offered. The first is the requirement for disclosure of client's addresses as part of the reporting on the contract. This is a change from current reporting requirements, which include case data reporting that is anonymized for client's identities.

As attorneys, we are bound by the *California Rules of Professional Conduct*, including Rule 1.6, which requires us to keep confidential and not reveal information about our clients that could lead to disadvantage or prejudice to them. Given that the services anticipated under the contract are only for eviction defense legal services, a client's address is key information that could be used to identify and reveal information about them that would normally be kept secret under attorney-client confidentiality. As an attorney responsible for supervising junior attorneys in this practice, I have real concerns about our ability to maintain our ethical obligation of confidentiality in light of that provision. It is further concerning in the era of threats to data privacy, and data misuse, that Council would require a step that weakens our ability to protect our client's identities.

I urge the council to consider whether the oversight purpose of reporting address information, which was not previously required as part of the regular reporting to the Housing Department, can be met by other means, which do not require us to risk attorney-client



confidentiality and imperil our client's data privacy by requiring disclosure of addresses, and thereby revealing that they were a tenant subject to an eviction action.

Secondly, I wish to voice my concern about the onerous financial reporting requirements foreshadowed in this contract. Unlike past contracts, this contract seeks reporting of costs per case, which, given that eviction defense is a volume practice imposes an onerous new requirement on the non-profit legal service providers that did not previously exist.

Concerns about public waste of funds are misplaced when the average cost per case for attorney services is approximately \$7,500 – a modest amount in publicly funded attorney services that come before this body - and the savings for cities on overall spending through adoption of a Right to Counsel program are well established. The issue is not one of transparency, but the best use of funds. Requiring non-profit agencies to engage in many more hours of financial analysis and reporting will mean that less funds go towards representing tenants, and may our ability to expand these services under the Council's own mandate.

We look forward to continuing to serve tenants and local communities facing housing insecurity under this contract, should we be given the opportunity to do so. We respectfully request that the terms of the contract be closely examined for unintended consequences and unnecessary burdens on non-profit legal aid and community organizations.

Sincerely,

Aimee Williams  
(awilliams@bettzedek.org)  
Associate Vice President of Justice for Tenants, Homeowners and Unhoused Individuals  
Bet Tzedek Legal Services