

Communication from Public

Name: Palms Unhoused Mutual Aid
Date Submitted: 06/14/2024 11:42 PM
Council File No: 21-0329-S5
Comments for Public Posting: Please post the attached letter from Palms Unhoused Mutual Aid regarding our opposition to 41.18 to the Council File.



Dear Councilmembers,

As mutual aid volunteers, we have spent the last several years working directly with LA's unhoused communities throughout the Westside, primarily in CD5 and CD11. At every turn, the City rejected our recommendations for a humane, effective, and functional system that actually gets people off the street and into housing. Instead, the City has implemented a cruel system that moves people around from block to block, throws out their belongings, and houses virtually no one.

Now, after months of community pressure, the City has finally released a report back on the "cost and efficacy" of LAMC 41.18 implementation and how to improve the policy.

Let us be clear: there is no improving 41.18. It is a racist municipal code designed to criminalize the existence and visibility of poor people in public, dating back to the 1930s. Rather than actually getting people off the street and into supportive housing, all 41.18 does is violate unhoused people's constitutional rights and ensure that they never end up housed. As the Jasmine Avenue unhoused community wrote in an open letter to Council District 5, 41.18 moves them away from the areas where they are often required to stay to receive support from service providers, thus cutting them off from services and displacing them to areas far from their communities and support systems.

Our documentation of 41.18 sweeps includes the City using this municipal code to justify throwing away narcans, clothing, food, medicine, cell phones, and other important personal belongings that people need to survive. There is no reforming a policy as dangerous as 41.18 that gives LAPD unprecedented power to regulate public space at their discretion.

The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit has already ruled that our enforcement of 41.18 violates the Constitution. Yet the City continues to put itself at massive liability by enforcing 41.18 and similar policies.

Our communities urge you to repeal LAMC 41.18 and stop wasting taxpayer money on this inefficient and cruel mechanism. We also demand that you invite unhoused community members who have been impacted firsthand by these cruel policies before the entire City Council to actually hear about the problems it creates for those who experience it every single day.

Sincerely,
Palms Unhoused Mutual Aid