0220-05151-0520

TRANSMITTAL

TO	DATE	COUNCIL FILE NO.
City Council	02-01-24	23-1182-S1
FROM		**COUNCIL DISTRICT**
Homeless Strategy Committee		All

At its meeting on January 25, 2024, the Homeless Strategy Committee approved the joint Office of the City Administrative Officer and Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst report (Attachment A) relative to the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Housing Navigation report. The Homeless Strategy Committee recommends that the City Council:

1. Instruct the Los Angeles Housing Department to authorize the filling of up to ten Homeless Engagement Teams (HET) vacant positions with housing/system navigators in the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority General Fund contract.

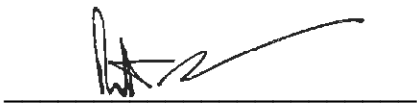
2. Adopt the attached Scope of Work by Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) for the housing/system navigator position.

3. Request LAHSA to report on existing housing navigation services and types of housing navigation in the system and where it is available in the City-funded interim housing sites and to provide recommendations on how to improve the provision of housing navigation services in sites where they are not being provided.

    a. The report should include the criteria for each deployment and how navigation type is matched with a client as well as information on how long it takes for a PEH to get from outreach to a housing placement with the help of housing navigation.

4. Request LAHSA to set program goals for housing navigation and incorporate the program metrics in its key performance indicator reporting.

There is no additional General Fund impact as a result of the recommendations in this report. The recommendations in this report utilize budgeted funds (General Fund) previously approved for Homeless Engagement Teams.



Matthew W. Szabo
City Administrative Officer

MWS:ECG:MCF:MP:16240071

CAO 649-d

Attachment A

FORM GEN. 160

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

0220-05151-0517

Council File No.: 23-1182-S1

Date: January 24, 2024

To: Homeless Strategy Committee

From: Sharon M. Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst

Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer

Subject: Housing Navigation Report

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Homeless Strategy Committee recommend that City Council:

1. Instruct the Los Angeles Housing Department to authorize the filling of up to ten Homeless Engagement Teams (HET) vacant positions with housing/system navigators in the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority General Fund contract.

2. Adopt the attached Scope of Work by Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) for the housing/system navigator position.

3. Request LAHSA to report on existing housing navigation services and types of housing navigation in the system and where it is available in the City-funded interim housing sites and to provide recommendations on how to improve the provision of housing navigation services in sites where they are not being provided.

    a. The report should include the criteria for each deployment and how navigation type is matched with a client as well as information on how long it takes for a PEH to get from outreach to a housing placement with the help of housing navigation.

4. Request LAHSA to set program goals for housing navigation and incorporate the program metrics in its key performance indicator reporting.

SUMMARY

On December 12, 2023, the City Council approved a joint report (C.F. 23-1182-S1) from the Housing and Homelessness and Budget, Finance, and Innovation Committees with recommendations to appropriate $2.3 million from the Unappropriated Balance to fund the continuation of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Homeless Engagement Teams (HET) for six months through June 30, 2024. The Report also recommended actions to fill the currently vacant HET positions, where appropriate, with newly defined System Navigator positions. A presentation by LAHSA on this topic was then heard in the Homeless Strategy Committee (HSC) on the same day. During the discussion in the HSC meeting, additional instruction was provided to the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA) and the Office of the City Administrative Officer (CAO) to report on the scope of work for the 10 vacant positions that would be converted to the navigation positions.

This report provides HSC with a definition of the housing and system navigation work, details on the scope of work for the 10 positions, deployment of navigation staff, as well as discussion on the current inventory of existing housing navigation within the rehousing system and how to improve it. The Office of the CLA and CAO worked with LAHSA to provide the information outlined in this report. The report also provides recommendations to the HSC on further exploration of housing navigation improvements.

BACKGROUND

The Adopted Budget 2023-24 allocated $4.6 million to LAHSA for 41 HETs for six months. Funding in the same amount for the remaining six months of the fiscal year was placed in the Unappropriated Balance so that LAHSA could develop a new strategy in the meantime to repurpose their HETs and present it to Council. In November 2023, LAHSA provided a report proposing a new framework for the HETs in which the remaining six months of funding would continue all the HET positions except for 10 vacancies which existed at the time the report released in November 2023. The LAHSA proposal was then presented to Council in a report from the CAO dated November 22, 2023 (CAO Report).

At the time of the Council vote to approve the recommendations in the CAO Report, there was no written or approved scope of work for the up to 10 housing/system navigator positions. At the HSC meeting on December 12, 2023, LAHSA further reported on housing navigation services. As a result of the discussion in HSC, the HSC members instructed CLA and CAO to work with LAHSA to report on the scope of work for the navigators and to provide any additional information on the housing navigation process as necessary.

DISCUSSION

Clarification of Recommendations

On November 29, 2023, the Housing and Homelessness Committee considered the CAO Report relative to the LAHSA HET continued funding (C.F. 23-1182). During the discussion in Committee, the Committee members amended the recommendations in the CAO Report to continue the current scope of work for HETs and to repurpose 10 vacant HET positions to the new “System Navigator” positions. This report was then considered

in the Budget, Finance, and Innovation Committee who concurred with the Housing and Homelessness Committee Report. The joint reports were then considered by Council on December 12, 2023 with the amended recommendation to repurpose 10 vacant positions.

The actions approved by Council on November 29, 2023 instruct the CAO and request LAHSA to "prioritize the filling of vacant HET positions with System Navigators first." LAHSA currently has seven vacant generalist HET positions that have been held open. Three of the 10 vacant positions that were reported previously are CARE/+ positions. The Council has stated that they do not want to change or repurpose any CARE/+ or Roadmap HET positions. The action approved by Council did not include details concerning the HET positions that would transition to System Navigators. Therefore, the CLA and CAO recommend that only up to 10 positions, not including any CARE/+ or Roadmap HET positions, be repurposed to housing/system navigators.

Furthermore, the instruction states that these positions be filled with "System Navigators." During the discussions in the Housing and Homelessness Committee on November 29, 2023, the Committee members stated their intent to repurpose the vacant HET positions with *housing navigators* as opposed to *system navigators.* The CLA and CAO met with LAHSA to discuss the differences between the two terms and to reconcile the differences, if any, between the system navigator and a housing navigator job description.

LAHSA defines "System Navigator" as a hybrid position which combines homeless outreach and housing navigation. The position's job duties (detailed further in the next section) include engaging an unsheltered person experiencing homelessness (PEH) to provide document assistance and connection with interim housing and other stabilizing resources. The system navigator will also assist PEH with finding and navigating into permanent housing opportunities as well as coordinating with multiple services to help stabilize them. This definition and scope of work for System Navigator satisfies the Council's intent of achieving housing navigation. For the purposes of this report, "housing/system navigator" will be used to describe the positions.

Scope of Work

LAHSA has provided the scope of work for the housing/system navigator position (Attachment I). It states that under the leadership of the Director of Access & Engagement Department, the housing/system navigator will provide field-based services to persons experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness as they transition into permanent housing.

Job functions for this position include:

- Assisting PEH in response to requests received while performing outreach duties;
- Providing connections to available resources for the homeless population such as links to medical care, health insurance, mental health and substance abuse support, benefits advocacy, etc.;
- Maintaining relationships with elected offices, and City and County departments;
- Work with clients to develop a housing location plan, including housing placement and retention;
- Conduct Coordinated Entry System assessment;

- Document case notes;
- Prepare housing assessments and referrals;
- Assist clients with completing housing applications;
- Transport clients to gather documents;
- Coordinate with unit acquisition teams to identify and share appropriate housing options;
- Develop relationships with landlords for identification of housing units; and
- Represent LAHSA at community meetings.

The CLA and CAO recommend that the attached Scope of Work, as written by LAHSA, be adopted by Council and included in the contract with LAHSA.

Deployment
Housing navigation plays an important role in the housing pathways strategy envisioned by LAHSA. LAHSA has identified housing navigation as a necessary tool to move people from the engagement and outreach phase in unsheltered locations into permanent supportive housing or exits out of homelessness. In most of the City's contracts with LAHSA for interim housing such as Tiny Home Village or A Bridge Home, housing navigation is identified as a service that should be provided to the participants in order to eventually provide them with an exit from the interim housing into a permanent housing solution.

There needs to be a comprehensive report on which interim housing contracts between LAHSA and the City include this stipulation. While this service might be included as part of the scope of work, it is oftentimes not implemented on the ground. Many interim housing service providers do not have the capacity or enough funding to provide housing navigation as part of their services. The CLA and CAO recommend that LAHSA work with their subcontractors to report to Council on which interim housing sites are supposed to be providing housing navigation currently, the status of service provision, and actions or funding required to implement it as required to meet program goals.

Furthermore, there has not been an accounting of all the various types of housing/system navigation that is being contracted out. There is housing/system navigation that is provided on site and navigation that is provided more generally. Housing navigation is sometimes provided by a subcontractor service provider or directly by LAHSA staff. The CLA and CAO recommend that LAHSA report on all types of housing/system navigation that exists, how and where they get deployed and by whom, and how the program is currently funded as well as funding needed to meet program goals to rapidly place PEH into stabilized permanent housing. The report should detail the criteria for each deployment and how navigation type is matched with a client. Additionally, the report should also detail at which point in a housing pathway a PEH is connected with housing navigation and how long it takes for them to get from outreach to a housing placement. While LAHSA has engaged with the City in meetings and discussion on this topic and these questions, a comprehensive report detailing these would be beneficial for the City to further understand the system.

It is proposed that five General HETs (10 people) will be repurposed as System Navigators in a hybrid role, which includes outreach. LAHSA proposes to assign teams to council districts to provide outreach and engagement efforts when not performing navigation responsibilities. Similar to the navigation component, these teams will be deployed for outreach efforts to regions of the city most impacted by homelessness based on the Homeless Count data. LAHSA notes that General HETs are deployed to specific zones across various council districts and are shifted as needed for targeted outreach operations on a regular basis. Based on the current deployment of General HETs, LAHSA reports that the repurposing of the teams is unlikely to have a significant impact on Council District outreach operations.

Housing Navigation Goals

A common issue associated with the City's current homelessness service programs is a lack of clearly identified success metrics with goals and targets. To ensure the success of the housing navigation program, it is important to set goals and monitor the success through consistent and comprehensive evaluation. LAHSA should ensure that the data from housing navigation performance should be incorporated into its key performance indicators analysis. In order to determine the efficacy of service providers implementing housing navigation, it is important to routinely collect data and analyze the key performance indicators related to this program. The CLA and CAO recommend requesting LAHSA to set program goals for housing navigation and incorporate the program metrics in its key performance indicator reporting.

Cost

The System Navigators will primarily be based at interim housing sites but will have the flexibility to respond to emergency situations that require additional outreach and engagement support. Because of this hybrid role, the cost of each team is $251,833 per year, which is an increase of $25,406 from $226,427 for the standard HETs. Each team will consist of two full-time equivalent employees. On December 21, 2023, the City Council and Mayor approved a transfer of $2.32 million from the Unappropriated Balance (UB) to continue HETs operations and establish System Navigators. As a result, the total budget available for HETs and System Navigators is $6.96 million. Of the $6.96 million budget, funding in the amount of $0.42 million is recommended to be set aside for System Navigators through June 30, 2024 since the System Navigator model is in the process of being developed. The recommended allocation reflects four months for System Navigators. The remaining budget in the amount of $6.5 million will continue to support the existing 36 HETs. The updated 2023-24 budget is as follows:

Table 1: 2023-24 System Navigators and Homeless Engagement Team Budget

2023-24 Updated Budget		
Outreach	No. of Teams	Amount
Systems Navigators	5	$419,722
HETs (CARE/CARE+ and General)	36	$6,542,909
Total Budget	**N/A**	**$6,962,631**

The CAO projects an annual cost of $6.92 million for the 36 HETs, which is based on the highest monthly expenditure of $0.58 million for the 36 HETs and $0.42 million for System Navigator for a total of $7.34 million. As such, up to an additional $0.37 million may be needed from the remaining HETs balance in the UB. The actual transfer amount needed will also be dependent on the ramp up of the Systems Navigators. The CAO will continue to monitor expenditures for both programs and will report back with any additional funding needs in a future report. The projected funding needs is as follows:

Table 2: Projected Year-End Funding Need

Projected Year End Funding Need	Amount
HETs	$6,917,582
System Navigators	$419,722
Total Projected Need	**$7,337,304**
Approved Funding	**$6,962,631**
Projected Additional Transfer Needed	***~ $374,673***

Attachment:

I. LAHSA's System Navigator Scope of Work

Attachment 1

Los Angeles
HOMELESS SERVICES AUTHORITY
"We drive the collaborative strategic vision to create solutions for the crisis of homelessness grounded in compassion, equity and inclusion".

707 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Floor · Los Angeles, California · 90017
Telephone: (213) 683-3333 · Fax: (213) 553-9373 · TTY: (213) 553-8488

Department: Access & Engagement
Salary: $26.27-$30.25
Appointments are typically made between the minimum and the midpoint of the range, depending on qualifications.

System Navigator- Outreach

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) seeks motivated professionals who want to use their talents and skills to make a difference. Our 500+ FTE staff are adaptive problem solvers and passionate about enriching people's lives. If you are mission-driven, dedicated to superior service and support, and can diligently work independently and in a collaborative environment, join our team. LAHSA is leading the fight to end homelessness in LA County. Here, not only would your work have a real impact on the community, but we also offer a comprehensive and competitive benefits package.

Created in 1993, LAHSA is a joint powers authority of the city and county of Los Angeles. As the lead agency in the HUD-funded Los Angeles Continuum of Care, we coordinate and manage over $300 million annually in federal, state, county, and city funds for programs providing shelter, housing, and services to people experiencing homelessness.

Job Summary
Under the leadership of the Director of Access & Engagement Department, the System Navigator- Outreach will provide field-based services to persons experiencing sheltered & unsheltered homelessness as they transition into permanent housing. This position will serve as a hybrid of Homeless Outreach and Housing Navigation. The selected candidate's primary responsibilities are to engage unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness to provide document assistance and connect them with interim housing and other stabilizing resources. Other responsibilities include supporting city-wide Interim Housing (traditional shelters and motel sites) sites with assisting clients with permanent housing opportunities and locating best fit housing placement options, providing housing stability services, including implementation of housing stabilization plans, and coordination of multiple services to meet each clients' needs. System Navigators- Outreach are also responsible for building and maintaining good working relationships with partnering agencies and landlords. Given the hybrid nature of this position staff may be assigned to work in any area of the City of Los Angeles and that assignment will change as the needs of the homelessness response system change. **This position may require the System Navigator to be temporarily assigned at Interim Housing/Service Provider sites across the city in an effort to support system flow and the City's Encampment Resolution efforts.**

Essential Job Functions

- Work with team members to assist people experiencing homelessness in response to requests received and while performing outreach duties.
- Provide connections to available resources for the homeless population (e.g. linkage to primary care physicians, health insurance, mental health / substance abuse support, benefits advocacy, employment services, food banks, credit repair, legal aid, In Home care)
- Maintain professional relationships with clients, Elected Offices, and city or County Departments

- Work with clients to develop and implement a housing location plan that will maximize housing location, placement, and retention which will increase quality of life and community engagement
- Conduct CES Assessment or alternative required assessment to accompany housing plan to determine appropriate housing intervention and service needs.
- Keep up-to-date, accurate, well-written/well documented case notes in required format
- Complete all documentation and paperwork in a timely manner
- Prepare clear and thorough housing assessments and referrals for inclusion in case files and provide supervisor with all information requested in the timeframe given
- Assist clients with completing housing and/or subsidy applications and securing housing of their choice
- Transport clients to gather needed documents for housing including but not limited to the DMV, Social Security office and Department of Social Services
- Transport clients to unit viewings and assist with completion of rental applications
- Coordinate with Unit Acquisition teams to identify and share appropriate housing options with participants
- Develop relationships with landlords to assist in identification of housing units and leasing process for participants
- Represent LAHSA at community meetings (i.e. care coordination & case conferencing) to advocate for client needs
- The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this role. While performing duties of this very active position, the employee must regularly walk, climb or balance, stoop, kneel, or crouch. The employee must occasionally lift and or move items over 10 pounds.

Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

- Knowledge of the LA CoC HMIS
- Strong computer skills to maintain up to date Clarity (HMIS) Records for services provided to clients directly in the field.
- Excellent people skills, specifically customer service skills and a capacity for collaboration and interpersonal relationships with varied populations
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to express technical concepts clearly to both technical and non-technical audiences
- Strong organizational skills with a strong attention to detail
- Intermediate level of skill with computer software programs specifically, Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Access, Power Point and Outlook)
- Ability to simultaneously manage multiple projects and timelines
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse community and organizational groups
- Other duties and special projects as assigned
- The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. This is a very active position. While performing the duties of this job, the employee is regularly required to walk; climb or balance; and stoop, kneel, crouch or crawl. The employee must occasionally lift and/or move items over 10 pounds.

Training & Experience.

- Minimum 2 combined years of experience and demonstrated effectiveness in social services, preferably homeless services

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- Certificates and/or trainings specific to domestic violence, mental illness, and harm reduction, preferred
- A high school Diploma is mandatory, however an A.A. degree with relevant social service work experience and bilingual (English/Spanish) is preferred.
- Any combination of extensive and applicable work experience and educational credentials to perform the above duties successfully.
- **Candidate must have a valid California Drivers' License and a clean driving record (including no unpaid parking fines) for a minimum of 3 years**.

COVID-19 Vaccines

- Effective **November 1, 2021, LAHSA will require proof of vaccination for all employees**. This requirement is in response to the public health emergency and is intended to reduce the spread of COVID-19 among LAHSA employees, our stakeholders and those we serve – it will remain in effect for the duration of the public health emergency.
- Employees may apply for an exemption if they cannot be vaccinated due to complicating medical conditions or sincerely held religious beliefs. If the exemption is approved, then the employees will be subject to weekly COVID-19 testing.

Applicants may make a reasonable accommodation request for this job by calling the Human Resources Department at (213) 683-3333; or via email at humanresources@lahsa.org; or in person @ 707 Wilshire Blvd., 6th Floor, LA, CA 90017.

To Apply, please go to www.lahsa.org/jobs

Template Revised: 09/01/2020 **Job Description Revised: 12/01/2023**

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