



**COMMUNITY
INVESTMENT
FOR FAMILIES
DEPARTMENT**
Paths to Prosperity



KAREN BASS, MAYOR
ABIGAIL R. MARQUEZ, GENERAL MANAGER

April 23, 2024

Honorable Members of the City Council Budget, Finance, & Innovation Committee
Los Angeles City Hall
200 N. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**RE: COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FOR FAMILIES DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO MAYOR'S
PROPOSED FY 2024-25 BUDGET**

The Community Investment for Families Department (CIFD) appreciates the support from Mayor Bass as outlined in her Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25. We acknowledge the difficult decisions made, especially given the City's financial challenges, and are grateful for the opportunity to continue to support CIFD's critical programs and maintain current staffing levels.

In response to the Budget, Finance, and Innovation Committee's request, the five most important priorities our Department will be able to achieve with the allocation provided by the Mayor's FY 2024-25 Proposed Budget are:

1. **Continue efforts to prevent more families from falling into homelessness through the FamilySource System** - In FY 2023-24, the FamilySource Centers (FSCs) have served 42,349 unduplicated individuals and 15,710 households. The system is on track to serve well over its FY 23-24 goal of 44,200 unduplicated individuals and 17,000 households.
2. **The regularization of seven (7) position authorities** - This allows CIFD to continue streamlining administrative procedures to maximize efficiencies while evaluating the challenges of managing the complex set of responsibilities associated with our special funds, General Fund requirements, procurement, and contracting requirements, to name a few.
3. **Position upgrades** - For our FY 2024-25 budget submission, CIFD was intentional in our request to upgrade existing position allocations that were more appropriate for the level of work in the CIFD portfolio. In the Mayor's Proposed 2024-25 Budget, CIFD was allocated three pay grade upgrades: Environmental Supervisor II (ES II), Senior Management Analyst II (SMA II), and Senior Systems Analyst II (SSA II). These pay grade upgrades will address the heightened intricacies in environmental analysis and clearances of Community Development Block Grant projects, align responsibilities with the classifications most commonly associated with the supervision of positions across the City, and correspond to performing the most difficult and complex professional assignments and supervising the respective units.

4. **Approval of a new Departmental Chief Accountant III** - The approval to add a new Departmental Chief Accountant III (DCA-III) aligns with the creation of a new division that consolidates the Department's financial management functions in the following areas: Cash Management, Cost Accounting, Grants Accounting, General Accounting, Payroll, Audits, and Fiscal Monitoring of Subrecipients. This position will centralize accounting functions in a structure more congruent with other City departments, allowing CIFD to meet its fiscal and auditing responsibilities.
5. **Mitigating funding reduction impact** - We appreciate the open dialogue with the Mayor's office and CAO, who solicited our feedback on how best to apply the required funding reductions to our budget. Although all programs are equally important, together, we identified solutions that aim to minimize the disruption of core services. We look forward to continuing this dialogue with the City Council.

For FY 2024-25, CIFD identified the need for 17 new positions critical to maintaining our Department's expansive portfolio. The request for additional staffing resources was directly tied to the overwhelming staffing deficit that has hindered our ability to manage our growing responsibilities properly. In FY 2023-24, our departmental budget grew by 68%, yet our staffing capacity grew by only 5%. While we appreciate the new positions allocated, we also feel it's important to underscore the need to continue building our staffing infrastructure. Without additional staffing capacity, CIFD will not have the capacity to support the implementation of any new priorities related to addressing homelessness through coordinated prevention models, reducing housing instability, and alleviating poverty.

Given the current budget constraints, we have prioritized the following two programs as essential to increase and continue in FY 2024-25.

1. **Increase resources to prevent survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking from falling into homelessness** - CIFD was instructed through various City Council motions to report on strategies to enhance services for survivors and identify resource needs to implement such strategies. Increasing resources for the Survivor Services system managed by CIFD can significantly curb the inflow into the homeless system by addressing some of its root causes and providing comprehensive supportive services. This becomes especially critical amid discussions of significant cuts to the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA), which would force a number of DV agencies to close their doors. CIFD is committed to enhancing the continuum of care for survivors and will continue to seek any eligible funding sources to increase the system's funding. Our request for increased funding particularly highlighted the intersection between domestic violence and homelessness, with survivors of domestic violence making up approximately 47% of those captured by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's (LAHSA) 2023 Homeless Count.
2. **Continue funding at \$1.2M to support the Children's Saving Account program, Opportunity L.A.** - The Opportunity L.A. program has reached a significant milestone by providing over 100,000 LAUSD students with savings accounts, solidifying its status as

the largest universal program nationwide. Opportunity L.A. ensures equitable access to financial empowerment opportunities for all students. Beyond numerical achievements, Opportunity L.A. serves as a crucial tool in fostering future financial capabilities among youth, working to mitigate homelessness, reduce crime, and cultivate financially independent Angelenos. The 100,000 students with accounts are three times more likely to pursue higher education and four times more likely to graduate, underscoring the program's impact on academic achievement and socioeconomic mobility. Notably, similar programs in the State have continued to operate successfully and independently, even following the launch of CalKIDS by Governor Newsom. Additionally, CIFD has received a \$1.5M grant from the state designated explicitly for outreach efforts. This grant serves as a vital resource to expand the program's reach and impact within the community, and continued funding from the City is required to receive and utilize this grant in full. Discontinuing funding for Opportunity L.A. puts us at risk of losing the state grant and will impede our collective efforts to create additional opportunities for youth to thrive.

The mission and vision of CIFD is to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty in the City of Los Angeles and create opportunities for *all Angelenos* to prosper. All of the Department's programs are intentionally designed with a focus on equity to prioritize resources within communities with the highest needs and reverse decades of socioeconomic, ethnic, and racial inequality that marginalizes low-income communities and people of color.

We look forward to strengthening our partnership with the Mayor and the City Council as we navigate this challenging financial crisis. Together, we can explore creative solutions to leverage our existing resources and identify new opportunities to foster stronger collaboration and coordination that will continue to deliver measurable results for our communities.

Respectfully,



Abigail R. Marquez
General Manager

cc: Honorable Members of the City Council
Carolyn Webb de Macias, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Jenny Delwood, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Solomon Rivera, Deputy Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Matt Hale, Deputy Mayor of Budget and Innovation, Mayor's Office
Brenda Shockley, Deputy Mayor of Economic Opportunity, Mayor's Office
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