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For Immediate Release

INTAKE EFFORTS OF LOS ANGELES HOMELESS SERVICES AUTHORITY STAFF RESULT IN KIDNAPPED BABY BEING REUNITED WITH MOTHER

Instincts and Experience Raised Suspicions About Father

Los Angeles, CA, August 27, 2010 – A simple intake question and answer form was enough to arouse the suspicions of staff at the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA). The result was an infant child being reunited with his mother, having been missing since August 6th. The father had taken the baby in Pennsylvania in a custody dispute and was last seen in New Mexico, before arriving at LAHSA in need of services.

“He seemed very guarded and while the baby had no signs of physical abuse he didn’t seem to have the proper clothing,” said Jeanette Rowe, Director of Homeless Services. “The father didn’t have identification for either himself or the baby and that made us a bit suspicious.”

The Homeless Families Standard Intake and Assessment Form is used by LAHSA during the initial interview for people who are homeless. In addition, staff is trained to look for more subtle indicators that an individual may be in danger.

“Our outreach team did a tremendous job of using their training and instincts to help return a young child to safety,” said Executive Director Michael Arnold. “I’m extremely proud of our staff and the coordinated efforts of the County of Los Angeles DCFS and City Police Department. It’s a good day when our efforts can return an abducted child to his home.”

According to the FBI & US Department of Justice 800,000 juveniles (under 18) are reported missing each year, including runaways. Family kidnapping accounts for nearly 50% of all child kidnappings.

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) is a joint powers authority of the City and County of Los Angeles created in 1993 to address the problems of homelessness in Los Angeles County. LAHSA plans, funds and administers programs that assist homeless individuals and families in their transition to permanent housing. LAHSA is the lead agency in the HUD-funded Los Angeles Continuum of Care and coordinates and manages over \$74 million dollars annually in federal, state, county and city funds for

programs providing shelter, housing and services to homeless persons. Additionally, LAHSA partners with the city and the county to integrate services and housing opportunities to ensure wide distribution of service and housing options. LAHSA funds agencies that address many underserved homeless populations including battered women and their children, persons struggling with chronic homelessness, veterans, youth transitioning from foster care, and individuals with mental health needs.

For more information, please visit: www.lahsa.org.

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