AGENDA AND NOTICE OF A PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON BLACK PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

COMMITTEE CHAIR: Jacqueline Waggoner  VICE CHAIR: Kelli Bernard

Monday, August 20, 2018
1:00 p.m.

Location:
James Wood Community Center
400 E. Fifth Street
Los Angeles, CA 90013

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<th>ITEM AND DESCRIPTION</th>
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<td>Call to Order/Roll Call/Establishment of Quorum</td>
<td>Commissioner Waggoner</td>
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<td>Agenda Items</td>
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<td>The public will have an opportunity to speak to any agenda item when the item is called and before action is taken. A Request to Speak Form must be submitted to the Secretary prior to the completion of the agenda item. The Chair will determine the order of speaking and unless the Chair grants more or less time, the speaker’s limit is two (2) minutes on each agenda item, subject to the total 20-minute period.</td>
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<td>Welcome and Introductions.</td>
<td>Commissioner Waggoner</td>
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<td>Commissioner Bernard</td>
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<td>Review and approve minutes from the meeting of Monday, July 16, 2018.</td>
<td>Commissioner Waggoner</td>
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<td>Discussion of Committee Work Plan, Recommendation Development Process, and Report Timeline.</td>
<td>Patricia Lally</td>
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<td>Presentation and Discussion: Listening Session Overview.</td>
<td>Patricia Lally</td>
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<td>Presentation and Discussion: Outreach.</td>
<td>Colleen Murphy</td>
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<td>Va Lecia Adams Kellum</td>
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<td>Kenny Clipper</td>
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<td>Donald Holt</td>
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<td>Lakesha Williams</td>
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<td>Presentation and Discussion: Assessment.</td>
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<td>Michael Nailat</td>
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<td>Presentation and Discussion: Interim Housing.</td>
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<td>Till Von Wachter</td>
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• Public Participation
Each Public Participant speaker is limited to two (2) minutes and may address any topic within the Commission’s jurisdiction. A Request to Speak Form must be filled out and submitted to the Secretary prior to the beginning of Public Participation. Subject to the total 20-minute period, each Public Participation speaker is limited to two (2) minutes.

• Adjournment

Packets of materials on agenda items are available to the public during normal business hours at 811 Wilshire Boulevard, 6th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90017. For further information, you may call 213-683-3333. Upon request, sign language interpreters, materials in alternative formats and other accommodations are available to the public for LAHSA meetings. All requests for reasonable accommodations must be made at least three working days (72 Hours) in advance of the scheduled meeting date. For additional information, contact LAHSA at (213) 683-3333 or TTY (213) 553-8488.
MINUTES OF THE
LOS ANGELES HOMELESS SERVICES AUTHORITY
AD HOC COMMITTEE ON BLACK PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS MEETING
Held July 16, 2018

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness Meeting, held at the AC Bilbrew Library, 150 E. El Segundo Blvd., Los Angeles, California, was called to order at 1:16 pm by Commissioner Waggoner.

Attendance
LAHSA Commissioners Present:
Jacqueline Waggoner, Chair

Committee Members Present:
VaLecia Adams Kellum   Edward Anderson   Jack Barbour
Oliver Buie             Brian Ford        Robin Hughes
Janet Kelly             Monique King-Viehland  Veronica Lewis
Nova Mirari             Anita Nelson       Suzette Shaw
Brenda Shockley         Lola Smallwood-Cuevas  Sean Spear
Reba Stevens            Pete White         Dhakshike Wickrema

Committee Members Absent:
Kelli Bernard, Vice Chair  Chancela Al-Mansour  Wendell Blassingame
Rachel Brashier          Chela Demuir-Cartier  Juataun Mark
Alisa Orduna             Molly Rysman

LAHSA Staff:
Sarah Mahin, Director of Policy & Systems
Eileen Bryson, Manager, Executive Support

Call to Order/Roll Call/Establishment of Quorum
Roll was called and quorum was established at 1:16 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions.
Commissioner Waggoner thanked everyone for attending, noted parking restrictions, and explained the public comment procedures.

Discussion of Committee Work Plan.
Patricia Lally, Committee Facilitator, gave the report:

- Ms. Lally explained some of the details around the workplan and that there would be an upcoming listening session in SPA 1.
- An employment component will be added to the September meeting and a focus group session will be held in late August or early September. The September meeting will be extended by 30 minutes to accommodate the full agenda.

Public Speaker(s): There were no public speakers.

Review and approve minutes from the meeting of Monday, June 18, 2018.

Motion: Jacqueline Waggoner moved and Brenda Shockley seconded acceptance of the minutes as presented.
Public Speaker(s): There were no public speakers.

Action: The motion passed with affirmative votes from Va Lecia Adams Kellum, Jack Barbour, Oliver Buie, Brian Ford, Robin Hughes, Monique King-Viehland, Nova Mirari, Anita Nelson, Suzette Shaw, Brenda Shockley, Lola Smallwood-Cuevas, Sean Spear, Reba Stevens, Jacqueline Waggoner and Dhakshike Wickrema. There were no opposing votes. Pete White and Veronica Lewis abstained.

Discussion: Listening Session Findings to Date.
Patricia Lally, Committee Facilitator, gave the report:

- Ms. Lally shared comments that were heard at listening sessions.

Public Speaker(s): There were no public speakers.

Presentation & Discussion: Children’s Data Network.
Dr. Regan Foust gave the report:

- Dr. Foust shared information on Children’s Data Network as shown in the provided presentation. She explained that the program compared records from LAHSA and Child Protection Services (CPS). The research is on family homelessness as opposed to individuals or children. The project looked at the differences in services between transition-age youth (TAY) families (head of household 18-24) and families with older heads of household.
- Dr. Foust provided information about the number of families accessing the system, demographics, programs accessed, and referrals to CPS.
- There was discussion about the involvement of the parents in the CPS. The researchers will look at this in the future.
- The data underscores the importance of trauma-informed services, cross-system collaboration, and the opportunities for prevention. It was clarified that the comparison was only with CPS, not DMH or other agencies. There were suggestions to target the 20-22 year old TAY, and look at older individuals who lost their children.
- There was discussion about how this information will be applied practically, whether work history was taken into consideration, possible interventions, housing status prior to the family being referred, if there was geographic data for SPAs, categories for referrals (i.e., were they referred for lack of housing?), and whether this data will be linked to other data sources.

Public Speaker(s): There were no public speakers.

Presentation & Discussion: Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services.
Roberta Medina, Karen Richardson, Cynthia McCoy-Miller, and V. Gail Winston gave the report:

- Ms. Medina introduced her team.
- A CPS case is not opened for families that are reported only for being homeless. These referrals are diverted to 211.
- She shared data for demographics, out of home care, age of children receiving services, as well as their plans to upgrade the data system due to its current limitations in recording accurate information.
- Ms. Richardson shared information about the Eliminating Racial Disparity and Disproportionality (ERDD) workgroup that discusses strategies to address disproportionality, provides implicit bias and cultural competency training, and trains community volunteers to become cultural brokers in the court system. The ERDD workgroup is open to the community and meets on the 4th Thursday of every month. In addition, there was discussion about prevention, the influence of environment and healthy behavior modeling, including possible future trainings.
- Ms. Medina spoke about the family preservation and family unification programs. She stated there is a lack of available HUD vouchers. There was discussion about the number of youth that transition from foster care to homelessness, a majority of whom are 21-24 years old.

Public Speaker(s): There were no public speakers.

Presentation & Discussion: Youth Lived Experience Panel.
Earl Edwards, Committee Co-Facilitator, facilitated a panel discussion with Nikyra Houston, Nova Mirari, and Tanisha Saunders:

- The panelists introduced themselves and shared their aspirations and their experiences of homelessness and with the child welfare system.
- There was discussion about what could have been done to prevent their homelessness or assist while they were in the system. Suggestions included improving access to and navigation of services, minimizing eligibility barriers, follow up, restructuring, knowledge about services (i.e. too much information received through word of mouth), ending the ceiling age for foster care youth, creating a safe environment to talk about abuse, and better coordination.

**Public Speaker(s):** There were no public speakers.

**Presentation & Discussion: Insights from Committee Members.**

Va Lecia Adams Kellum and Veronica Lewis, Committee members, gave the report:

- Veronica Lewis shared that coordination of services is a challenge for clients who age out of foster care and discussed the importance of informing youth about the available services and beginning transition planning earlier. She shared that youth are ill-equipped to address the daily realities, expressed a need for a more comprehensive support system, and recommended changing the requirements for family reunification.
- Va Lecia Adams-Kellum shared information about St. Joseph Center’s initiatives to serve youth and families, including the family coordinated entry system and its outcomes, the food pantry, the Codetalk program, the youth resource team, and the Animo program.

**Public Speaker(s):** There were no public speakers.

Janet Kelly arrived at 3:55 p.m.

**Discussion of Potential Recommendations.**

Patricia Lally led the discussion, and Sarah Mahin shared recommendations captured throughout the discussion:

- Conduct cultural competency trainings led by Black/African American trainers
- Implement Trauma Informed Care at DCFS
- Provide prevention-oriented family supports for TAY families
- Cross-system coordination across the homeless services delivery system, DCFS, etc.
- Cultural broker volunteers for DCFS and potentially homeless services delivery system
- Encourage DCFS and the courts to operate within the community
- Help break intergenerational cycles by providing opportunities to model healthy behaviors
- More resources on college campuses for foster care youth
- More support for former foster care youth navigating the system
- Extending ILP program to 24 years old—advocate to change federal policy
- Earlier transition planning for foster care youth
- Improve access points within DCFS and homeless system
- Examine different standards for Black youth
- Note that Family Unification Program is not housing first
- Provide choice as often as possible for all services
- Explore faith-based counseling
- Provide additional prevention services
- Examine the visible/invisible phenomenon and create a roadmap to educate the public on how to help
- Address not just cultural competency but representation; hire more Black/African-American people.
- Brenda Shockley inquired as to how LAHSA has internalized the recommendations that are being made of other agencies and what steps LAHSA plans to take as a result.
- Janet Kelly recommended not watering down issues specific to Black/African-American people.

**Public Speaker(s):** There were no public speakers.
Public Participation

**Public Speaker:** Tiffany Duvernay requested more information about available services and advocated for formerly incarcerated people and individuals with mental illness.

**Public Speaker:** Thomas Smith shared that coming back to his community was a challenge with reentry. The church is the best support for reentry. He also gave feedback that there should be better outreach and notification of the public meetings.

**Public Speaker:** Bernice Nofflin shared that some programs are destroying the community and contribute to the problems. She recommended that Committee members think outside the box and involve the faith community.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:32 p.m.
LAHSA Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness

Work Plan

1.0 OVERVIEW

At its December 2017 meeting, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Commission established the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness to address the issue of sustained overrepresentation of Black people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County. The purpose of the Committee is to provide focused attention to better understand the factors contributing to the overrepresentation of Black people among the population experiencing homelessness, identify opportunities to increase racial equity within the homeless service delivery system, and develop recommendations to more effectively meet the needs of Black people experiencing homelessness.

2.0 COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

LAHSA Commission Committee Members:
Jacqueline Waggoner, Chair
Kelli Bernard, Vice-Chair

Committee Members:
Va Lecia Adams Kellum
Chancela Al-Mansour
Edward Anderson
Jack Barbour
Wendell Blassingame
Rachel Brashier
Oliver Buie
Chela Demuir-Cartier
Brian Ford
Robin Hughes
Janet Kelly
Monique King-Viehland
Veronica Lewis
Juataun Mark
Nova Mirari
Anita Nelson
Alisa Orduna
Molly Rysman
Suzette Shaw
Brenda Shockley
Lola Smallwood Cuevas
Sean Spear
Reba Stevens
Pete White
Dhakshike Wickrema

LAHSA Staff Liaisons:
Sarah Mahin, Director of Policy & Systems
Erin Cox, Supervisor, Policy & Systems
Brenda Wheatley, Commission Liaison

3.0 GOALS

1. Provide Focused Attention and a Forum for Discussion
   a. Hold public monthly meetings on subjects related to Black people experiencing homelessness
   b. Invite public speakers to present on aspects of homelessness and offer recommendations
   c. Host community listening sessions and focus groups across the county to engage advocates, service providers, and community members to better understand key challenges and barriers to service
   d. Expand and adjust discussion of subjects based on feedback and progress
2. Develop and Promote Recommendations
   a. Analyze data related to Black people experiencing homelessness
   b. Apply a racial equity analysis to develop appropriate strategies and recommendations related to Black people experiencing homelessness
   c. Identify and make recommendations to the LAHSA Commission, the County, the City, and other stakeholders on how to improve efforts to address racial disparities impacting Black people experiencing homelessness
   d. Share recommendations and results of the Committee’s work with community members
   e. Produce a report to present data on Black people experiencing homelessness in LA, information gathered from presentations and discussion, and recommendations made by the Committee

4.0 PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE

The Committee is holding monthly public meetings and listening sessions over a six-month period to better understand the experiences of Black individuals and households within the homeless service delivery system, including challenges, vulnerabilities, barriers to service, and driving forces of housing instability. Meetings are open to the public and are held in various locations across the County to enable attendance and participation by a diverse group of community members.

Monthly Committee Meetings
The Committee’s monthly meetings invite expert presentations on specific topics in addition to providing an opportunity for public comment from stakeholders and community members to address and better understand each of these issues.

Monday, April 18, 2018 | 1:00 – 5:00 PM
   Los Angeles Services Authority, 811 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles

Monday, May 21, 2018 | 2:00 – 4:00 PM
   Los Angeles Services Authority, 811 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles

Monday, June 18, 2018 | 1:00 – 4:30 PM
   Constituent Service Center of Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, 8475 S Vermont Ave, Los Angeles

Monday, July 16, 2018 | 1:00 – 4:30 PM
   A.C. Bilbrew Public Library, 150 E. El Segundo Blvd., Los Angeles

Monday, August 20, 2018 | 1:00 – 4:30 PM
   James Wood Community Center, 400 E. 5th Street, Los Angeles

Monday, September 17, 2018 | 1:00 – 4:30 PM
   Location TBD

Monday, October 22, 2018 | 1:00 – 4:30 PM
   Location TBD

Community Listening Sessions
A critical component of the Committee’s work is engaging advocates, service providers, and community members through a series of targeted community listening sessions, to better understand key challenges
and barriers that the Committee’s work needs to address, and to generate recommendations for improving services.

Friday, May 18, 2018 | 3:00 – 5:00 PM  
*James Wood Community Center, 400 E 5th Street, Los Angeles*

Thursday, June 7, 2018 | 3:00 – 5:00 PM  
*Broadway Manchester Service Center, 8525 S Broadway, Los Angeles*

Thursday, June 14, 2018 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM  
*Holman United Methodist Church, White Hall, 3320 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles*

Friday, July 13, 2018 | 9:30 – 11:30 AM  
*St. Joseph Center, 204 Hampton Drive, Venice*

Friday, July 13, 2018 | 9:30 – 11:30 AM  
*Harbor Interfaith Services, 670 W 9th Street, San Pedro*

Wednesday, August 15, 2018 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM  
*Chimbole Cultural Center, Manzanita Ballroom, 38350 Sierra Hwy, Palmdale*

**Focus Group Listening Sessions**

The Committee’s focus group listening sessions provide a platform to engage service providers, populations with lived experience, and community members around vulnerabilities, barriers to service, and systems to better understand the challenges and explore recommendations focused on specific sub-populations and subject-areas.

Friday, May 4, 2018: Homeless Youth Forum of Los Angeles  
*Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority*

Friday, May 4, 2018: Lived Experience Advisory Group  
*Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority*

Tuesday, August 14, 2018: Mental Health Providers  
*SCHARP Oasis House*

Thursday, August 16, 2018: Mental Health Clients  
*SCHARP Oasis House*

Thursday, August 16, 2018: Employment Training Provider  
*St. Joseph Center*

Friday, August 17, 2018: Employment Specialist  
*People Assisting the Homeless*

[Date TBD]: Re-Entry Service Providers  
*Los Angeles County Office of Diversion and Reentry*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Objective(s)</th>
<th>Requests</th>
<th>Potential Recommendations</th>
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| April      | Orientation Training on Implicit Bias & Racial Equity Toolkit (RET) Application | - Establish Committee purpose & goals  
- Conduct racial equity training  
- Review the use of a Racial Equity Toolkit to establish desired racial equity outcomes, identify harms and benefits, and develop strategies to achieve racial equity   | - Use a Racial Equity Toolkit, with clear racial equity outcomes, to examine critical programs, policies budget decisions, procedures.  
- Examine hiring practices and job requirements to eliminate barriers for people of color.  
- Ensure racial justice is a focus in the implementation of City & County homeless strategies. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|            |                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| May        | Introduction to LAHSA & the Coordinated Entry System (CES) Examining Equity in the Homeless Service System through Data | - Understand the role of LAHSA and the function of the Coordinated Entry System  
- Understand demographic characteristics and experiences of Black people experiencing homelessness in LA County  
- Examine racial equity in the homeless service system through data on program enrollments, housing placements, and retention   | - Provide information about plan for capturing justice system involvement in CES assessment tools  
✓ Report to full Committee on themes emerging at listening sessions  
☐ Provide more in-depth information about housing programs and matching process  
☐ Provide further analysis of recidivism/why people are exiting housing placements | - Involve persons with lived experience, persons of color, and service providers in data analysis and research efforts.  
- Strengthen and expand homelessness prevention programs.  
- Advocate for inclusionary zoning policies.  
- Advocate for fair hiring practices to reduce barriers to employment.  
- Increase cultural competency of program staff.  
- Advocate for fair chance housing legislation to prevent rental restrictions based on criminal records. |
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<th>June 6/18/18</th>
<th>Re-entry &amp; Criminal Justice System Involvement</th>
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<td>- Understand the connection between re-entry and homelessness</td>
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<td>- Explore barriers and possible solutions for accessing housing and services</td>
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<td>- Learn about and discuss existing City and County re-entry initiatives</td>
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<td>- Learn about and discuss community-based programs to support formerly-incarcerated persons in accessing safe and stable housing</td>
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<td>- Update on community listening sessions and focus groups</td>
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<td>- Apply the RET to address racial inequities impacting formerly-incarcerated Black people at risk of or experiencing homelessness</td>
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<td>✓ Create one list of listening sessions</td>
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<td>✓ Provide presentation on themes from listening sessions</td>
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**Programs and Services:**
- Advocate for the development and growth of community-rooted programs, providers, and networks owned and/or led by formerly incarcerated individuals to guide successful reentry.
- Increase the scope and scale of criminal justice diversion programs provided by the LA County Office of Diversion and Reentry.
- Expand the use of restorative justice programs.
- Target Black families for homelessness prevention services.
- Adopt use of the Justice Discharge-Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (JD-VI-SPDAT).
- Employ a Black person-centered trauma informed care model.
- Ensure rental and housing search/stability assistance is readily available for those exiting from incarceration.
- **Create (or expand funding for) a Re-entry Navigator program to provide peer-to-peer mentorship, guidance, and support for re-entry populations in accessing housing, employment, healthcare, and education services.**
- Assess current service provider practices (including how providers ask what people need) to ensure formerly incarcerated individuals are connected to the appropriate services.
- Champion the criminal justice system to be homeless- and housing-informed and...
operate with an anti-racist lens; train law enforcement on implicit bias and institutional racism.

- Assess current booking criteria and sentencing guidelines; divert all homelessness-related bookings to services rather than jail.
- Review and redesign compliance requirements to be human-centered and racially just.

Cross-System Coordination:
- Strengthen working relationships between law enforcement, service, and housing providers.
- Support partnerships with homeless service providers, re-entry agencies, economic development organizations, and unions to provide job training, apprenticeships and a hiring pipeline for formerly incarcerated individuals.
- Coordinate with appropriate agencies to target and leverage any housing dollars to support those living with criminal history.
- Partner with community colleges to create re-entry education programs for persons leaving incarceration.
- Generate a network of Reception/Transition Hubs with culturally relevant services.

Funding:
- Fund and build capacity for programs to conduct effective wrap-around service
models for people who are formerly incarcerated and who are, or at risk of becoming, homeless.

- Fund programs that hire Black people who are formerly-incarcerated as caseworkers and managerial staff to support other formerly incarcerated people and employ trauma-informed care training and practices in their services.
- Engage the philanthropic community to leverage funding and strengthen new and existing partnerships.
- Reduce contracting requirements with public agencies; facilitate joint-ventures versus subcontractor models.
- Conduct a fiscal, cost, and power analysis of criminal justice investments and redirect criminal justice spending to early intervention, diversion, and behavioral health services.
- Encourage the City and County to shift investments in high-cost systems, such as the criminal justice system, to housing and service investments to help this population thrive in the community.

Data:
- Increase available data and metrics on homelessness and criminal justice—especially focusing on women and incarceration.
| July 7/16/18 | Child Welfare System Involvement | Discuss the unique challenges of child welfare system involvement for families experiencing homelessness  
• Discuss strategies to support youth of color exiting the foster care system  
• Update on community listening sessions and focus groups  
• Apply the RET to address racial inequities impacting Black people involved in the child welfare system | ✓ Make changes to the recommendation process to ensure accurate recording and additional time for consideration.  
□ Provide a timeline for the recommendation and report writing processes. |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | Programs and Services:  
• Identify interrupters of intergenerational cycles of homelessness and create appropriate coaching strategies to model desired healthy behaviors and essential life skills.  
• Promote client choice by providing programs and services based on the client’s needs and preferences whenever possible.  
• Offer appropriate referrals to those seeking faith-based counseling.  
• Employ a “targeted” strategy approach when developing programs and services, specifically relying on culturally competent and trained staff (including Black staff).  
• Create effective reunification programs and services that are reflective of housing first policies.  
• Focus on strengths of families (including foster care families and kinship care) and |
build the family unit support through counseling and training, as well as mental health and behavioral health services.

- Broaden the extended foster care program to include youth up to age 25 with comprehensive, person-centered services including guaranteed housing, education, and employment. Increase foster care placements for youth of color with foster care families of color by offering incentives and supports.

Cross-System Coordination:
- Integrate trauma-informed care across DCFS.
- Implement prevention-oriented family supports by DCFS, potentially starting with TAY families.
- Improve access points within DCFS and in the homeless service delivery system.
- Create a human-centered systems design as well as a roadmap for the public to understand how to connect to services.
- Start transition planning earlier for youth exiting the foster care system.
- Encourage DCFS and court to operate within community-based settings.
- Develop cross-system coordination strategies to leverage resources and maximize services, expertise, and outcomes.
- Coordinate with partner agencies to develop more effective support systems for youth in DCFS care.
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<th>Work with partner agencies to ensure transition planning commences with sufficient time to ensure the best outcomes.</th>
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<td>Funding:</td>
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<td>- Identify and fund appropriate support systems for former foster care youth.</td>
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<td>- Increase investments in reunification and address concerns before children ever come into care.</td>
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<td>- Advocate for funding to support foster care youth seeking higher education or vocational programs.</td>
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<td>Data:</td>
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<td>- Ensure data privacy is not compromised while supporting a robust data collection system.</td>
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<td>Policy and Advocacy:</td>
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<td>- Advocate for a change in federal policy to extend Independent Living Programs (ILP) to age 24.</td>
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<td>Institutional Racism Awareness and Trainings:</td>
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<td>- Create and implement a Racial Equity Initiative at LAHSA to further goals aimed at eliminating institutional racism and achieving racial equity within all policies, procedures, and programs.</td>
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<td>- Understand and employ strategies to address the intersections of oppression</td>
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<td>August 8/20/18</td>
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(such as transgender discrimination and racism).

- **Require ongoing training for mandated reporters, community service providers, foster care parents, DCFS staff, judges, attorneys, and legislators to address implicit bias, institutional racism, and disproportionality.**

**Workforce Development:**

- Develop a plan and process to increase the recruitment and hiring of Black people.
- Support the formulation, expansion, and use of “cultural broker” volunteers.
- **Recruit, incentivize, and support people with lived experience and/or people of color to become social workers.**
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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| September 9/17/18 | Permanent Housing                  | • Learn about housing models within the homeless service system (i.e. rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing)  
• Explore ways to improve connections to housing opportunities of all forms (i.e. affordable housing)  
• Examine reasons for high rates of housing exits and recidivism for Black people served through the homeless service system  
• Learn about promising housing services  
• Update on community listening sessions and focus groups  
• Apply the RET to address racial inequities impacting Black people seeking housing |
| October 10/22/18 | Final Review of Recommendations    | • Review all potential recommendations that have emerged from the Committee’s work and finalize for inclusion in the Committee’s public report |
Listening to Those Most Impacted by Homelessness

August 20, 2018
Held 6 Community Listening Sessions

May – Skid Row (SPA4)
June – South Central Los Angeles (SPA6)
June – West Adams (SPA 6)
July – Venice/Santa Monica (SPA 5)
July – San Pedro (SPA 8)
August – Palmdale (SPA1)
Who We Heard From

- People currently or formerly experiencing homelessness
- People who provide services to those experiencing homelessness
- Pastors and others from the faith community
- Advocates for those experiencing homelessness
- Interested community members
What We Asked

1. Why do you think Black people are over-represented in the homeless population?
2. What are three steps or changes that you would take to improve the situation, specifically for Black people?
3. What programs and/or services intended to support and assist the homeless community have you found the most challenging or problematic?
4. What services or programs (either to prevent homelessness or to end homelessness) are working well?

5. If you have experienced homelessness, what would have prevented homelessness or ended your homelessness?

6. Do you think being a Black man, woman, or transgender person experiencing homelessness creates unique barriers? If so how?
Emerging Themes

- Systemic racism and the need to dismantle institutional racism
- Criminalization of homelessness, incarceration, and re-entry
- Cost of living and lack of employment opportunities
- Housing (affordable, rapid re-housing, discrimination, shelters, safety concerns, etc.)
- Service delivery deficiencies
- Family issues, child care, and family support
- CES access and assessment
Systemic Racism

The impact of institutional and structural racism precedes homelessness, exacerbates homelessness, and must be dismantled across agencies, across systems to eliminate the racial disparities impacting Black people experiencing homelessness and to end homelessness.
Criminalization of Homelessness

Mass incarceration of Black men and women
- fractures families,
- removes wage earner leaving families homeless,
- creates barriers to housing, employment, and education.

Transition from and following incarceration:
- Inadequate services and support result in revolving door.
- Wrap-around services, mentoring, and job and life-skill trainings show promise.
Cost of living in Los Angeles impacts people’s ability to:

• find affordable housing,
• use Section 8 vouchers,
• live in their neighborhood of choice
Lack of employment opportunities due to:

- discrimination,
- inadequate training and apprenticeship programs,
- poor education, and
- criminal justice involvement,

result in high unemployment and limited access to living wage jobs.
Housing – Permanent and Interim

Key housing-related issues raised include:

- **Lack of affordable housing**, and lack of housing development in traditionally Black neighborhoods;

- **Unique barriers and needs** for populations such as: seniors, chronically homeless, disabled, those with criminal records;

- **Rapid re-housing**: challenges sustaining rent when subsidy ends;

- **Interim Housing**: long length of stay, lack of access to critical services, safety concerns (particularly for women).
Programs and Services

Participant concerns include:

• quality of case management and need for racial and cultural competency training,
• prioritizing people with highest acuity scores,
• need for wrap-around services to fit participant needs, with assistance from Black staff who have experienced homelessness.

Provider concerns include:

• unrealistic case management loads, high turnover rates, inadequate pay, and job burnout.
Challenges impacting children and families include:

- intergenerational cycle of poverty,
- stigma of family homelessness,
- pain of family separation,
- impact of incarceration (parent) on entire family,
- need for funded childcare so that parents can work or attend school.
Assessment concerns include:
• assessment tool length,
• lack of prior or follow-up relationship,
• client turmoil and/or crisis,
• duplicative questions.

Critical factors impacting engagement include:
• building a relationship first,
• follow-through with help,
• demonstrating a sense of caring.
Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness
A Summary of Listening Session Comments
Collected between May 5 and July 13, 2018

Executive Summary

The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Commission established the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness to address the issue of sustained overrepresentation of Black people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County. The purpose of the Committee is to provide focused attention to better understand the factors contributing to the overrepresentation of Black people among the population experiencing homelessness, identify opportunities to increase racial equity within the homeless service delivery system, and develop recommendations to more effectively meet the needs of Black people experiencing homelessness.

To that end, in May 2018, the Committee began a series of listening sessions and focus groups to learn firsthand from those who have experienced homelessness, those who serve people experiencing homelessness (service providers, faith community, governmental agencies), as well as other interested parties. These sessions were held in various locations across the county, and a full list of meetings and locations can be seen in Appendix A. At each listening session, participants offered critical, clear, feedback to six guiding questions (see Appendix B). Despite unique aspects of each session, across listening sessions and neighborhoods, common themes emerged. These themes are highlighted below.

Racism, Discrimination, System Failure, and Dismantling Institutional Racism: Participants overwhelmingly view homelessness as the result of generational racism. The impact of institutional and structural racism (in education, criminal justice, housing, employment, and access to opportunities) precedes homelessness, exacerbates homelessness, and must be dismantled across agencies and across systems to eliminate the racial disparities impacting Black people experiencing homelessness – and to ultimately end homelessness.

Housing (Permanent and Interim): Participants consistently raised the issue of inadequate supply of permanent housing (including for those who have no income, seniors, and people with disabilities). Providers noted the challenges of providing needed services when housing cannot be secured for a client. One mental health case manager shared that it is nearly impossible to stabilize a client who remains homeless.

Participants raised concerns with various interim and permanent housing programs. For example, providers shared that rapid re-housing can be an effective tool to end homelessness; however, absent job training and meaningful employment, too many people return to homelessness when the subsidized period concludes. Participants also repeatedly voiced concerns about the quality of shelters, including safety, poor treatment by providers, and lack of sufficient services.

Cost of Living and Lack of Employment Opportunities: Participants lament that as the cost of housing continues to skyrocket in Los Angeles, finding affordable housing, using Section 8 vouchers, and living in their neighborhood of choice is less and less possible. While cost of living continues to rise, employment opportunities for Black people continue to lag behind others. Employment discrimination, inadequate training and apprenticeship programs, poor education, and criminal justice involvement result in high
unemployment and limit employment options to minimum wage jobs. Repeatedly, participants noted that an average apartment in Los Angeles requires a $33 per hour full-time job.

**Criminalization of Homelessness, Incarceration, and Challenges Associated with Re-Entry:** Mass incarceration of Black men (and to a lesser degree, Black women) has fractured families; removed the wage earner, too often leaving families homeless; and has created lifelong barriers to housing, employment, and education. Inadequate services and support for those transitioning from incarceration and re-entering community creates a revolving door between homelessness and incarceration. Emerging practices such as housing with wrap-around services, mentoring from individuals with lived experience, and job and life skills trainings show positive results.

**Service Delivery Deficiencies:** At every session, participants focused heavily on program and service shortcomings. A basic concern expressed in many different ways can best be summed up as a lack of feeling cared for or valued. Repeatedly, community participants and provider staff discussed the quality of case management (overly-burdened case managers, lack of follow-through, excessive turnover rate, lack of lived experience, etc.) and the need for racial and cultural competency training. Participants described the need to fit into pre-existing programs and voiced the importance of wrap-around or customized services to fit their needs with assistance from Black staff who have lived experienced.

**Family Issues, Child Care, and Family Support:** Although not as frequent, issues associated with families and children arose at most listening sessions. Participants noted the intergenerational cycle of poverty for too many families and the pain of families being separated (often the result of incarceration). Older participants shared their experience and stigma of family homelessness, while youth (at a focus group) shared about the challenges of navigating foster care, the need for better support in transitional living programs, and barriers to accessing appropriate interim housing—particularly for transgender youth.

**Coordinated Entry System (CES) Access and Assessment:** Client and provider staff uniformly shared concerns about the assessment process and the length of CES assessment tools, particularly when a relationship with the client has not been established and the client is often in turmoil or crisis. Participants and providers also shared that the assessment scoring component can result in clients feeling the need to make false claims (such as, mental health issues or substance abuse) in order to be prioritized for services. Some providers shared the following critical factors when serving new clients: building trust with the client, assuring the client help is available, taking the necessary time to complete the assessment, and demonstrating a sense of caring.

This report captures these common themes (organized by topic) as well as specific comments from the listening sessions. We have relied on extensive note-taking as well as transcriptions of audio recordings to capture the community’s concerns, insights, perspectives, and recommendations.

The LAHSA Homeless Youth Forum of Los Angeles (HYFLA) provided rich, comprehensive, and multi-faceted perspectives about the challenges of navigating homelessness. Their feedback is captured in a separate section of the report to maintain the integrity of their views and also to highlight the unique challenges facing Black youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Issues specific to the Skid Row community were also collected and reported as a separate section (see “A Focus on Skid Row”).
Racism, Discrimination, System Failure, and Dismantling Institutional Racism

“I have been a part of this for a long, long time. The policies and systems we designed, were not developed with Black people in mind. The policies were developed by White people and were developed in a way that dealt with the problem of the White alcoholic individual that only needed certain things. Now we have a different situation; we have a new situation since the 80s with the crack epidemic and those systems didn’t evolve to deal with these new things.” -Black Man, Former Service Provider Administrator with Lived Experience at South Central Listening Session

Structural racism is the issue here. LA doesn’t acknowledge this. How can we have the conversation if we don’t acknowledge we live in a racist Los Angeles? -Paraphrase for Participant at San Pedro Listening Session

“African Americans are disproportionally represented in homelessness because they are misrepresented in every area of disparity in our country. And that goes back to our roots of racism, oppression, and institutional racism. It doesn’t change with the category. It is almost expected.” -Black Woman at West Adams Listening Session

“I want to talk about the systemic oppression in this country that existed since the Africans were brought here from Africa on the slave trips. They were enslaved and prevented from reading and learning. The system was set up against Black people, since we got here. When you talk about moving forward – it is hard to move forward without looking back. Since the sixties, it was deemed that it was two Americas – a White America and a Black America. I will argue to this day that there is a brown America. White America profits on the demise of Black America. It is hard to break it down to individuals to say how can Blacks overcome their oppressive situation when this White America is benefiting greatly off their demise.” -Black Man, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“I am not originally from here; I am from Oakland. I was riding the bus the other day near Avalon and what surprised me when I transferred on to that bus in that area is that the bus was ugly. I have been riding the bus all throughout Los Angeles looking for work and when I am riding in certain areas, you can tell. The bus companies put their worst buses in certain areas. I was in a nice bus down here, and I get to a different area and you can see the streets look different, the neighborhoods look different, and even the buses look different. That tells you that not even the companies that are existing on the dollars of those communities don’t even give a [expletive].” -Latino Man at South Central Listening Session

“I think it is because of the policies that we have had for so long. When you think about every bad list or anything you look at, as it relates to education or whatever, Black folks are always on the top of that list. There is a reason because of how the system is set up. When you think about the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, people were able to buy a home for $8,000, but Black folks couldn’t live in White neighborhoods. Remember, the government built segregated housing at the time. The cycle continues to perpetuate itself. White folks could live in the suburbs, but because of racism, Black folks couldn’t move to the suburbs; that is why they built the projects. -Black Man, Pastor at South Central Listening Session

“One of the things we have to look at is that gentrification and homelessness are intertwined. If you look at the communities that have a lot of development going on, a lot of those areas that have development are the areas where people still live on the streets.” -Black Man, Service Provider at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session
Permanent Housing

Lack of Affordable Housing

“It is discouraging for me because I know we are talking about solutions, but I know we still need 500,000 affordable housing units, and I know when we look over in South Park where the Staples Center is, there is a 12% vacancy over there. We got housing, we just don't have it for poor folks or for Black folks. The greatest issue is not being dealt with: folks can't pay their rent and equity firms own most of these single-family homes that they took away from folks in 2008. Most of that was Black folks who lost their homes; nobody got their homes back. I get real emotional about that stuff because I feel like nothing will be solved until we deal with the housing.”

-Black Man, Pastor at South Central Listening Session

“You give these people the power to develop in this town and not build affordable housing, even with government money. With government money, you have 100 developers coming out of the country to take federal money to allow our government to be their business? So, can they give us ten percent?”

-Black Woman, Outreach Worker with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

"I think the fair market rate needs to increase. It is nearly impossible to find a place, even when you can help a client under the fair market rate. The rates that landlords are charging, people are not getting their money's worth. They increase the rate to meet the fair market rate and then the apartment is like a box, or a closet, or a shared restroom. It is unfair.”

-Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

If you find permanent housing, it has to be within 80% of your total monthly household [income]. If your income is $500 because you are only getting funding from DPSS, a family of two cannot find a house for $400. I think the programs need to be reevaluated from the federal government because it is not helpful to the population that are needing the services. This causes people to commit fraud because they want to get the money, but they really cannot find a place for that amount of money, so it is just a revolving door. They just keep coming back.”

-Black Woman, Social Worker at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“So, speaking as someone who dealt with the homeless issues since the 80s, I experienced it myself, and now with my wife and kids. We got four kids. In 2006, my sister and I lost our duplex because of the adjustable mortgage rate. So that is the first thing. We always talk about mental health people, people with drug issues, but there is also another category of people who actually work, went to school or whatever, and are homeless.”

-Black Man, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“The developers are responsible for creating affordable housing in many of the buildings that are coming up across the city. I have stumbled upon the fact that [the developers] have said that they would rather pay the penalty than to give the affordable housing away. It is a penalty called the linkage fee. I don't know where that penalty is going. I don't know who is overseeing it and making sure it is received. If that is going to position for the developers that are building in our city, that they will pay the fee versus diversifying the property, then I think the fee and penalty needs to be higher.”

-Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I know for a lot of the affordable housing units, they have a tax credit. They have that 15 or 20-year clause that they can remain at low-income. At the 15 or whatever the term is, they can raise the rents up to fair market rates. It is important to ensure that these new units being built are not under that same clause because I think in the 90s and 80s a lot of the affordable housing units were built. In 2010
most of these units went to fair market rent. We don't want to revisit that come 10 or 15 years from now.” -Black Man, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“We need to make affordable housing truly affordable. It is not affordable.” -Black Woman at West Adams Listening Session

**Housing Discrimination**

I have a Black boyfriend. When we look for apartments, I have to go alone because they always turn us down when he is around. We have to try to trick them into giving us the apartment, before they find out he is Black. We both have bad credit but “for me they are willing to make an exception, for him they are not.” -Paraphrased from White Youth at LAHSA Homeless Youth Forum of Los Angeles Focus Group

"The criminalization of the mentally ill and being criminalized for using addictive substances are making it hard for people to get homes. Even if you have first and last [month’s] rent, the first thing they are going to do is a background check. If you have been incarcerated, you are not going to be able to get that apartment." -Black Man, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“Housing discrimination plays a major role. When we talk about policies and when we talk vouchers, etcetera, one of the things that happens is that our housing policies do nothing to develop our communities. The issue is that we give vouchers to individuals for a place to stay, but the money is going to the landowner. The landowner is usually not anyone of the community.” -Black Man, Former Service Provider Administrator with Lived Experience at South Central Listening Session

“More than 50% of the population is Latino. Some of these people are landlords, or they are involved with the management side of the property. When you call and leave messages – a and maybe they speak two languages on the machine or you can tell by the accent or something like that – these are not the people who are calling back. I just happen to believe it is because I don’t have an accent. I am not speaking in Spanish on the machine. I feel discriminated against invisibly and someone can say it is in my own head, but I don’t think it is in my own head.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

**Concerns with Section 8 Voucher Program**

“Around 1998, I went to the housing authority and applied for Section 8 – that didn’t come through until about 2015 – damn near twenty years later. When I got my voucher, I went around looking for places, and even in the jungles we found a lot of the property that used to be mostly Black, were now being managed by non-Black people. What we found was that they were only taking vouchers from non-Black people. Now you see a lot of non-Black people over there in that area. I finally found a place on my last extension and the inspector came out and failed the place for things like screws missing on drawers and stuff, so I ended up losing my voucher.” -Black Man, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“The Section 8 program is broken and I think there is a lot of favoritism within that program. I believe that a lot of individuals that first get to Skid Row lose their hope when they are told, 'If you just stay in this [PROVIDER] property or this Skid Row housing and trust property for a year, you will automatically receive your Section 8 voucher.’ That is not happening. There needs to be some sort of oversight over the Section 8 program.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

"I was born and raised in South Central. We need to build some affordable housing. They build all these buildings in this community at market rate. They aren’t taking Section 8 vouchers. I have a friend, he is
military. He has a Section 8 voucher and can't get an apartment of anything around here."

-Black Man, Community Member at West Adams Listening Session

"I think the Section 8 program needs to be revamped because a lot of the landlords do not want to even take the program. As well as pre-inspections, people shouldn't have to go and get a voucher and then go wait to see if the place is going to be approved. It should already have a certification that it passed, so when the people come, they know this place is available, safe, and certified. I had to sue seven landlords on the Section 8 program because the ones who do take the vouchers are slumlords."

-Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at South Central Listening Session

"We have HACLA, the Section 8 for the city, same thing just city and county. Then at the same time all of those agencies are competing to find...there is not a structure. LAHSA wants to house this amount of people, but there is no guidance. The expectation is not real. We need to be realistic and speak honestly. We have 54,000 homeless people in LA. We don't have enough housing. We have more Section 8 tickets than we have housing. We talk about vacancies, but how many of those vacancies are Section 8?"

-Latino Man, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

**Coordinated Entry System Permanent Housing Programs**

“Rapid re-housing is a great program, and it does work for some people, but for other people who only have 221 or SSI, they are never going to increase their income. After we pullout, 10 times out of 10 they will be homeless. We have to figure out a way to help those people.”

-Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I had rapid re-housing recently, and I went to a place in Bellflower. The agency gave the landlord a deposit, and I brought the contract because these agencies don't care. They gave LAHSA's money and did not put it on the lease. When I asked the landlord how much my deposit was, he told me $300 and I told him I was going to take him to the Feds. Then I told the company, [PROVIDER], to send a copy of the lease because I wanted to see if it was the same one that I had. I was relying on them to make sure everything was right, and they let me down."

-Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

The Shelter-Plus Care program is good but, “where is the care?” The permanent care facilities only have staff working from 9am-4pm. A lot of the staff have credentials (from USC) but they have no idea how to help individuals experiencing homelessness.  

-Paraphrased from Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at LAHSA Lived Experience Advisory Group Focus Group.

**Interim Housing**

**Concerns with Interim Housing**

"It is not about the organization at all; it is about the structure and the system that they have to work with. For all the providers in here, you are going to get mad at me, but I do want to say that we have – and I have – been a part of it, so I can't exonerate myself. We have created a system for homeless care that is not more attractive than a tent on the sidewalk. Think about that. It tells me that there is something that our system is failing to do especially for Black people. What we have to do is begin to enlist not only our service providers but also Black people in terms of what they need. Our customers need to be served, and we are not serving our customers in the manner they want to be served.”

-Black Man, Former Service Provider Administrator with Lived Experience at South Central Listening Session
“I am a part of a social service provider. We run some of the largest homeless shelters in the County, and I talk with people every day, and I try to understand why they do not want to come in. We have to improve. We have to make a product that consumers want to take part in.” - **Black Man, Social Service Provider at West Adams Listening Session**

“There's no current information in shelters around what’s happening regarding housing. People are blind. How do we get this information so one can begin to be hopeful? The more we know, the more we'll share the information. Should we start sharing on radio? Infomercials? TV? Providers may have the info but how does it get to the community? Give the information to us. Empower us with the information. Who’s monitoring the shelters? An independent organization needs to do this work.” - **Black Woman with Lived Experience, San Pedro Listening Session**

"I have been living in the shelter for almost a year now. They want you to save your money, and they are supposed to have a system for you for when your car breaks down or you have another emergency, but I have been waiting for several months. People in position to help you are not doing their jobs. They tell me, ‘come back tomorrow.’ They have too many people working down there not doing anything." - **Black Man with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session**

“I am not Black, but the money – the money is being mismanaged, mishandled; there is something scandalous going on. There is so much money, and yet I have toured buildings where there is mold in the common bathrooms caked on the shower curtains. Rats running around all over the place. All of them are a failure.” - **White Man with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session**

I work with shelters in South LA. A lot of shelters extend their stay without holding them to a higher standard—to find jobs, get connected to resources. Shelters could do a better job at helping them find resources. - Paraphrased from **Black Woman, Service Provider at San Pedro Listening Session**

“They wanted to put 400 people that all had histories of trauma into one place. Most of the folks I talked to said, 'Don't put me in a shelter with 400 other people – I am afraid.' Until homeless services really integrate trauma-informed care and deal with it from the perspective that looks at the whole piece – that looks at the racism – we are going to continue to repeat and spend money in ways that is not going to change the system.” - **Black Woman, Mental Health Service Provider at West Adams Listening Session**

"You go into a shelter needing or wanting peace, and what I got was more PTSD." - **Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session**

"We have walked into many shelters, and people are so disrespectful. Why would you want to go? The one place that is supposed to help you, the one beacon, and there is more racism, more disrespect. Why the hell am I here?" - **Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session**

"I was living in shared housing, and I was able to get placed at a job at [PROVIDER]...two or three weeks of working, I started purchasing clothes and getting my sense of style back together and getting self-esteem back, and then the woman in the house turned on me: 'You think you are cute?' My car was damaged within two weeks of getting it. They started stealing my food and they broke into my room and stole from me. I got flyers about me having STDs and pieces of glass slide under my door. Eventually my life was threatened. I was reporting all of this to the property manager, that is White, and he did nothing.” - **Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Sessions**

"Some people do not want to go into shelters because there is trauma in those shelters." - **Black Woman at South Central Listening Session Listening Session**
“I just want to say, piggybacking off her pain and no one coming to her aid, made me want to speak about being pepper sprayed in a shelter while supposedly being in a ‘safe place’ and breaking my nose in two places. I have a broken wrist. I didn’t find out that my wrist was broken until a couple of weeks ago. It is not fun and it is scary. The ‘safe place’ where I spent the night. I arrived there; there was an ambulance; there was a fire truck and the paramedics. To this moment, I do not know what happened but I know at 1:35 this morning, the same thing occurred, and I am afraid. So, I am living in fear. I felt safer in my car.” -Black Woman with Lived-Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“I didn’t have a place to go; I feared joining the shelter. I stayed in the car. I stayed in a garage unbeknownst to the people, and there weren’t the resources that I wanted.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

**Motels**

“We then went to motels and found that we were spending $3,000 plus a month for a motel.”-Black Man with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“My friends came on a short notice. They have been part of the CES system. They have been calling and asking for help. They cannot get help because they can afford to pay for a motel. They have two children. What the heck is that?” -Black woman, Community Member Experiencing Homelessness

“I know some of the programs through the State; I work for DPSS. The hotel funding is like $65 a night, and you really can't find a hotel for that amount. From what I understand, that amount is going to increase, but these are the numbers that the State gives us to give to our participants.” -Black Woman, Social Worker at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

**Cost of Living and Employment**

“Jobs are real big and a part of the issue. A lot of folks want to work; we see that in Skid Row. You talk about the people out here hustling – they want to work.” -Black Man, Service Provider at Skid Row Listening Session

“I am a paycheck away from being homelessness myself.” -Black Woman, Social Worker at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“You are pushing them into housing, knowing that they are only going to make $12.50 [an hour] and now they are saying two or three months later they have to pay 100% of their own rent. You are just recycling the poor.” -Black Woman, Service Provider at West Adams Listening Session

“People need to also see that there is a connection between housing and jobs. If you do not have a job, it is impossible for you to be able to afford, maintain, and sustain that living.” -Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

"Hosing minus employment is a disaster. I can get you a job making $12 [an hour] but that's not sustainable if we are talking about the rapid re-housing program." -Black Woman, Employment Specialist at West Adams Listening Session

“I went from working to receiving a notice of layoff to homeless within 60 days. I suffered with bouts of anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts.” -Black Woman, South Central Listening Session

**Employment Discrimination and Lack of Training Programs**
“Definitely, job discrimination – that is why I remain homeless. Then also the services that are provided like unemployment that runs out, things like emergency housing, things like shelter plus care. So that is another level of stress. If you survive all of that and get an apartment, you have to think about, ‘well if I get an apartment, am I going to have to retire on Section 8? Is this going to be forever?’ It is very stressful.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“Do you leave the area because you can’t find a job? I know so many people driving Uber with Ph.D. and master’s degrees. How is that possible? Find those people and employ them. Be creative. We can do something but there is a bureaucracy preventing it. Maybe we need to change the people in the bureaucracy.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

"We have redlining; we have lack of access to employment; certain groups are being hired into management positions. Black people tried to get hired into entry level positions and they can’t even get those jobs." -Black Woman at West Adams Listening Session

“So, I came here; eventually I got a job; I got into school. There is a lot of help here, but it is not really for Black people. There wasn’t a lot of help for Black people here. I saw little Black people here. Now it is time for me to get a job. How am I going to get hired? Everybody else in that work were not Black and they wanted their people in it. I went through that, and it was very difficult for me to get a job here. I got the job, but it wasn’t nearly enough to cover half of the rent they were charging me.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“I have about 25 certificates and they won’t hire me. I have a tech background and when I came downtown, I had a job. So, when I came down here, they made me feel like I did not [do enough] to get help.” -Black Woman at West Adams Listening Session

“Spanish, because I am not bilingual. I go on craigslist and they say, ‘bilingual preferred,’ ‘bilingual required;’ these are problems right here. When you start eliminating that factor and bring it back to how back in the day you had to hire a certain amount of people; I don't want to get hired because of my color either. I would like to get hired because of my intelligence, but that notion becomes a problem too. You do not want to hire that person because you are worried about them taking your job or them doing something that you cannot do.” -Black Man with Lived Experience at Skid Row

“There are plenty of jobs in Los Angeles. In 2016, Angelenos made a big decision that the future of Los Angeles would be great, but they are making it and leaving our children, our young people, our next generation out. Now Measure M, $130 billion dollars, it promises 479 thousand jobs. Why are we not re-opening our trades workshops in our schools and preparing our children for this next generation that is coming? So, when you say, ‘What is the problem?’ Too many programs in the community that don't work for us.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

"When we think about sustainability, we need to be looking at the skillsets that can help funnel kids into careers of the future. We need training programs in and near our community rather than having the community going up to the valley." -Black Woman, Employment Specialist at West Adams Listening Session

**Criminalization of Homelessness, Incarceration, and Re-entry**

“I had a gentleman that went to our church who was arrested 13 times in one year. We are in Skid Row. Every time he got arrested he would lose his place for housing.” -Black Man, Pastor at South Central Listening Session
“I think we need to take into consideration the criminalization and incarceration rates in the communities. Not only does it remove an adult from the family, it also removes an income, and creates other barriers. I think it is worth mentioning the criminalization and our justice system.” -Woman at Venice/Santa Monica listening session

“It is nearly impossible to house Black people with criminal histories.” -Black Woman, Service Provider at San Pedro Listening Session

“Everyone knows that there is an issue now since it is being brought to the forefront about mass incarceration and how it affects our communities, but I also think for the programs that are out there, there needs to be more to address the issues of the formerly incarcerated. It doesn’t matter if you have a voucher or not in your hand, if you have been gone or down for 12 or 15 years, you have no history as far as where you lived prior. Even if you had that, just the fact that you are a felon, that is another added stigma on to you to prevent you from getting housing.” -Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I was in prison for 35 years and I got out – me and a whole bunch of other people went to [provider] and signed up, but guess what they told us? You can’t get our services. You know why? You do not have a permanent address. Number two, you were in prison, and number three, you are not the right person. You do not fit the model.” -Black Man, Advocate, Formerly Incarcerated with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

“In 1999, I got out of jail, and I couldn’t get a good job, so now when we are homeless, it is hard for us to get a place because they want to do a background check. If I have a felony, what does that have to do with me just trying to have a place to stay? No, I can’t get a job, and I can’t get an apartment. You are doing a background check on me for what I paid for.” -Black Man with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

Service Delivery Systems

“Care” Is an Essential Component of Service

“I think the main barrier is the value of a dog compared to the value of a Black person. A value of a dog! Compared to a Black person! It doesn’t compare. And so, my point is that lack of love, so the ultimate barrier, I would say is just the lack of love.” -Black Woman, Advocate at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

You have to have the people that have the passion, then help people get the capacity you need. We have to start investing in programs where it is not a big business for them. -Black Woman at South Central Los Angeles Listening Session

“I live in a [provider] building. I have been there for three years. I can tell you this, since I moved in there, I have not had one day of peace. There is a serious problem with [provider] staff. You get cursed out. You are mistreated.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row

“I have been to a lot of these programs and the people there are just there for the money. You see from the bottom up. You can tell the top people do not care, because they would not have kept those type of people to stick around.” -Black Woman, Advocate at Skid Row Listening Session
“You also have to care about Black people. You have to care about all people, but you have to have a level of care and respect for that community. It sounds so basic, but I don’t think we would be having this conversation if everyone had that level of care and respect for Black people.” -Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“It’s not about money. It’s about someone who cares, who you can be vulnerable with. What [a provider says] is critical. Really listening is important. Is there time for providers to really connect with people? I didn’t want to be a case number, we don’t want that. That’s why we don’t want to be served because we’ll just be a number.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at San Pedro

“[I had a conflict] with my case manager because I needed her to meet me as me – at where I was coming from. Because I wasn’t coming from the street, because I wasn’t drug addicted, because I didn’t have all of those stipulations connected to me. My only ordeal was that I do not have a place to live, but she couldn’t align with me. Instead, she had to put me into the case with everybody else that came through the door. And when she started telling me, ‘if you don’t do this and you don’t do this, then you don’t have a bed.’ I said, ‘I am not doing that, not because I am not wanting to do it. I am not doing it because I don’t need to.’ I need you to see me as me. All I need is a house to live in; I need to upload my resume; I need to contact these people; I need to re-certify my drug and alcohol education; I need these things to carry-on.” -Black Woman, Case Manager with Lived-Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“As far as people understanding what trauma looks like, because people are always looking for a cut, people are always looking for you to be in that gutter life, smoking that pipe. If you have a cute dress on, you got your hair done, then there is nothing wrong with you. Or if you had some schooling, you just need to ‘woman up.’ So, this is what is happening to some of the programs and the people running these programs. They pathologize who these women are when they go in for the services. They want to pathologize us, instead of listen! Listen! Listen! Listen!” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

Training Needs

“As an agency, we need to do more training for our staff, and not just policy, procedures, and program rules. We need to start gearing our training towards empathy, ways to converse with clients, and behavioral trainings. We can learn to interact with all types of people – White, Hispanic, Asian Gay, Lesbian, Trans – it doesn’t matter, because now we are into behavioral trainings versus policy and procedures.” -Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I was getting $600 every two weeks, so I couldn’t get an apartment because it wasn’t permanent income. I went to almost every facility in the area, and I was mistreated, and they were not trained. Finally, I ended up moving in with somebody (shared housing) but once I was not needy, I was put back on the streets. I realized that I would rather sleep under the bridge and help myself, and that is what I did. I didn’t have a license. I had 16 points against my license. I had been in jail. I cleaned my own record up. They do not have enough resources. They do not have enough people that know enough to direct the people in the right places. If you are not strong, you will not get through it.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“[They] get jobs, and lot of times they do not necessarily have the passion or the skills.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“The other thing about it is that we do not train our people to understand their own bias and their own baggage. That goes to women dealing with Black men in terms of the stigmas that comes with that like, ‘Oh my god I am scared of him’ or whatever may be the case. We have to understand how this baggage
comes out. [The provider is here to serve the individual and not the other way around]. They are not interested in building the quality relationships necessary to provide quality services. A lot of times they are sitting there working for the system rather than working for the individual.” -Black Man, Former Service Provider Administrator with Lived Experience at South Central Listening Session

There has been an increase in people doing service outreach in the community; however, those individuals are poorly trained (USC kids) with good credentials. Many of the new hires leave in less than 4 months and ruin relationships with the houseless people they were attempting to support. -Paraphrased from Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Lived Experience Advisory Group Focus Group

I worked on an outreach team, and the team member left. He had 75 people on his caseload that we had to attempt to support in addition to our own caseload. -Paraphrased from Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at LAHSA Lived Experience Advisory Group Focus Group

**Hiring Black People with Lived Experience**

"If thousands of us [Black people] are experiencing homelessness, then why aren't thousands of us working within the departments that deal with homelessness?" -Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

"They are hiring those who look like them [White] for management, and it is obvious." -Black Woman at West Adams Listening Session

“I think we need to stop making housing policies and programs using White middle-class values for the framework. We let the programs be informed by the people with the lived experiences. Often, we do develop these programs and policies that sound good and look good, but access becomes a problem. Like you said, lack of culturally appropriate training for those folks that are placed. So, to really get the change – right now White is the normativity we operate from, so when we develop programs and policies according to those values, we are erasing ourselves from process.” -Latino Man at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

I worked as an outreach worker, and I spent a lot of time talking to my clients making sure they knew me. I checked on them every day, gave them my cellphone, and made sure I provided them with whatever they needed. Some of these White women caseworkers are scared of their clients. They need a couple of men with them to provide any type of services to people on Skid Row. I am not afraid. I would go there myself and meet my clients where they were and as a result they trusted me. -Paraphrased from Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at LAHSA Lived Experience Advisory Group Focus Group

"Sitting across the table of someone that looks like you, and at the very least can understand what it is like to experience the world the way you experience it, makes a huge difference. It opens you up to be more willing to support care. Until we get people that look like us in these positions, we are not going be able access it. It not going to seem like something that is safe.” -Black Woman at West Adams Listening Session

“When there is so many people running programs that do not look like us, and for some reason that only seems to matter, in other ethnic communities that you have people who are understanding. And then Black people too often – I am sorry to say this – that do get the job, then according to Joy DeGruy Leary, sometimes end up being like ‘Stephanies’ and ‘Stevens.’” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session
**Responsiveness**

“The case managers do not answer their phones. The case managers – their voicemails are blocked up. When you call to get help, you can't get in touch with nobody.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“There is a horrible breakdown in communication. It is like you call a number, it goes into a hole—even if somebody answers. Most of the time it is an answering service, and you do not get calls back, so how do you help? Help me! We are here, you are talking to us, but still nothing changes in terms of the systematic breakdown in communications. We are not communicating properly because you have funds that don't get to people that need them.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“Staying on the street, looking for a place, talking to a case manager, and then next time you call they do not answer or they are not there. Those are stressful situations. You want to fight somebody; you want to fight yourself because you know you done what you are supposed to do and here you are on the bottom.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

“You have to become a part of it, and you have to meet people exactly where they at. And be diligent about it. Don’t come in and reach a person one day and then you don’t see this or they don’t see anybody else for a year.” -Black Man, Outreach Worker at Skid Row Listening Session

“LAHSA does not call people back. You do not get calls back. We have had a fire. I have a degree in engineering. We have been homeless for four years. We had a fire. We can't get help. We don't qualify. No person going through [the homeless] experience should have to do it alone. Every day you have to have someone you can call.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

**Insufficient Funding Opportunities for Smaller Organizations**

“There is a disconnect right there, between what is happening at the top, and the grassroots. The money is not getting down to the organizations like African Town Enterprise, African Town Coalition, who are out there every day on the ground trying to rent property and working with people on the street.” -Black man, Advocate, and Service Provider at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

"This is a half a cent tax. This is our money. So, I just put together a budget two days ago just to see what would be the minimum expense to sustain the program that is working at Mount Tabor without funding from LAHSA, without funding from [PROVIDER] you have all been invited. It cost a little under half a million dollars the whole year, operating at five days. Peter Lynn makes $200,000 dollars. Now how many people has he saved? How many lives has he changed? Two Peter Lynn’s would fund our program.” -Black woman, Advocate, and Service Provider at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“There are a lot of little non-profits, like myself; we go to LAHSA, and it is really hopeless because... all of those [larger] organizations are going to continue to get the funding. Maybe LAHSA can open an RFP just for the community. Small faith-based and community organizations and the big ones cannot apply.” -Black Woman, Veteran, Community member with lived experience with homelessness at South Central Listening Session
Family Issues, Child Care, and Family Support

“The ladies can’t go to work if they cannot get anyone to watch their children, and there are so many restrictions on that. They need to lift some of them or give them some type of money. LAHSA, when they are doing the allocation, put something in there for childcare, so these young girls can get to work.” - Black Woman, Veteran, with Lived Experience of Homelessness at South Central Listening Session

“Single moms or parents in general have a hard time finding housing because they want to know where the other parent is or why you have all these kids, or how old are they, or are they going to mess up my property.” - Black woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I’m a mother, but I fear moving because my son is a young Black man. But property owners may see my son as a ‘bad asset’ to the community. We cannot leave out youth and Black children.” - Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at LAHSA Lived Experience Advisory Group Focus Group

“When you talk about families being separated, sometimes the parents are out of the home because they have to work. If something happens and your kids are home, people think it is some kind of neglect. That is another reason why families are being separated and it is causing homelessness. - Black Woman, Social Worker at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“We are going to sleep in a park tonight. There isn’t anything positive when you have to look at your children crying every day. You know, where are we going to sleep next? When you are eating cups of noodles every day, and then you might not be able to eat that.” - Black man, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“Working with people of color, one thing I noticed is the lack of education and life skills that are not being taught, generation after generation. So even with my TAY clients, which is 18-24, I am getting a lot of adults that do not know how to do basic things. They do not know how to properly speak to the landlord or get their needs met or how to go and get services from the county. They do not have the life skills to go and access them.” – Black Woman, Case Manager at South Central Los Angeles

“[There is a] need [for] more programs in inner cities for parenting so we can train children when they are young. I grew up in projects and was exposed to drugs, prostitution, etc. We did not have role models. I was lucky enough to have teachers who mentored me, but [we] need more of that. Only a few peers actually made it out and became successful.” - Black Woman, LAHSA Lived Experience Advisory Group Focus Group

“It is important that we are catching youth when they are younger because a lot of times young people age out of foster care and it turns into a cycle. So, [we need] programming that is dealing with the childcare issue, providing mental health services so they are not consistently in the spiral of homelessness.” - Black Woman, Service Provider, at South Central Los Angeles

“I was homeless with my whole entire family, but as a stigma we were like, ‘We are not going to get help; we were going to figure it out.’ As a community, we don’t want to get help because we have been conditioned to look at it as a handout. Really, it is to help you get back on your feet and improve our future. Until we put that focus out there to re-unify and re-educate, we are going to always be homeless.” - Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

“Lack of resources and education starting at young ages. Things like financial literacy [are needed]. It is hard to get back once you are in that situation. Families are being torn apart. Lack of knowledge as to what is available to them. Sometimes people don’t use the services because they don’t know about
them. There is a stigma about using services in the Black community.” Black Woman at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

Coordinated Entry System Access and Assessment

“We need to stop these systems that are forcing us to lie. Have you ever had to lie on an application or the social worker told you to lie unless you won’t get this program? How do you think we feel after we lie and walk away? You are talking about lowering our self-esteem; it effects our spiritual life. I am already in a bad place, and I have to lie on top of it. Sleeping on someone’s couch, and I have to lie and say I am sleeping on the street. It doesn’t make sense.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

“Not everyone has a drug problem or an alcohol problem. But these programs, to get in them you got [to lie]. 'Yeah, I have a drug problem. You know what I mean, if it is going to get me housing.' 'Yeah, I [need mental health services] if it is going to get me housing.' So, these programs down here are formulated for people who have problems, and if you don’t have no problems, you are going through what that woman went through [not qualifying for services].” -Black Man with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“I am a little bit stuck. So [let me know] whatever programs there are or the options for me or [do] I have to lie somewhere and say I am homeless just to get move-in money or pretend to go to a shelter somewhere just to get move-in money? I don’t want to do that. Another thing is – well something I experienced, period, was reverse discrimination. So maybe because I am cute or maybe because I had my hair done, or maybe because I had on an inexpensive pretty dress, then someone wants to believe I don’t need help. -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“That data is being kept in whatever computer. They say they are going to give you housing and check back with them, but check back with who? I don’t even have your number and the number you gave me is not the individual that took my CES information. I hear this every day in Saint Julian Park, where I sit, from individuals trying to use my phone. When they call over there, the first thing they ask you is, “What is your CES information?” If you are not a mental health [client] or you not coming from a drug program, they really do not want to assist you. So, what I am saying to you is that you asked for what doesn’t work – it is the program that they mandated everyone who is homeless must go through...to even be classified housing. Your number ranges from 1-20, and hell, if I have been on the streets for five years and I am not a drug addict, my number would be one. If you go to mental health [services], we are going to knock you up to 10. Are you a drug addict? Well, now you have 15. If you are being treated? We need to conduct an evaluation of the CES program.” -Black Man, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

"When we do not have a place to go, I usually go to the park and the library because that where you can find people with families. My friends came on short notice; they have been part of the CES system; they have been calling and asking for help. They cannot get help because they can afford to pay for a motel. They have two children. What the heck is that?" -Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

“The SPDAT is very insensitive. If you are trying to SPDAT this person on initial intake, which is basically what every program must do before you put them into a program, you already isolated them; you already made them feel below, so they don’t want to receive our services. Nine out of 10 that would be
the same as me coming up to you after this meeting and asking, ‘Hi, have you been diagnosed with HIV? Are you gay and fleeing domestic violence?’ You are not going to tell me that. But the way LAHSA set it up is that you have not allowed us to develop the relationships to the people so that they feel welcomed to come and talk with us.” -Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“The SPDAT is very lengthy. A lot of times clients come in; they are overwhelmed; they are stressed out; they are frustrated, and they are at their wits end. For us to service them properly we have to literally go through a 25-page assessment. It is question, after question, after question, and if you read the SPDAT and you compare it to the HMIS intake, the questions are the same. So now you have to sit through 25 pages of the SPDAT, to then only sit through 10 to 15 pages of the HMIS enrollment. It is very insensitive to the clients’ needs and situation. If we begin to actually have conversations with the client and figure out a way to either shorten the SPDAT, perhaps we can start building relationships and formulate [lines] of communication.” -Black woman, Service provider at South Central Listening Session

Intersectional Challenges Highlighted

Race and Age Intersectional Challenges

“After working in social services and then having to go to DPSS, you are talking about sucking up a lot of pride. And people think that is easy, but until you have been on the other side, you do know what it is to have had a car, to have had an apartment, to not be a substance user. It is humiliation. There is no age limit. I would like to hear more about seniors being unhoused and poorly housed.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at West Adams Listening Session

“We are talking about Black homelessness; most of the people on Skid Row are Black males. Here is the thing that we forget: a lot of those people cannot work. A lot of them are senior citizens, and they can’t work. So how do we deal with that issue as well? It was just an issue when I was trying to get someone a room at [PROVIDER] and there was only a top bed bunk, and he is 65 years old. He can’t climb up the top bunk. We have lost a whole generation of Black males on the streets of Skid Row. There are individuals that will not be able to work, ever. How do we deal with that?” -Black Man, Pastor at South Central Listening Session

“Yes, I think it is a culmination of all of that: lack of resources, education, financial literacy, which only further exacerbates one’s [circumstances] —especially the older that they get—and that is trauma. Then people are physically, mentally, and emotionally worn down by the time they enter into their 20s or 30s and then the 40s and 50s and so forth – hence the fact that we have an overabundance of middle aged elderly Black folks here in Los Angeles.” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

“In this arena, seniors are competing with those with children, and we don’t compete well. Our energy levels are lower; our resilience to going here and going there wanes quickly. I am not making excuses; this is just reality. We are older. It doesn’t mean that we are uneducated because education is fine as long as you have access to the resources and the communication that is necessary in order for you to get the result.” -Black Woman with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

Black Woman Intersectional Challenges

“We have all of these single Black women, [who are] middle-aged, elderly [and] are the number one demographic living in poverty and homelessness. Not just year after year, but decade after decade.
What has the system done to address the fact that we have all these single Black women living in poverty [and are] homelessness? You are letting us die out here on these streets because the system is not set up [correctly]. You do not have people [who] understand that the needs of a Black woman are not necessarily the same as maybe a White woman or a Mexican woman or so on and so forth. So that is why it upsets me. -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

"For Black women, we have the highest mortality rate during child birth. A lot of that comes from generations and generations of trauma and pain and hurt we are carrying on top of creating life. For us to access care, there has to be some level of trust. Being a Black person, you are not going to be trusting of the many systems. They haven't given us a reason to trust them." -Black Woman at West Adams Listening Session

**Black Man Intersectional Challenges**

“As a Black man, I do not have a problem. As a Black man, America has a problem with me. Everywhere I go, there is a problem. Whether it is law enforcement, whether it any kind of institutional system, whether it is the school system as a child growing up. Sports and sport coaches, the entertainment industry, there is always some type of issues going on with me being a Black man. Then to be labeled the angry Black man, only because I am speaking up for what I believe in and what my mama taught me to be true. So now there is this reverse psychology like I am the problem. I am not the problem; the problem is White America.” Black Man, Lived Experience, Advocate at Skid Row Listening Session

“We are at a place in our society – we call them obstacle courses. If you a Black male, you are going to go to jail. Let's keep it 100. If you are in Skid Row and you are out here on this sidewalk, they are going to find obstacle courses for you. Your job is to jump over those.” -Black Man, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

**Black Transgender Person Intersectional Challenges**

[See Youth section below.]

**A Focus on Skid Row**

“What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you say homeless down here on Skid Row? The first thing that comes to people's mind when they [see] a homeless man – they think is he drug addicted; he has mental health issues, and that is how these programs are formulated. They are formulated for people down here who have problems, but everybody down here [does] not have a problem.” -Black Man, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“I was at the United Way women empowerment event a few weekends ago, and one of the things I noticed [was] that there were people speaking from all over the world regarding women issues, but Mayor Garcetti talked for the women of Skid Row, and other people talked for the women of Skid Row, but...I wasn’t invited to talk on behalf of Skid Row – why was I not invited to talk to the women of Skid Row? ... Why can’t we talk for ourselves?” -Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“So just thinking about myself, I have been down here for 14 months and I think it is about feeling and it is really weird to say this but, it is about feeling freedom. That is a crazy thing to say down here but down here, the people down here can do what they want to do. There are rules you have to follow if
you stay in the shelters, which I stay in a shelter. You stay in those tents, you can do what you want to do.” – Black Woman, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

“They gave me the job, or God gave me the job; y’all know how it goes. I am one of 310 people from Skid Row that have gotten jobs. I am one in this community because they gave me a grant, and thank God the grant is still going because they found out there are people here that do want to work.” - Black Man, Caseworker with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

Many are refusing services or housing and are selling drugs, which contributes to the oppression of other people in surrounding areas; while many come to Skid Row to seek services, many come to sell drugs. - Skid Row Listening Session

“Look at empowering people and communities. Stop criminalizing poverty and homelessness. [There is a] need to identify and pay Skid Row ambassadors to represent themselves and the residents of Skid Row.” Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session

Many people have been on Skid Row for years, and sometimes new people who have only recently arrived are already getting housed. - Skid Row Listening Session

Disabilities bring even greater difficulties, and Skid Row is a historical dropping-off point. - Skid Row Listening Session

What is Working or What Might Work Better

Programs that Provide Employment Opportunities

“We currently have a point of view that focuses on their deficits, and if we change that perspective we create more training programs where people are welcomed and feel included.” - Black Woman, Community member with lived experience at South Central Listening Session

“Vocational programs: we have a vocational program that uses technology to help women who are low-income or are homeless. [We have changed our recruitment model to bring in people that might otherwise be left out. We have found] that when you put them in an environment that is safe, creative, nurturing, and supportive with wrap around services, they become empowered to move forward themselves.” – White Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I remember Job Corps used to have a program where they would train you. I know they are building a school on Vermont and we need some like a Job Corps where they house you, train you, and give you several certifications while you are there.” - Black Woman, Community member experiencing homelessness at South Central Listening Session

“If you are trained and have employment, your self-esteem goes up. When you don’t have employment, your pride – even though you are out there hustling on the streets – you are still losing your self-esteem until you get employment. We, the Downtown Neighborhood Council, did a job fair last month. I had over 31 different agencies come out and table. Out of those 31 agencies, over 600 people out of Skid Row came to the park, and over 100 of them got a job. So, you can’t say employment is not important.” - Black Man, Advocate with Lived Experience at Skid Row Listening Session
**Affordable Housing with Supportive Services**

“The affordable housing programs with supportive services is what helped me get out [of homelessness]. I have been personally housed going on two years – and it wasn’t a quick one. Sometimes we have to be willing to sit down in the place, especially [interim] housing, and that process took four to six months.” – Black Woman, Outreach Worker with Lived Experience at Venice/Santa Monica Listening Session

**Transitional Housing Programs for Youth**

“What seems to work with probation and foster youth once they turn 18 is independent living programs. They are all clamoring for it as soon as they turn 18 because these are programs that often pay them to be there. And they get an academic advisor, some that are just going to help them get financial aid and get into school. They provide them with all of the school materials they need. They have an employment specialist that goes and helps them get a job, and they go through career training. They also have a therapist who addresses their mental health issues and their substance abuse issues. They are giving bus passes, so they can get from wherever they need to go around the county and the city. So, they address these students’ issues holistically. They provide education resources, employment resources, therapy resources, and they are paying the kids to be there. The kids do not have to focus on how they are going to live or where they are going to eat. They can just focus 100%, like any other kid who is in college or trying live and being supported by a parent. The independent living programs for kids seems to be doing really well.” – White Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“For transitional-aged youth, it is important to continue funding transitional age housing. We have been able to support youth in a way that when they pay their rent, which is 1/3 of their income, it goes into a savings account, and they get all of that money back. We also have been able to extend how long they are in the program, from two years to three years. So, imagine paying your income for two to three years and being able to get it back for when it is time to move into an apartment or move out. We also have education specialists, workforce development. Having that three years with all the that support sets the groundwork for them to be able to succeed. That is a positive from what I see Measure H had been able to do.” – Man, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I could have used the same style of support [wrap around services for youth]. And the difficult piece is that as an adult it is challenging, and it is uncomfortable to tell some to treat me like you treat the youth because that is where I really am. We should look across so that everyone can get the support and be lifted.” – Black Woman, Community member with lived experience South Central Listening Session

**Better Staff Training and Client Care**

“Very well-trained outreach workers, and the second thing that I know that works is very well-run crisis housing. Those things actually do work.” – Black Man, Former Service Provider Administrator at South Central Listening Session

“How you treat clients matters. The more dignity and respect. We all need tenderness. We think of kids, we think of treating them with tenderness, we think of transition-aged youth. We all need love and tenderness. That does transform the heart. I used to run and I developed a transitional living program and it was all based on love folks with our whole heart and expecting a lot from them. I do believe philosophically, that heals people. You can't expect that from employees, if you don't treat your employees well. If you empower and respect your employees, it trickles down to the clients. It is transformative, and it works.” – Black woman, Service Provider Administrator at South Central Listening Session
**Improved Communication and Coordination**

“I think we need to do public service announcements just like we did when we had the droughts and how we had commercials and the billboards up. I think we need to have community education, so people can be educated that these homeless people are not just bums on the street. They are people that made bad choices in life, but these are human beings. This could be your neighbor that is about to lose her house and be homeless. This could be your daughter’s teacher that lives in her car. So, I think money needs to be spent on marketing. Once people understand the problem, then you can put a solution forward.” – Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“There are lot of small entities that are not as well-known; it is helpful is to have a lot more community centers host forums like this. There are a lot of people who are newly homeless; they are not connected, and shame keeps them from asking. If you are out in the community and have a venue which they can come, it breaks the isolation for them.” – Black Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I am a nurse executive that just recently retired. I ran six hospitals in the greater Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley. The coordination of all of the various services is really complex for those who seek healthcare, even for us to refer them into the agency. There is so much going on and I like the idea of the smaller community centers, but how do we coordinate and understand these [multiple] points of access for those who have no place to go.” – Retired White Woman, at West Adams Listening Session

“I just want to offer one thing that we did in the Bay Area. I am originally from LA but I was in the Bay Area for like 4 years with our organization. We created a community advisory board; the community advisory board was from the people. It was formerly incarcerated folks making up this community advisory board... that is how you coordinate. You create these types of coalitions and advisory boards, and we meet all of the time. They have regular meetings and all of these smaller organizations come, and we figure it out. Alameda Valley created a manual together with the different organizations for how to address certain issues.” – Black Man, Formerly Incarcerated, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

**Improved Service Delivery Models**

“The intensive case management model has really worked well because it is not a pretty picture. [There is a need for someone to serve as] an advocate that is teaching you along the way, sometimes taking baby steps. Even teaching them how to use a microwave; those are baby steps; those are life skills. It works for us, but we need more. It is not enough.” – Latina Woman, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session

“I work with the formerly incarcerated. We house the formerly incarcerated. We are talking about people that have served 20 or 30 years in prison and are coming home. They need wraparound services. In many cases, they couldn’t read or write, or they didn’t have a GED when they came home and now they got that. They got training or now that they are certified to do something to empower themselves - that programing has to be there. It can’t be just give them a house or give them some place to go. They have to have other services that meet their needs so they can get out there and feel empowered. Because they still feel hopeless with a voucher in their hand because they can’t help themselves.” – Black Man, Service Provider, Formerly Incarcerated at South Central Listening Session

What I have seen that works is a program for homeless vets. That is what I have seen work. Somebody needs to follow what they are doing. They are getting employed; they are being educated; they are becoming homeowners. – Black Woman, Veteran, Service Provider at South Central Listening Session
DMH full services partnership. I think they help the population getting out of jail. They have coaching programs; they have weekly group counseling or post-modern coaching. I believe that really, really works. – Black Woman, Community Member Experiencing Homelessness at South Central Listening Session

More outreach to homeless people. Start doing preventative measures by conducting outreach to communities. Advocating for legislation and making sure schools are well-funded. Focus on policy and legislation that are key to be focused on now. -Black Woman at Venice Listening Session

What We Learned from Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

(From Young Adults Serving on LAHSA Homeless Youth Forum of Los Angeles (HYFLA))

On Racism, Discrimination, and Dismantling Racism

Institutionalized Racism: The country is set up in a way that doesn’t support the Black community or the advancement of the Black community. The system oppresses people of color. There is a difference between wanting to help Caucasian people experiencing homelessness and Black people. White people are prioritized over others.

Institutional racism is how the county is set up. There is no support for the advancement of Black people. It is a tool to continue to oppress Black people.

Discrimination: “I have gone to see an apartment after one of my White peers went and I was told I would have to pay a higher rent.”

We need to understand the legacy of racism and its impact on society today. Need to understand how redlining pushed Blacks into South Central Los Angeles and how there is no accumulation of wealth.

We experience macroaggressions from a lot of these service providers and they are quick to use our housing against us.

On Programs and Services

The current model is not a “human-centered design.” It is more about completing a checklist vs. building the capacity of people.

Organizations need Black people to seek services in order to obtain funding. But some of these organizations are not necessarily the appropriate providers and do not understand or have training on how to best serve Black people.

The system wants Black people to be at-risk and vulnerable in order to obtain services. Individuals who are deemed “able bodied” are discriminated against [by not being prioritized for services].

There is no conversation as to what the youth person needs, the programs are prescriptive. If I am competent and succeeding, don’t take away resources because of it. Ask what we need rather than assume what we need.

Organizations try to steer youth towards a particular activity. They want to place youth in already funded programs.

Community-based restorative practices should be created for domestic violence, criminal justice, school incidents, etc. The City of Los Angeles should re-direct police funding to youth violence prevention programs.
There is a trend to exploit youth in this work. Things like paying youth for their time. Since service providers know youth are homeless, they provide gift cards/movie tickets but no incentive or resources to stabilize their lives. Also have agencies that hold housing over the youth’s head by demonstrating power over the youth. Sad that agencies are receiving a lot of money, but on the floor, the youth don’t see it.

There is a need trauma-informed care, mental illness care. People with mental health could die because there is no trauma-informed care, police don’t know how to handle mental illness or traumatized people.

It took 9 months to help find housing – response time needs to be addressed.

Lack of accountability for agencies in terms of administering programs. How do we know if they are doing a good job?

Agencies need equity training and must understand the difference between equity and equality. Equity can tear down racial disparities if more agencies are operating under that lens. There needs to be cultural competency, racial equity and trauma informed care trainings offered by Black trainers.

Hire more Black staffers for shelters. Most staff are White and straight out of college. There should be more Black staffers with lived experience.

Hire more Black staff at higher levels of power at agencies to influence policies. Having more Black people at the table to make changes is an important step. Too often POC staff are there to just fill a quota. They are put in case management positions to fill a quota and for representation.

On the Intersection of LGBTQ Discrimination and Race

Black families are pushing kids out of their homes because of their sexual orientation or identity.

Black and Queer people are experiencing homelessness because of [race and sexual identity] intersections. Some LGBTQ youth are not accepted by their families, have mental health issues and may have experienced incarceration.

There are not a lot of housing programs for LGBT youth. There is only one place I know that offers LGBT housing and they are not welcoming to Black youth. I went there and they saw me as a threat. Everyone looked at me as if they were scared of me. I walked in that one time for help and never went back.

I was staying at a shelter in Hollywood and had to do everything for myself. I felt exploited and tokenized because of my age.

I was in a Hollywood shelter and I was looking into a work program. I asked my case manager, but I didn’t receive any support, so I looked on my own. I spent weeks researching programs and I found this program all the way in Long Beach, so [I] spent hours getting there to see the van of the shelter I was staying at in their parking lot! My caseworker failed me! Once I was accepted into the work program, the shelter then tried to take credit!

There is no safe place for Black transgender youth. Services are denied based on racial and gender discrimination.

The LGBTQ community is White dominated. They are always featuring their success. Intersectionality (Black and gender) is problematic.
Institutionalized racism. Within the queer community, lots of representation of White identities and their success instead of Black identities. It can definitely affect a person’s success. If you don’t fit the status quo, you won’t see the success. Difficult to find support groups, mental health, and housing.

Only one place that offers LGBT specific housing. That agency is a powerhouse in LA and they receive a lot of philanthropic funds. When it comes to distributing resources, the environment is not welcoming to me. As a Black male, you are expected to be vulnerable in a certain way, expected to be incarcerated, and if not, you’re not as vulnerable as you need to be. Being a Black transgender man, there is no safe place. Places that are supposed to be safe are not safe. I am denied services based on my gender identity and the fact that I’m Black is another layer on that. I walked into the agency and was asked if I was a drug user. What is my mental capacity? The more acute, the more willing they were to help. I felt uncomfortable.

**On Transitional Living Programs and Assessment**

There are a lot of Transitional Living Programs. Overall, these programs discriminate against able bodied people. “Since you can do this, go figure it out on your own.” For people put into TLP, they are placed in an internship or temporary job and it’s like recidivism. They were not given sufficient support and its back to square one for the youth. We need longer, more sustained support, including life skills support.

We need more preparation to be independent of the system. For the most part, there are no real steps to assist with Black young adults that are receiving services to sustain the independence. It’s like, “You’ve reached 25, you’ve been here 2 years, what do you have saved, what’s next?” There needs to be more support over the course transitional services. We should have navigators to assist with securing housing and confronting housing discrimination.

TLPs should link and connect youth to other programs. Don’t focus on money and funding, focus on what youth need first. They are not Human-Centered. It’s more about money for the bodies.

TLP is saying you now have to do everything on your own and views it as moving towards independence. If you need a medical device, TLP won’t pay for it because the young adult has money saved even though the savings are needed for living independently.

I am currently hopping from TLP to TLP, when I should be in housing. Agencies give up on youth so quickly but it makes for a poor transition. You have nowhere to go from age 23-25 because you’ve been hopping from shelter to shelter.

Assessments/Tools. There seems to be a concern that funding will be lost because a client is not of high enough acuity. Most people who score higher have been homeless multiple times. We want stability and want to avoid being homeless multiple times.

Paraphrased statement from a Black Transgender participant: “You are telling me, I have to live on the streets longer or develop a mental illness before I can get housing services?”
Appendix A: Listening Session Meeting Locations

Community Listening Sessions

Friday, May 18, 2018 | 3:00 – 5:00 PM
*James Wood Community Center, 400 E 5th Street, Los Angeles*

Thursday, June 7, 2018 | 3:00 – 5:00 PM
*Broadway Manchester Service Center, 8525 S Broadway, Los Angeles*

Thursday, June 14, 2018 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM
*Holman United Methodist Church, White Hall, 3320 W Adams Blvd, Los Angeles*

Friday, July 13, 2018 | 9:30 – 11:30 AM
*St. Joseph Center, 204 Hampton Drive, Venice*

Friday, July 13, 2018 | 9:30 – 11:30 AM
*Harbor Interfaith Services, 670 W 9th Street, San Pedro*

Wednesday, August 15, 2018 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
*Chimbole Cultural Center, Manzanita Ballroom, 38350 Sierra Hwy, Palmdale*

Focus Group Listening Sessions

Friday, May 4, 2018: Homeless Youth Forum of Los Angeles
*Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority*

Friday, May 4, 2018: Lived Experience Advisory Group
*Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority*
Appendix B: Listening Session Guiding Questions

1. Why do you think Black people are over-represented in the homeless population?

2. What are three steps or changes that you would take to improve the situation, specifically for Black people?

3. What programs and/or services intended to support and assist the homeless community have you found the most challenging or problematic?

4. What services or programs (either to prevent homelessness or to end homelessness) are working well?

5. If you are a person with lived experience, what would have kept you from becoming homeless or what would have shortened your period of homelessness?

6. Do you think being a Black man, Black woman, or Black transgender person experiencing homelessness creates unique barriers? If so how?
Coordinated Entry System Outreach, Assessment, & Interim Housing

Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness

August 20, 2018
Insights from Community Listening Sessions
"You also have to care about Black people. You have to care about all people, but you have to have a level of care and respect for that community. It sounds so basic, but I don't think we would be having this conversation if everyone [has] that level of care and respect for Black people."

"There has been an increase in people doing service outreach in the community; however, those individuals are poorly trained (USC kids), [but] with good credentials. Many of the new hires leave in less than 4 months and ruin relationships with the houseless people they were attempting to support."
“The SPDAT is very insensitive. If you are trying to SPDAT this person on initial intake, which is what every program must do before you put them into a program, you already isolated them; you already made them feel below, so they don't want to receive our services. . . . The way LAHSA set it up is that you have not allowed us to develop the relationships so that they feel welcomed to come and talk with us.”

“The SPDAT is very lengthy. A lot of times clients come in. . . they are overwhelmed, they are stressed out. . . . To service them properly, we literally go through a 25-page assessment. It is question, after question, and if you read the SPDAT and you compare it to the HMIS intake, the questions are the same. So now you have to sit through 25 pages of the SPDAT, then sit through 10 to 15 pages of the HMIS enrollment. . . [we need to figure out a way to shorten the SPDAT] . . .”
“We have walked into many shelters and people are so disrespectful. Why would you want to go? ...The one place that is supposed to help you, the one beacon, and there is more racism, more disrespect. ‘Why the hell am I here?’”

“They wanted to put 400 people that all had histories of trauma into one place.... Until homeless services really integrate trauma-informed care and deal with it from the perspective that looks at the whole piece--that looks at the racism--we are going to continue to repeat and spend money in ways that is not going to change the system.”
Outreach
Outreach 101

- **What?**
  - Locate, identify, build relationships with individuals experiencing homelessness who are unsheltered to engage them for providing immediate support, linkages to services, connections with housing navigation resources aimed at ending homelessness.

- **Where?**
  - Streets, riverbeds, railroad tracks, underpasses, encampments, parks, remote areas, urban areas, beaches, etc.

- **When?**
  - Usually during daylight hours due to safety and ability to connect to housing and services.

- **Who (types of outreach)?**
  - Generalists
    - Some have a special population focus (e.g., Youth, Veterans)
  - Some work with law enforcement (e.g., HOPE teams)
  - Mental Health-focused
    - SB-82, MITs
  - Multi-disciplinary teams
    - Health, mental health, substance abuse, case management, peer
Vision of E-6: Coordinated Outreach Strategy

- Develop a coordinated outreach system to reduce duplication and increase efficiencies via:
  - CES Outreach Coordinators
  - Centralized Outreach Request Portal
  - Generalized Outreach Workers
    - LAHSA Homeless Engagement Teams (HET)
    - CES Outreach
  - DHS-funded Multidisciplinary Outreach Teams
- Between LAHSA HET, MDTs, SB-82 and others, over 550 outreach workers on the ground
- Strategy co-led by LAHSA and Health Agency

To read E6 and the other County Coordination Strategies:

To read the recent summary of our E6 Community Design Session
The New Model

New Coordinated Outreach Model under E6 Strategy

- Countywide Web Portal for Outreach Requests (LA-HOP) *coming soon!
- SPA-Wide CES Outreach Coordinators
  - Deploy requests from LA-HOP to appropriate outreach teams
  - Create and maintain SPA-wide Outreach Inventory
  - Create and support SPA-wide Outreach strategy to ensure well-functioning system
  - Track response times and outcomes; support capacity-building
  - Facilitate collaboration and coordination between outreach teams, first responders, housing navigation, and other stakeholders

Outreach To Do List:
- Proactively outreach to people experiencing homelessness
- Respond to requests for outreach
- Support participants with immediate needs (e.g., shelter, mental/physical health), connecting to permanent housing resources
- Work with other outreach teams, first responders, other stakeholders to support participant’s care plans

Generalist Outreach Teams
  (e.g., LAHSA’s Homeless Engagement Teams (HET) [formerly ERT], other Outreach Teams)

Multidisciplinary Outreach Teams
  (e.g., new DHS-funded MDT outreach Teams)

Specialty Outreach Teams
  (e.g., DMH SB-82, DMH HOME, Veteran Outreach)

System supported by the Health Agency and LAHSA-E6 Leadership Team
**Outreach Program Staffing**

*Race/Ethnicity of Outreach Staff*

- **Black/African-American**: 31%
- **Latinx/Hispanic**: 44%
- **White**: 27%
- **American Indian/Alaska Native**: 7%
- **Asian**: 4%
- **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander**: 3%
- **Other**: 3%

*Includes outreach members who identify as multiple ethnicities. Percentages total to more than 100%*

**Outreach Staff with Lived Experience of Homelessness**

- **Black/African-American Respondents**: 63%
- **All Respondents**: 50%

**Outreach Staff in Management Roles**

- **Black/African-American Respondents**: 26%
- **All Respondents**: 28%
Measure our Success

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<tr>
<td>Number of unduplicated individuals initiated contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of unduplicated individuals engaged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of unduplicated individuals provided services or successfully attaining referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of unduplicated individuals engaged who successfully attain crisis or bridge housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of unduplicated individuals engaged who are linked to a permanent housing resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of unduplicated individuals engaged who are permanently housed</td>
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Outreach Program Engagement

Outreach Program Engagement by Race

Source: HMIS, Engaged persons actively enrolled in E6 outreach programs during FY17-18
COMING TOGETHER IS A BEGINNING;
KEEPING TOGETHER IS PROGRESS;
WORKING TOGETHER IS SUCCESS
Insights from Outreach Workers

**Moderators:**
Colleen Murphy, LAHSA
Va Lecia Adams Kellum, St. Joseph Center

**Panelists:**
- Joseph Robertson, Department of Mental Health
- Kenny Clipper, St. Joseph Center
- Audrey Pearson, SSG HOPICS
- Kennetta Fells, Mental Health America
- Donald Holt, LAHSA
- Lakesha Williams, LAHSA
Discussion of Potential Recommendations
Assessment & CES Triage Tools
CES Assessment Process

- **CES Assessment** refers to a process of collecting sufficient information from participants to understand their strengths, needs, and the nature of their housing crisis, make prioritization decisions consistently, and facilitate access to housing and supportive services.

- The LA County CES uses a standardized assessment process and tools to enable consistent, fair decision-making across different regions, access points, and staff.

- The assessment process has multiple components, including:
  - Crisis assessment & engagement
  - Intake & initial assessment
  - Comprehensive assessment & development of a housing plan

- **CES Triage Tools** are one key part of the assessment process.
CES Triage Tools

- CES utilizes a common needs assessment tool to connect people to the right interventions AND prioritize limited resources.
- All tools based on the Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool, or SPDAT

CES Survey Packet for Adults  
Next Step Tool for Youth  
VI-FSPDAT for Families
CES Triage Tool Scoring

- Each CES triage tool has a Scoring component
- 5 Domains for Single Adults and Youth
- 6 Domains for Families

Domains:
1. Basic Information
2. History of Housing & Homelessness
3. Risks
4. Socialization & Daily Functioning
5. Wellness
6. Family Unit (Families)

**CES Survey Packet for Single Adults**

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<td>4-7</td>
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<td>D. Wellness</td>
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**Next Step Tool for Youth**

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<td>Diversion and support services</td>
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<td>F. Wellness</td>
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<td><strong>Grand Total:</strong></td>
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**VI-F-SPDAT for Families**

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<td>B. Risks</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Socialization &amp; Daily Functions</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Wellness</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Family Unit</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Score</strong></td>
<td><strong>72</strong></td>
<td><strong>9+: Referral for permanent supportive housing</strong></td>
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Known Challenges

- **Consistency**: variance in when, how, and by whom CES Triage Tools are administered
- **Accuracy**: Need for stronger assessor training to ensure CES Triage Tools are administered consistently and accurately
- **Length of survey**: difficult balance between collecting sufficient pertinent information and ensuring participants are not retraumatized or disengaged
- **Need for further research** to ensure CES Triage Tools adequately capture vulnerabilities of all subpopulations and race groups
- **Sensitivity**: Need for trauma-informed care training to ensure staff conduct assessments with sensitivity
Opportunities

▪ Developing clear protocols for when (and by whom) CES Triage Tools are administered, and guidance for progressive engagement to avoid over-assessing

▪ Developing system training on how to administer the CES Triage Tools (expected to launch in September)

▪ Working with independent researchers to better understand CES Triage Tools' effectiveness at capturing vulnerabilities and recommending appropriate housing & service interventions

▪ Implementation of the Justice Discharge (JD) VI-SPDAT to capture vulnerabilities of those exiting the criminal justice system
Potential Research Questions

• Are there significant differences in CES Triage Tool score by Race/Ethnicity?

• Do the CES Triage Tools adequately capture vulnerabilities, particularly those more prevalent amongst Black/African American participants?

• How can the assessment process best mitigate for the existence of implicit bias?
Discussion of Potential Recommendations
Interim Housing
Interim Housing Overview

- Winter Shelters
- Bridge Housing
- Privately Funded
- Crisis Housing
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Stabilization
- Recuperative Care

Interim Housing
Interim Housing Overview

**Interim Housing** refers to facilities or programs that provide temporary shelter for individuals or households experiencing homelessness.

**LAHSA & Health Agency interim housing programs** aim to:

1) Provide a safe place for participants/households to sleep,
2) Stabilize the participant/household,
3) Provide case management and assessment, and
4) Address barriers to permanent housing through referrals and/or crisis resolution.
Interim Housing Models

**Crisis Housing**
- Provides safe, short-term, 24-hour emergency shelter while participants are assessed and connected to more permanent housing resources
- Resource referral and case management are used as primary interventions
- First-come, first-served basis

**Trauma-Informed Care**
- Strength-based framework grounded in an understanding of the impact of trauma
- Emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety
- Creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment

**Bridge Housing**
- Reserved, 24-hour emergency shelter targeted for participants prioritized through CES for housing resources
- Beds are reserved for participants assisted by Housing Navigation and/or Case Management while securing permanent housing

**Recuperative Care**
- Provides short-term residential care for participants recovering from an acute illness or injury
- Includes 24/7 health monitoring, assistance with ADLs, and development of comprehensive care plan
Interim Housing Stock

Total Interim Housing Beds by SPA

Total Bed Units by HMIS Coverage

- Non-HMIS 40%
- HMIS 60%
Known Challenges

- Lack of sufficient interim housing beds to meet the need

- Large geographic variation in bed availability, and challenges coordinating access across SPAs

- Traditional shelter models often uninviting or retraumatizing

- Concerns about participant safety

- Large portion of interim housing privately funded and not subject to public agency guidance and accountability
Opportunities

▪ Establishing learning communities among interim housing providers to provide training and best practice guidance

▪ Newly-launched Trauma-Informed Care Program for women

▪ Working with City and County partners to improve coordination around discharge planning

▪ Bed Availability App (pilot) to provide real-time bed availability data to facilitate referrals to crisis housing
Discussion of Potential Recommendations
The Interim Housing System

For the LAHSA Ad Hoc Committee on Black People Experiencing Homelessness
Taking a Closer Look at Interim Housing

• Who uses interim housing in Los Angeles County?
• What happens to people when they leave interim housing?
Why Focus on Interim Housing?

- Nearly 40% of all HMIS service entries are for interim housing
- 43% of HMIS entries for Black/African American participants between January 2010 and April 2017 are in the interim housing system
- Interim housing is designed to provide a safe place to sleep off the street
- Ideally it helps move clients to more permanent services
Data sources used

• Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count
  • Gives a snapshot of homelessness in LA County
  • Mandated by US Department of Housing and Urban Development
  • Conducted annually in January
  • Includes unsheltered (metro lines, county parks, riverbeds) and sheltered (emergency shelters, transitional housing, and Safe Havens).

• Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)
  • Records information about clients who access housing and homeless services in LA County
  • Mandated by US Department of Housing and Urban Development
  • Data collected at intake into Coordinated Entry System
  • Includes homeless and those at-risk of homelessness
Question 1: Do the demographics of people in interim housing differ from those of the overall population experiencing homelessness?
Black people make up a slightly higher proportion of the interim housing population than the general homeless population.

Source: HMIS intake data at time of PIT count, 2017 Homeless Count
Discussion: Are these numbers consistent with your experience and/or prior research?
Question 2: Do outcomes for people leaving interim housing differ by race/ethnicity?
Defining Outcomes

- Housing placement and outcome information upon exit from interim housing is missing in over 76% of all shelter stays from January 2010 to April 2017.
- However, we can more reliably determine whether someone who stayed in interim housing returns again within a year.
What percentage of *single adults* exiting interim housing return within a year?

85% of people in interim housing are single adults

Source: HMIS intake data, 2010-April 2017, single adults, 25 and older, who have a recorded exit date.
What percentage of families exiting interim housing return within a year?

18% Black
15% Latinx
17% White

Source: HMIS intake data, 2010-April 2017, observations with missing race are excluded, Families with Children, total refers to number of families. Sample is restricted to observations with a recorded exit date.
What percentage of *transition age youth* exiting interim housing return within a year?

Source: HMIS intake data, 2010-April 2017, observations with missing race are excluded, TAY, 18 to 24 years old, who have a recorded exit date.
Preliminary Takeaways

• Interim housing users are mainly single adults, and over 40% of them are Black.

• Black single adults are much more likely than other groups to return to another interim housing program within a year after their last stay.
Questions?
Appendices
The majority of people in interim housing are single adults.

Source: HMIS intake data, 2010-April 2017, observations with missing race are excluded, total refers to number of households.
The gender proportions of interim housing are similar to those of the general homeless population.

Source: HMIS intake data at time of PIT count, 2017 Homeless Count
Individuals with health issues make up a smaller proportion of the interim housing population than the general homeless population.

Source: HMIS intake data at time of PIT count, 2017 Homeless Count