

SECTION VII CONTINUUM OF CARE NARRATIVE

Annually, the city is required to report on progress of the Continuum of Care, a comprehensive approach to identifying and solving the problems of homelessness.

The Los Angeles Continuum of Care, which is administered by the LAHSA, in cooperation with Los Angeles County and homeless provider agencies, is composed of over 13,000 emergency, transitional, and permanent beds and represents one of the nation's largest homeless delivery systems. On any given night, an estimated 74,900 men, women, children, and unaccompanied youth are homeless within the Continuum boundaries – an area covering all of Los Angeles County with the exception of Glendale, Pasadena and Long Beach. About half of those are in the City.

The Continuum includes 85 separate cities, of which 33 are entitlement jurisdictions. LAHSA divides the local Continuum into eight service planning areas (SPAs), including the downtown Los Angeles area. LAHSA coordinates the development of the Los Angeles Continuum of Care strategy, and prepares applications to HUD for funding. A ten-member commission appointed by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the City of Los Angeles Mayor and City Council governs LAHSA.

Homeless Strategy

The purpose of the Continuum of Care is to reduce and eventually eliminate homelessness in the City and County of Los Angeles by assisting homeless individuals and families to move to self-sufficiency and permanent housing. LAHSA utilizes Supportive Housing Program funds for permanent housing, transitional housing and services projects. ESGP, CDBG, as well as City and County General Funds are administered by LAHSA to provide emergency and transitional shelter as well as outreach and other emergency services such as access centers. HUD is currently focusing on eliminating chronic homelessness and LAHSA is supporting programs, which address this population.

Though great strides have been made in addressing homelessness, much remains to be done. LAHSA has partnered with the Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger and Homelessness to develop a strategic plan to end homelessness. Entitled Bring LA Home, this plan will be complete in October 2004 and will be endorsed by 65 members of a Blue Ribbon Panel comprised of leaders from government, business, non-profit agencies, faith-based organizations, the homeless, and academic institutions. The plan will lay out the goals and action steps to end homelessness in the Los Angeles Community and will lay out the major obstacles that need to be overcome including lack of accurate and current data on the homeless population, difficulty in siting projects which serve homeless people, appropriate and effective performance evaluation protocols, limited resources. Perhaps, most importantly, the plan will address prevention of homelessness and the role major governmental departments and programs play in this effort.