



LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
**COMMISSION ON HIV**



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**HOUSING TASK FORCE VIRTUAL MEETING**

**AGENDA**

**FRIDAY, MAY 23, 2025**

**9:00AM-10:00AM**

<https://lacountyboardofsupervisors.webex.com/lacountyboardofsupervisors/j.php?MTID=me79dbfad7f91b9921cd55502b1b32cea>

**Meeting number/Access Code: 2531 461 4782**

**Password: HOME (All capital letters)**

**Join by phone**

**+1-213-306-3065 United States Toll (Los Angeles)**

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| <b>1. WELCOME &amp; INTRODUCTIONS</b>                    | <b>9:00AM-9:05AM</b> |
| <b>2. CO-CHAIRS' REPORT</b>                              | <b>9:05AM-9:10AM</b> |
| a. April 25, 2025 Meeting Recap (See meeting summary)    |                      |
| b. Review workplan                                       |                      |
| <b>3. DISCUSSION: Review and finalize housing survey</b> | <b>9:10AM-9:45AM</b> |
| <b>4. AGENDA DEVELOPMENT FOR NEXT MEETING</b>            | <b>9:45AM-9:55AM</b> |
| <b>5. ANNOUNCEMENTS &amp; ADJOURNMENT</b>                | <b>10:00AM</b>       |

**Upcoming Meetings (4<sup>th</sup> Friday monthly): June 27, 2025**

**Resources to Check Out:**

[Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California \(USC\) Street Medicine](#)

[Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative Impact Dashboard](#)



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**HOUSING TASK FORCE (HTF) VIRTUAL MEETING**

[CLICK HERE FOR MEETING PACKET](#)

**APRIL 25, 2025, 2025 | 9AM-10AM**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Introductions**

- K. Nelson and Dr. David Hardy, HTF Co-Chairs, called the meeting to order, conducted introductions, and welcomed attendees the meeting.

**Co-Chairs' Report:**

- K. Nelson referred attendees to the packet for the meeting summary for the March 28, 2025 meeting.

**PRESENTATION: University of Southern California Street Medicine and HIV Testing | Brett, Feldman, MSPAS, PA-C, Director of USC Street Medicine | Key Takeaways**

The presentation addressed the urgent housing and healthcare needs of people living with HIV in Los Angeles, emphasizing the importance of street medicine and integrated care for the unsheltered population.

- Street medicine addresses healthcare access for unsheltered homeless individuals by providing services in their environment, centered around building a trusting relationship with the client and provider.
- Street medicine has become billable nationwide, recognizing the rights of homeless individuals to receive care.
- Effective street medicine requires integrated care, following patients through various housing situations for continuity.
- The need for street medicine in Los Angeles is significant due to a high number of unsheltered individuals.
- Testing for HIV and other conditions shows high acceptance rates among individuals approached on the street.
- Phlebotomy serves as part of a comprehensive patient intake, providing extensive health information and care plan.
- Trauma significantly impacts the unhoused population, affecting their trust in healthcare and housing systems. The system that is trying to take of them is also traumatizing them.
- Street medicine teams integrate housing navigation with medical care to support individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Federal funding cuts pose risks to ongoing HIV programs and services for vulnerable populations.

- A participant suggested connecting the USC street medicine team in West Hollywood regarding testing coordination at locations like the library.
- Most street medicine data is from Skid Row
- Strategies for reaching homeless individuals and linking them to care:
  - Work with hospitals who have seen homeless individual who have been diagnosed with HIV and screen their contacts.
  - Hepatitis C treatment completion rate is 82%- shows that people experiencing homelessness can be engaged and retained in care in a trusting environment and relationship with providers even if they move from one encampment to another.
  - The USC team has a 38% housing placement; a challenge given the lack of affordable housing.
  - Provide fully integrated care on the spot, not referrals.
  - Fully integrated care should be built from the streets, not institutions
  - The USC street medicine team has not found that HIV is a barrier to getting housing; the diagnosis actually helps get folks into housing.

### **Homework Assignment**

- HTF members were asked to review and provide feedback on the draft housing survey; submit feedback to Cheryl by May 15.

### **Tasks and Assignments:**

- Prepare for a deeper dive into the housing survey feedback at the next meeting on May 23.
- Cheryl to send the housing survey draft in MS Word format to task force members for easier editing and feedback.

### **Agenda Development for Next Meeting:**

- Review housing survey (May 23)



## Housing Survey

### DRAFT REVISED 4.29.25

This survey seeks to understand the housing needs and challenges faced by people living with HIV in Los Angeles County. The results of the survey will help the Commission on HIV with its planning and service standards development efforts.

All responses are confidential. Providing your name and email is OPTIONAL and will only be used for purposes of entering your name in a raffle for a \$100 Visa Gift Card.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you a person living with HIV?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to disclose

2. What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65-74
- 75 and older

3. How do you describe your gender?

- Woman
- Man
- Trans woman
- Non-binary
- Two-spirit
- Genderqueer/Gender non-conforming/Gender fluid
- Questioning/Unsure/Exploring
- Prefer to self-describe:  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Homosexual
- Heterosexual or straight
- Lesbian
- Pansexual
- Queer
- Questioning/Unsure/Exploring



## Housing Survey

**DRAFT REVISED 4.29.25**

- A sexual orientation not listed here  
(please specify):

\_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your race/ethnicity? Select all that apply.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian                            | <input type="checkbox"/> White/Caucasian                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African American           | <input type="checkbox"/> Another race (please specify):      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latinx/e                | _____  |

6. What language do you speak at home?

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> English    | <input type="checkbox"/> Farsi                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish    | <input type="checkbox"/> Arabic                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese    | <input type="checkbox"/> Armenian              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tagalog    | <input type="checkbox"/> Russian               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Korean     | <input type="checkbox"/> Cambodian (Khmer)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify: _____ |

7. What zip code do you live in?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you have health insurance?

- Yes  
 No  
 Not sure

9. What type of insurance do you have? (Select all that apply)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medi-Cal (nationally known as Medicaid) | <input type="checkbox"/> Medicare (mostly for people 65 or older, and sometimes for people with certain disabilities) |
|--|---|



## Housing Survey

### DRAFT REVISED 4.29.25

- Medi-Medi (Medicare and Medicaid)
- Private insurance (via work, , union, etc.)
- Other, specify: \_\_\_\_\_
- Covered CA (marketplace exchange)
- Veteran's Administration
- Not sure
- None

10. Do you receive medical care through the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program? Click [here](#) to find out about Ryan White services in Los Angeles County.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

11. What is your current citizenship status? (Reminder: your answers will remain anonymous. This means that your answer to this question will not be linked to you in any way.)

- US citizen
- Permanent resident
- Not a US citizen or permanent resident
- Refugee or asylum seeker
- Decline to state

12. Have you lived in any of the following situations at any time within the last 2 years?  
Select all that apply.

- Lived in a vehicle, abandoned building, anywhere outside or other place not meant for human shelter
- Lived in a hotel, motel or campground paid for by an agency, church or other service provider
- Lived in a garage, backyard, or shed
- Lived in a shelter for single adults, youth or families



## Housing Survey

### DRAFT REVISED 4.29.25

- Lived in transitional housing for homeless persons
- Lived in a friend or family member's room, apartment or house where I did not contribute to the rent
- Lived in a hospital, nursing facility, mental health facility, jail/prison, or substance use disorder facility where I was homeless before
- None of the above

#### 13. What is your current housing situation?

- Renting a property
- Own a property
- Living in a shelter
- Unsheltered/homeless
- Staying with a friend/relative
- Living in a treatment facility
- Subsidized housing (Section 8, HOPWA)
- Living in supportive living facility or group home
- Moving from friend/relative to friend/relative (couch surfing)
- Other, please specify:  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### 14. How long have you been living in your current housing?

- Less than one month
- One to two months
- Three to six months
- Six months to one year
- More than one year

#### 15. Does this place have any of the following issues? Select all that apply.

- Incomplete kitchen (no sink, refrigerator, and/or stove with oven)
- No indoor bathroom
- No access to a kitchen
- No hot and/or cold running water
- No heating
- Mold/mildew



## Housing Survey

### DRAFT REVISED 4.29.25

- Pest infestation (bedbugs, cockroaches or other pests)
- External doors that don't lock
- Water leaks
- Broken windows and/or doors
- None of the above

16. Is your housing dedicated to only people living with HIV?

- Yes
- No

17. Have you had difficulty paying your rent/mortgage or utility bills in the past 12 months?

- Yes
- No

18. In the past 12 months, have you had any problems **getting** housing due to any of the following? *(Select all that apply)*

- Criminal record information
- Didn't have enough money for the deposit
- Could not find affordable housing
- Was put on a wait list
- Had credit problems
- Didn't qualify for housing assistance
- Had no transportation to look for housing
- Had a mental or physical disability
- History of drug or alcohol use
- Meeting eligibility requirements for subsidies (e.g. Section 8) or other public housing programs
- Finding a place to live that will accept my rental subsidy (Section 8)
- Problems with my immigration status
- Meeting eligibility requirements
- I have not had any problems getting housing





## Housing Survey

### DRAFT REVISED 4.29.25

19. Please share any additional challenges you have experienced with **getting** housing.

20. In the past 12 months, have you had any problems **keeping** your housing due to any of the following? (*Select all that apply*)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty paying rent, mortgage, or utilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Problems with my immigration status            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug or alcohol use                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal problems                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Credit problems                                | <input type="checkbox"/> I have not had any problems keeping my housing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eviction                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                   |

21. Please share any additional challenges you have experienced with **keeping** your housing.

22. Considering your living situation, which of these reasons make it harder for you to take care of your health?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a safe and/or private room        | <input type="checkbox"/> conditioning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not feel safe                              | <input type="checkbox"/> I am afraid of others where I live knowing I have HIV                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a bed to sleep in                 | <input type="checkbox"/> I cannot get away from drugs or alcohol   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a place to keep my medicine       | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have good internet access  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a phone where someone can call me | <input type="checkbox"/> There is not good public transportation where I live                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have enough food to eat                | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not feel comfortable receiving mail about my HIV care, including medications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have money to pay for rent             | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have heat and/or air                   | <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have these challenges  |



## Housing Survey

### DRAFT REVISED 4.29.25

23. What is your current employment status?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working full-time  | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working part-time  | <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self-employed      | <input type="checkbox"/> Looking for job/unable to find work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working off and on | <input type="checkbox"/> Attending job training              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not working        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify):             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability         | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student            |  |

24. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never attended school                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than high school                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some high school                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate degree    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High school graduate/GED                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some college/technical or vocational school |   |

25. Currently, what is your main source of income?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earnings/job              | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family/friends            | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CalWORKs                  | <input type="checkbox"/> No income       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, specify: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Assistance/Relief |  |

26. Do you receive any benefits from any of the following programs? Select all that apply.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CalFresh, SNAP or Food Stamps       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other retirement income      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SSI or Supplemental Security Income | <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployment insurance       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Disability Income             | <input type="checkbox"/> General Relief               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private disability insurance        | <input type="checkbox"/> CalWORKs or TANF             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security retirement income   | <input type="checkbox"/> Alimony and/or child support |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran's benefits           |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify:       |



## Housing Survey

**DRAFT REVISED 4.29.25**

None

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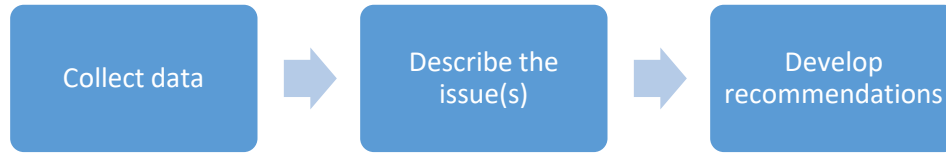
**PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT:** To identify activities and priorities the Housing Task Force will lead and advance for 2024-2025.

**CRITERIA:** Select activities that are **specific and realistic and within the scope and capacity of the COH**. The Commission is Los Angeles County’s integrated prevention and care planning council.

**Overarching Goal:** Develop specific and realistic recommendations and/or response to address the intersection of HIV/STD and housing.

2024-2025		
#	ACTIVITY	TIMELINE/DUE DATE/ACTION ITEMS
1	<p><b>Engage DHSP-funded housing and legal services agencies to understand the types of needs they see among their clients.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ keep people housed? How can this strategy be supported?</li> </ul> <p><b>Status Update (02.3.25):</b> Completed subject matter/provider panels with DHSP-funded housing agencies; Inner Law Center completed on 1/24/25 meeting. <b>Report back to COH 5/8/25</b></p>	<p>Invite these DHSP-funded housing and legal services agencies to the September 27 meeting and extend the time to 2 hours.</p> <p>Some questions to ask include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How do your programs work together to foster housing-legal services and partnerships for clients?</li> <li>○ When are you seeing clients in the service pipeline? What issues are they presenting with? How are your agencies mitigating their issues and needs?</li> <li>○ How can your services help prevent clients from becoming homeless? What services are provided for prevention versus those who are already homeless?</li> <li>○ How are clients getting to your agencies? Are they being referred by agencies? Other Ryan White-funded service providers? Self- referrals?</li> <li>○ Where are the gaps and failures happening in the overall service delivery network?</li> <li>○ What are legal issues are clients presenting with?</li> <li>○ What strategies should we consider in using legal services as a way to keep people housed?</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>Develop housing specific needs assessments and supplement with community listening sessions/focus groups.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review existing data and conduct housing-focused needs assessment. Dig deeper in the housing needs and challenges for PWH and those at risk. Identify provider needs around housing such as service/staffing and organizational capacity needs, issues, and challenges.</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and review existing data sources and needs assessments (i.e., City of LA Consolidated Plan, Housing Element Needs Assessment) <b>March- April 2025</b></li> <li>2. Develop needs assessment objectives, aims, questions/instruments. Develop focus group guide and survey. <b>April 2025</b></li> <li>3. Finalize instruments, promote, recruit participants, and administer survey. <b>May 2025</b></li> <li>4. Collect data analyze data. <b>June-July 2025</b></li> <li>5. Develop report and recommendations. <b>July 2025</b></li> </ol>

3	Convene housing solutions for PLWH summit to present needs assessment and develop county wide plan of action.	August-September 2025 or a World AIDS Day event?
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PRIORITY LIST AFTER ACTIVITY 1 IS COMPLETED			
2	<p>Use the data for service standards and/or create new service model; perhaps extend temporary housing to longer-term housing and braid RW and HOPWA funds together. Incorporate in EFA service standards the new guidance from HRSA that now allows the use of RW funds for rental deposits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Offer more legal services (such as help with eviction notices, landlord mediation, etc.) and emergency financial assistance to keep people housed.</li> </ul>	<p>Update service standards Review EFA and housing service standards Create program directives to DHSP</p>	<p>SBP is currently reviewing and updating the EFA service standards.</p>
3	<p>Once standards are updated, pursue advocacy efforts and use data with personal stories to advocate for more funding and/or policy changes.</p>	<p>Annual priority setting and resource allocations (PSRA) process.</p>	<p>PP&amp;A Committee will undertake PSRA for Program Year (PY) 34 and PY 35, 36, and 37 at the July and August PP&amp;A meetings.</p>
4	<p>Conduct housing resource fairs and/or housing clinics at the end of a Commission meeting (does not have to be at all Commission meetings) or have the Consumer Caucus lead this effort.</p>	<p>Inform, educate and disseminate information to consumers, specified target populations, providers, the general public, and HIV and health service policy makers to build knowledge and capacity for HIV prevention, care, and treatment; and actively engage individuals and entities concerned about HIV.</p>	

**\*\*CONTRACTUAL ISSUES AND AGENCY NAMES ARE OUTSIDE OF THE PURVIEW OF THE COH. HOPWA is not under Ryan White, or DHSP or the Commission.\*\***

**OTHER IDEAS FOR FUTURE WORKPLANS AND ACTIVITEIS**

#	HOUSING CHALLENGE/ISSUE	ACTION OR STRATEGY TO ADDRESS ISSUE	TIMELINE/ DUE DATE	ACTION ITEMS+NEXTSTEPS+FOLLOWUP
1	<p><b>Lack of coordination among housing systems and providers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HTF should look at ways to collaborate with DHSP and other providers – agencies are not aware of what each other are doing; not much communication between HIV and housing providers; conduct a training among housing providers about the Ryan White program</li> <li>• Improve interagency communication; the lack of and often conflicting communication among lead agencies and subcontractor agencies lead to frustration and delays in application process; case closures are done erroneously and the burden of starting over is on the client. Submitted documents are lost when they have been submitted by the client multiple times. No one is talking to the client; often left in limbo.</li> <li>• Ensure Medical Care Coordination teams and benefits specialty services contractors are aware of resources; provide trauma-informed care training.</li> </ul>		
2	<p><b>Duplicative and confusing application process</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve interagency communication; the lack of and often conflicting communication among lead agencies and subcontractor agencies lead to frustration and delays in application process; case closures are done erroneously and the burden of starting over is on the client. Submitted documents are lost when they</li> </ul>		

**OTHER IDEAS FOR FUTURE WORKPLANS AND ACTIVITEIS**

#	HOUSING CHALLENGE/ISSUE	ACTION OR STRATEGY TO ADDRESS ISSUE	TIMELINE/ DUE DATE	ACTION ITEMS+NEXTSTEPS+FOLLOWUP
		<p>have been submitted by the client multiple times. No one is talking to the client; often left in limbo.</p>		
3	<p><b>Lack of affordable housing stock</b></p>			
4	<p><b>Current efforts are not addressing the root causes of homelessness (stagnant incomes, poverty, racism, mental health, substance use, etc.)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore service models for different populations, such as the TransLatina Coalition’s employment to housing program, where graduates of the program learn to start their own business.</li> <li>• Intersect housing with other capacities like employment, food, mental health; some agencies just provide housing but not other services needed by the client to remain housed.</li> </ul>		
5	<p><b>Lack of homeless prevention services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore service models for different populations, such as the TransLatina Coalition’s employment to housing program, where graduates of the program learn to start their own business.</li> <li>• Intersect housing with other capacities like employment, food, mental health; some agencies just provide housing but not other services needed by the client to remain housed.</li> <li>• Universal basic income, expand</li> </ul>		

**OTHER IDEAS FOR FUTURE WORKPLANS AND ACTIVITEIS**

#	HOUSING CHALLENGE/ISSUE	ACTION OR STRATEGY TO ADDRESS ISSUE	TIMELINE/ DUE DATE	ACTION ITEMS+NEXTSTEPS+FOLLOWUP
		<p>financial assistance, temporary and permanent supporting housing.</p>		
6	<p><b>Lack of clarity about eligibility requirements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HTF should look at ways to collaborate with DHSP and other providers – agencies are not aware of what each other are doing; not much communication between HIV and housing providers; conduct a training among housing providers about the Ryan White program</li> <li>Improve interagency communication; the lack of and often conflicting communication among lead agencies and subcontractor agencies lead to frustration and delays in application process; case closures are done erroneously and the burden of starting over is on the client. Submitted documents are lost when they have been submitted by the client multiple times. No one is talking to the client; often left in limbo.</li> </ul>		
7	<p><b>Outdated and restrictive federal policies and regulations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agencies are under-staffed; secure more funding to expand staffing capacity.</li> </ul>		
8	<p><b>Unclear how/where one would access or start looking for help</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need effort to educate housing and HIV agencies; create a document or web page to help individuals at risk of losing housing; intervene to avert the crisis</li> <li>Develop 1 hotline for housing resources and program for PLWH and those at risk? Isn't this CHIRP LA?</li> </ul>		



**COMPREHENSIVE HIV PLAN (CHP) HOUSING RELATED ACTIVITIES:**

- 7C.5b: Improve systems, strategies and proposals that prevent homelessness, expand affordable housing, as well as prioritize housing opportunities for people living with, affected by, or at risk of transmission of HIV/AIDS, especially LGBTQ people
- 7C.5c: Promote family housing and emergency financial assistance as a strategy to maintain housing
- 7C.5d: Increase coordination among housing agencies to include intergenerational housing options
- 7C.5e: Blend funding to support housing and rental assistance for seniors living with HIV



April 2025

The UCLA Ziman Center for Real Estate presents a series of UCLA Affordable Housing Policy Briefs sponsored by the [UCLA Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Program in Real Estate, Finance and Urban Economics](#) and the [California Department of Real Estate](#), UCLA/Ziman Center Endowment Fund. For this April 2025 Brief, UCLA Ziman Center associate Jack Skelley speaks with [Lourdes Castro Ramirez](#) (B.A. '94/MURP '96/M.A. '03), recently appointed President and CEO of the [Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles](#) (HACLA). Ramirez and HACLA face many critical challenges related to affordable housing in Los Angeles. We discuss some of the most recent issues.

## States of Emergency

New HACLA President Lourdes Castro Ramirez on Los Angeles' Multiple Housing Crises



Disasters in Los Angeles (the urban wildfires) and events in Washington will likely greatly sharpen Los Angeles' already existing extreme housing affordability crisis. All these events transpired shortly after your assuming HACLA leadership. What can you tell me about HACLA efforts to monitor and assist on these daily mounting emergencies?

Los Angeles, like cities across the country, has long faced significant housing affordability challenges. Now that I am at HACLA, I remain deeply committed to its mission and to continuing the work that I led for Mayor Bass and Governor Newsom—to build more safe, dignified and affordable places for people to call home.

Following the wildfire emergency, HACLA quickly activated its emergency response protocols. In the first two weeks of the emergency, we held twice daily huddles with our emergency response team to share updates from the City's Emergency Operation Center and to keep our residents and housing communities informed. Our immediate focus was on assessing needs within our own housing portfolio to ensure residents remained safe. The staff quickly pivoted

to supporting the City's Recovery Operations Center and providing referrals and placement for housing, services and economic support. HACLA has a long-standing history of partnership, and we were able to lean on philanthropic and service organizations in our network to distribute N-95 masks, generators, clothes, food, laptops, and other essential supplies to fire-impacted residents in both the City and County of Los Angeles.

Recognizing early on that recovery and rebuilding is not just a matter for the directly impacted communities but the entire City and County of Los Angeles, HACLA has identified key issues and provided suggestions for legislative and regulatory fixes to help remove barriers to rebuilding and temper emerging challenges—such as rising housing costs, shifting policy landscapes, and natural disasters.

The only constant in life is change. Effective government response requires continuous assessment and preparation combined with nimbleness and flexibility. Our agency learned valuable lessons from this emergency and continues to integrate them into our disaster preparedness plans. As HACLA's new CEO, I am committed to strengthening our agency so we can be an even stronger partner to the City of Los Angeles and the region.

*“Preventing homelessness through affordable housing production and rental assistance remains the most sustainable long-term solution. HACLA continues to work to expand affordable housing and advocate for a coordinated, well-resourced approach that strengthens both emergency response and long-term housing stability.”*

— *Lourdes Castro Ramirez, President, Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles*

**HACLA advocates an “all-of-government approach” for housing crisis solutions. This includes: more active efforts to connect people with housing and supportive services; building a permanent interim housing infrastructure; and boosting the building of housing to lower housing/rental costs and “help prevent people from falling into homelessness in the first place.” At the same time, resources remain limited, and the L.A. fires have greatly increased the crisis. How would you characterize these solutions in terms of greatest chance for success, meriting the greatest investment?**

The roots of the crisis remain complex, ranging from a combination of economic and structural factors, which requires a multifaceted response that includes various innovative and comprehensive solutions.

In a crisis, immediate interventions are always necessary. From her first day in office, Mayor Bass declared an unprecedented state of emergency on homelessness, followed by the County Board of Supervisors taking the same action. Together, the City and County have led an extraordinary regional collaborative effort to expand our shelter and interim housing system, creating our first layer of connective tissue in a system of response. Expanding interim housing and strengthening supportive services provide urgent relief for people already experiencing homelessness, especially in the wake of disasters like the recent fires that have displaced Angelenos. Without these critical measures, more people would be left without shelter and the path to permanent housing even more difficult.

Mayor Bass has driven meaningful change in how we address homelessness, launching new initiatives to bring people living in encampment inside while also working to prevent people from losing their homes. We have seen that an all-of-government approach—across all levels—can move people inside, save lives, and restore neighborhoods. The 2024 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count showed homelessness in the City of Los Angeles decreasing for the first time in six years. The significant 10% drop in street homelessness in the City of L.A. reflects the strong action Mayor Bass has taken to confront the crisis.

At the same time, preventing homelessness through affordable housing production and rental assistance remains the most sustainable long-term solution. HACLA continues to work to expand affordable housing and advocate for a coordinated, well-resourced approach that strengthens both emergency response and long-term housing stability.

As the largest affordable housing provider in the region, we are committed to keeping families housed and connected to opportunities that improve educational and economic outcomes. We strive to provide respectful, high-quality services and maintain our housing communities to the highest standards in excellence.

Matthew Murphy, executive director of NYU's Furman Center, says New York will have to [defend many housing programs](#) from the incoming Trump administration. [Los Angeles mayor Karen Bass says](#) new programs could include working with the Trump administration on using federal land for temporary shelters (advocating modular structures over "tent cities.") How do you perceive the potential effect on housing of the Trump administration? Is there an approach that holds the best promise for success?

HACLA depends on federal funding from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), in fact 90% of HACLA's funding is provided by HUD, and any shift in federal policy plays a significant role our work. Potential threats include cuts to HUD funding, restrictions on rental assistance programs, and policy changes that could slow down the development of affordable housing.

HACLA has a strong track record of adapting to federal changes and will continue to preserve, enhance, and expand deeply affordable housing. One approach is to leverage all public land, including federal land to build housing.

Additionally, working with private sector partners, streamlining development processes, and engaging at the federal level to protect our key programs will be necessary to advancing housing solutions.

For the first time in the most recent election cycle, both Democrats and Republicans put affordable housing on their platform. This is the first time either party has recognized what a critical issue affordable housing is for every American and I believe that recognition will go a long way in Washington DC as legislative policies and budgets take shape. HACLA remains committed to expanding affordable housing and building thriving communities and we will provide HUD and legislators, at all levels, the data and information they need to deliver smart and effective policies to move the needle on housing affordability.

**How would large-scale deportations impact the housing crisis? It could reduce demand. But immigrants constitute a large share of homebuilding labor. (This is assuming mass deportations even happen.)**

About 35% of Angelenos are immigrants and I'm sure that percentage translates fairly evenly across the United States since we are a country of immigrants. Immigrants are not just workers, but they are neighbors, business owners, and families who contribute to the culture, economy, and social fabric that makes Los Angeles a beautiful place to live. Any policy involving mass deportations wouldn't just shift housing demand, it would disrupt communities, displace families, and create instability for countless people who call L.A. home.

From a housing perspective, it is important to recognize that immigrants play a key role in building and maintaining our homes. The construction industry depends heavily on immigrant workers. A sudden loss of this workforce could slow down production, increase costs, and make it even harder to address the housing crisis.

Our focus remains on preserving, enhancing, and expanding deeply affordable housing and improving the quality of life for Angelenos regardless of background. Policies that create displacement and instability do not solve the housing crisis—they make it worse. We will continue to prioritize supporting the laws of our country and doing the work of strengthening communities, increasing opportunity, and ensuring the people that we serve, including immigrant families, have a place to call home.

**The first Trump administration proposed removing Section 8 voucher funding if there was a noncitizen in the household. What would happen if Section 8 housing was killed?**

The loss of Section 8 voucher funding would be catastrophic for low-income households and property owners in Los Angeles and across the nation. The Housing Choice Voucher Program (commonly known as Section 8) is one of the most effective tools for preventing and reducing homelessness while ensuring housing stability.

Eliminating Section 8 would put thousands of Angelenos—many of them seniors, people with disabilities, families with children—on the brink of eviction and potential homelessness.

Congress created the Section 8 program with the goal of enabling low-income families to reduce the cost of living, requiring voucher holders to pay 30 percent of their income towards rent while the voucher or subsidy covers the remainder.

In Los Angeles, HACLA is authorized to administer over 61,000 vouchers, helping residents afford rent in the private market. Nearly \$800 million flows into the local economy each year through rental payments to 13,000 private property owners and developers on behalf of the program participants.

Without Section 8, there are not enough deeply affordable housing units to accommodate the families who rely on these subsidies. The results would be increased displacement, overcrowding, and homelessness, worsening an already severe housing crisis.

Additionally, the ripple effects extend beyond voucher holders. Many property owners who participate in the program depend on the steady rental income from vouchers. Without it, they could face financial strain leading to instability in the rental market. The broader economy would also feel the impact, as housing instability drives up costs for emergency services, healthcare, and social programs.

I recently met a young man, who thanked me on behalf of his mother and family. He shared that, thanks to HACLA and the Section 8 program, his mom was able to provide him and his siblings with a stable place to live. The stability allowed him to succeed in school, attend college and earn his degree from UCLA. Today, he works for a non-profit organization in Los Angeles and hopes to help his mother buy their first home. This is why programs like Section 8 are so essential.

**A study on the proposed Citywide Housing Incentive Program (CHIP) says the City will fall short of State requirement for the construction of approximately 250,000 new homes. [New research by UCLA's Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies](#) finds that the CHIP ordinance - moving now through City Council - will probably result in far fewer than those 250,000 new homes. The reason: It is weak in upzoning politically powerful, single-family homes neighborhoods. What's the solution here?**

Meeting the Regional Housing Need Assessments (RHNA) of approximately 450,000 units of housing capacity in the City by 2029 will require multiple concurrent efforts, including addressing the ongoing concentration of affordable housing for low-income households in lower opportunity areas.

I believe the removal of upzoning in single-family neighborhoods is not a reflection of our expertise or political understanding of the issue but rather an indication that we have more work to do to educate our neighbors and fellow Angelenos. It is an important first step, but I don't believe anyone sees it as the last.

Many of the communities targeted for further upzoning are already facing deep gentrification pressures, including rising rents as new developments are completed and as rent stabilized buildings are demolished to make way for higher density market rate housing. The tension between the need to build more housing and the desire to preserve existing zoning will remain a challenge. But I am optimistic that we will find a path forward.

**Here's some good news! Two master plans emphasizing affordable housing are having an impact in L.A.: The redevelopment of Jordan Downs and the evolving masterplan at West L.A. Veterans Administration campus. Both are large-scale. And the VA campus is already credited [with lifting a significant number of veterans off the street](#). Care to comment on these?**

Jordan Downs and the build out of the VA Campus are vastly different in their approach and impetus yet both are proving to be catalytic.

The community-driven revitalization of Jordan Downs extends beyond housing, creating a thriving, inclusive neighborhood with new homes, retail spaces, job opportunities, childcare, parks, and gathering spaces. Most importantly, we are ensuring that the existing community remains intact while expanding opportunity for families through additional affordable housing.

Once complete, Jordan Downs will feature approximately 1,683 new affordable and market rate homes, offering both rental housing and ownership opportunities to foster a dynamic mixed-income community. This project exemplifies our commitment to making meaningful investments that uplift entire neighborhoods. HACLA leveraged Jordan Downs as a catalyst for broader community investment, securing grant funding from the State of California, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the USDA Forest Service, and the National Institute of Health. These funds have driven new parks, multi-modal transformation improvements, and public health investments across Watts.

I am excited to share that we have four additional large-scale redevelopment efforts underway. We will apply the lessons learned from Jordan Downs as we revitalize and expand housing in these communities.

Back to the VA campus, HACLA has been able to provide voucher subsidies for several new affordable housing units coming online, and we are excited to see the next steps in its evolution. This long-awaited redevelopment is becoming a vibrant, supportive community where Veterans and their families can thrive. Like our partners in Veteran advocacy, we are overjoyed to witness this progress.

