Facilitate Utilization of Federal Housing Subsidies

POPULATION IMPACT

✅ ALL FAMILIES TAY SINGLE ADULT VETERAN CHRONICALLY HOMELESS ADULT

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA) to develop the following temporary, two-year programs to encourage landlord acceptance of subsidized tenants with a Housing and Urban Development voucher issued by HACoLA:

1. Damage Mitigation/Property Compliance Fund;
2. Vacancy payments to hold units; and

LEAD AGENCY

Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles

COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES

Health Services
Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
Other Public Housing Authorities

DESCRIPTION

Federal housing subsidies play a critical role in combatting homelessness; however, the current very low vacancy rate in the rental housing market makes it very difficult for families and individuals with a federal subsidy to secure housing. To mitigate this problem, for two years, the County could provide the following incentives for landlords to accept subsidized tenants:

- Damage Mitigation/Property Compliance Fund. This program should be similar to Oregon's Housing Choice Landlord Guarantee Program, which provides financial assistance to landlords to mitigate damage caused by tenants during their occupancy under the HUD Housing Choice Voucher Program, Family Unification Program, and Shelter Plus Care/Continuum. In addition, the program should provide landlords with modest financial assistance to repair and/or modify their property to comply with HUD Quality Housing Standards, if property non-compliance is the only barrier to accepting a subsidized tenant.

- Vacancy payments to hold units. Develop a program to provide landlords vacancy payments to hold a rental unit for 1-2 months once a tenant with a subsidy has been accepted by the landlord, while the landlord is going through the HUD approval process. This program is needed on a temporary basis, due to the current, exceptionally low rental housing vacancy rate in Los Angeles County. The County is already implementing such a program under the Department of Health Service's Housing for Health Program and the Veterans Administration Supportive Housing Program.

- Security Deposit Assistance. Develop a
DESCRIPTION (continued)

Program to provide security deposit assistance to homeless individuals and families by either covering the amount of the security deposit or having the County guarantee the deposit. The latter could be modeled after Monterey County’s Security Deposit Guarantee Program which allows low-income households to spread out the security deposit over a period of time. The County would sign an agreement with the landlord that guarantees them the full amount of the deposit while allowing the tenant to make monthly payments with no interest. If tenant defaults, the County would be responsible for paying the difference owed to the landlord.

POPULATION(S) TARGETED & OTHER CATEGORIZATIONS

All homeless populations.

POTENTIAL PERFORMANCE METRICS

◆ Increased number of landlords willing to accept homeless households with housing subsidies

FUNDING

◆ $2 million in one-time HPI funds for the three recommended programs, with no more than $750,000 for the Security Deposit Assistance Program.

CONNECTION TO CITIES

✓ SAME

COMPLEMENTARY

NO CITY ROLE

Cities which have their own Public Housing Authorities could implement the same or similar programs to facilitate utilization of the housing subsidies which they issue. All cities could fund vacancy payments to facilitate rapid re-housing for their homeless residents.