Strategy B6 | SUBSIDIZE HOUSING

Family Reunification Housing Subsidy

POPULATION IMPACT

ALL  ✔ FAMILIES  TAY  SINGLE ADULT  VETERAN  CHRONICALLY HOMELESS ADULT

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the Department of Children and Family Services and Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority to provide rapid re-housing and case management services to families in the child welfare system where the parent(s)' homelessness is the sole barrier to the return of the child(ren), and the family meets the following criteria:

1. The child(ren) are currently placed in out-of-home care (including relative caregivers);
2. The parent(s) have complied with or are in substantial compliance with all court orders for the return of their children;
3. Homelessness is the sole barrier to the return of the child(ren) to their care; and
4. The family is a good candidate for rapid re-housing, rather than a longer-term housing subsidy.

DESCRIPTION

DCFS has oversight of thousands of children in out-of-home care throughout Los Angeles County. Families on CalWORKs whose child(ren) are removed lose eligibility to their CalWORKs cash grant, if there is no minor child remaining the home; therefore, the removal of the child(ren) can itself result in the family becoming homeless. Moreover, since homeless parent(s) without physical custody of a child are not eligible to receive a CalWORKs grant which could be used to pay for housing, children can remain in foster care for extended periods of time. A significant number of children in out-of-home placement could be reunited with their parents, if their parents were able to obtain and sustain suitable housing.

Rapid re-housing is the most effective and efficient intervention for more than 50 percent of homeless individuals and families based on available data. The success rate for permanent placement is higher and recidivism rates are lower than for other forms of housing intervention. However, notwithstanding the value of rapid re-housing, some families who initially appear to be well-suited to rapid re-housing may ultimately need a permanent housing subsidy. Such families should be granted priority access to a permanent, federally-funded housing subsidy. This is consistent with the current approach in the Homeless Families Solutions System administered by the LAHSA.

LEAD AGENCIES

Children and Family Services (DCFS)
Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA)

COLLABORATING

DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES

Community Development Commission
Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles
Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles
Probation
Public Social Services
POPULATION(S) TARGETED & OTHER CATEGORIZATION

Homeless families with DCFS involvement, where the family’s homelessness is the sole barrier to the return of the child(ren) from out-of-home placement.

POTENTIAL PERFORMANCE METRICS

- Number of families placed in housing
- Number and percentage of families who have retained housing after 12 months by service planning area
- Number and percent with increased income from all potential sources at program exit
- Number of families with no DCFS jurisdiction at program exit
- Number and percent of families who successfully transition to unsubsidized housing

FUNDING

- DCFS funding that would otherwise be used for out-of-home placement, absent reunification, will be used to fund participation in this program by families which include an adult who is eligible to participate in the CalWORKs welfare-to-work program, including subsidized employment. An initial commitment of $2 million from DCFS will enable the program to be implemented. Out-of-home placement cost savings will be tracked, based on an assumption that the child(ren) would have otherwise remained in placement for 12 additional months, and the savings will be reinvested to sustain the program on an ongoing basis. If savings exceed the cost of sustaining the program for families which include a CalWORKs parent who is welfare-to-work eligible, the “surplus savings” could be used for rapid re-housing for other families who meet the eligibility criteria for this program.

- $1 million in one-time HPI funding for families who meet the eligibility criteria for this program, but do not include a parent who is eligible to participate in the CalWORKs welfare-to-work program.

- CalWORKs Single Allocation funding, including family reunification services for families who were receiving CalWORKs at the time that the child(ren) were removed.

- Housing Choice Vouchers, particularly from the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA) and the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA), for families who ultimately need an ongoing housing subsidy at the end of the rapid re-housing program.

- Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers from HACLA and HACoLA.

CONNECTION TO CITIES

SAME

COMPLEMENTARY

NO CITY ROLE

Cities which operate public housing authorities could commit Housing Choice Vouchers for families who participate in this program, but ultimately need an ongoing housing subsidy.