



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, AGING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS DIRECTIVE

DATE: September 3, 2019

NUMBER: WDP D19-09

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES HOMELESS OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEANINGFUL EMPLOYMENT DEFINITION OF HOMELESS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This directive provides information and guidance to agencies operating workforce development programs funded by Los Angeles County Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) on what defines individuals and families as homeless. This directive is effective immediately.

REFERENCES

- 24 CFR Parts 91, 582, and 563 – Department of Housing and Urban Development Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) “Homeless” Definition Final Rule¹

BACKGROUND

Different agencies use different definitions of homeless which affects how various programs determine eligibility for individuals and families at the state and local level. To maintain consistency across Workforce programs, Los Angeles County WDACS will use the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition of homeless.

HUD is a Cabinet department in the Executive branch of the United States federal government and is administered by the United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, which is tasked with developing and executing policies on housing and metropolises.

On December 5, 2011 HUD issued the final regulation to implement changes to the definition of homelessness contained in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act. The definition affects who is eligible for various HUD-funded homeless assistance programs. The new definition includes four broad categories of homelessness:

- I. Literally Homeless
- II. Imminent Risk of Homelessness
- III. Homeless under other Federal statutes
- IV. Fleeing/ Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Accurately assessing whether an individual is experiencing homelessness is essential in determining additional services available, appropriate partner referrals, and maintaining data integrity. Agencies operating workforce development programs funded by WDACS are to use HUD's definition of homeless when assessing the status of participant(s) at the time of enrollment and throughout program participation.

This requires agencies to report in CalJOBS and the Youth@Work portal, if applicable, if a participant is experiencing homelessness and to assess all participants' status, as it may change, at each contact with participant. This will ensure that those who fall into homelessness are documented and provided additional services that will aid them in combating these barriers.

For specialized programs (i.e. LA:RISE and Alternative Staffing Organization Program) that include Formerly Homeless or History of Homeless as categories of eligibility, these categories will also be considered as meeting the definition of Homeless (as described below).

Homeless is defined as follows:

- I. **Literally Homeless:** An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
 - i. An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
 - ii. An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately-operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
 - iii. An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;

- II. Imminent Risk of Homelessness:** Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
- i. The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
 - ii. No subsequent residence has been identified; and
 - iii. The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks needed to obtain other permanent housing;
- III. Homeless under other Federal statutes:** Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:
- i. Are defined as homeless under section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a), section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e–2), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)), or section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);
 - ii. Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance;
 - iii. Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and
 - iv. Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities; chronic physical health or mental health conditions; substance addiction; histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect); the presence of a child or youth with a disability; or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment; or

IV. Fleeing/ Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence: Any individual or family who:

- i. Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's or family's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
- ii. Has no other residence; and
- iii. Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, and faith based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

ACTION

All applicable WDACS programs will use the homeless definition as defined by HUD and as it is defined in this directive.

INQUIRIES

Inquiries regarding this directive and the policies and procedures described herein should be directed to HOME@wdacs.lacounty.gov.



**Irene Pelayo, Program Manager
Workforce Development**

¹ https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/HEARTH_HomelessDefinition_FinalRule.pdf