Los Angeles Continuum of Care

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# LOS ANGELES CONTINUUM OF CARE ANNOUNCES SETTLEMENT PRESERVING LOCAL CONTROL OF HOMELESSNESS FUNDING

*Agreement keeps funding decisions in the hands of the community and protects housing and services for thousands of Angelenos.*

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles Continuum of Care (LA CoC) today announced the approval of a settlement resolving federal litigation with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in *Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority v. Donald J. Trump et al (2:26-cv-07056-DOC-AJR)*. The litigation challenged HUD's June decision to suspend LAHSA and usurp the region's control over approximately $240 million in federal homelessness funds. In August, LA CoC intervened in the lawsuit to challenge HUD's failure to consider the impact on the LA CoC, the largest Continuum of Care in the country, which is responsible for coordinating federal funding and key components of the region's homelessness response system.

In October, after a robust and independent application process ordered by Judge David O. Carter, LA CoC selected the County of Los Angeles to take over the roles LAHSA had previously performed for the region. Those roles include submitting the region's consolidated application for federal funding, coordinating the homeless count, overseeing the region's homelessness data, and matching unhoused people with available housing.

"HUD's unprecedented actions against LAHSA and the CoC threatened to effectively disband the CoC and with it, upend one of the most stable and collaborative parts of the region's homelessness response system," said **Ben Kay, chair of the Los Angeles Continuum of Care Board.** "But as a region, we came together to stand up and fight back. This week, we got control for the region back. Now comes the hard work of rebuilding the stability of the system, along with all of our partners."

The settlement signed by Judge Carter creates a thirteen-month timeline for the transition of the administrative roles previously performed by LAHSA to the County of Los Angeles. The extended transition period is aimed at preserving stability for service providers and the unhoused people they serve. The settlement also requires HUD to provide technical assistance to the County and ensures oversight and monitoring while the transition takes place.

The LA CoC is represented pro bono by the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Public Counsel, and Steptoe LLP.

“Congress created the Continuum of Care system to empower local stakeholders to set the priorities for how federal funding is spent in their communities. HUD’s actions took that away from Los Angeles. This settlement brings it back home. In doing so, the settlement protects the region’s vital homelessness response system and the housing and services that keep tens of thousands of our neighbors off the streets,” said **Shayla Myers, Director of Impact Litigation and Policy for the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles and lead counsel for the LA CoC**.

“This settlement gives the LA CoC, LAHSA, the County, and all of their critical partners, including the City of Los Angeles, the time and direction they need to build an even stronger system to address the homelessness crisis in Los Angeles,” said **Faizah Malik, Managing Attorney at Public Counsel and an attorney for the LA CoC**.

“We are pleased to have been able to support this important effort to protect the LA CoC and the Los Angeles community’s ability to respond to the needs locally, as well as to support our pro bono partners at Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles and Public Counsel,” said **Robyn Crowther, partner at Steptoe LLP and an attorney for the LA CoC.**

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**The Los Angeles Continuum of Care** is a body of local stakeholders, including unhoused people, nonprofit homeless assistance providers, and local governments and agencies, established by Congress to coordinate the LA region’s homeless response system under federal law. LA CoC includes 85 cities in Los Angeles County and is led by a Board that carries out LA CoC’s congressionally-mandated responsibilities. https://losangelescoc.org/.

**Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles (LAFLA)** is a nonprofit law firm that seeks to achieve equal justice for people living in poverty across Greater Los Angeles, with offices, legal clinics, and self-help centers throughout the community. For more information, please visit www.lafla.org.

**Public Counsel** is a nonprofit public interest law firm dedicated to advancing civil rights and racial and economic justice, as well as to amplifying the power of our clients through comprehensive legal advocacy. For more information, please visit publiccounsel.org.

**Steptoe LLP** is an international law firm with a reputation for vigorous representation of clients and innovative thinking before governmental agencies, successful advocacy in litigation and arbitration, and creative and practical advice in structuring business transactions. For more information, visit www.steptoe.com.