



APPENDIX A: Glossary of Terms

ACT Teams (Assertive Community Team) – A client-centered, recovery-oriented mental health service delivery model that has received substantial empirical support for facilitating community living, psychosocial rehabilitation, and recovery for persons who have the most serious mental illnesses, have severe symptoms and impairments, and have not benefited from traditional out-patient programs.

Acuity Scale – A scale used by case managers to assess numbers, and severity of issues, for their clients. Alternatively, the scale can be used by management for balancing the time commitment and caseload of an organization overall.

At-Risk of Homelessness – People who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is precarious or does not meet public health and safety standards.

Affordable Housing – Housing for which the occupant(s) is/are paying no more than 30 percent of his or her income for gross housing costs, including utilities.

Bridge Housing – A housing intervention that provides an interim residence to participants while they work with housing navigators to become document ready and matched with appropriate permanent housing.

Community Development Corporation (CDC) – A developer who is building affordable housing.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) – An annual appropriation allocated between states and local jurisdictions that are distributed to ensure decent affordable housing, provide services to the most vulnerable members of a community, and to create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses.

Case Management – A collaborative and client centered approach to service provision for persons experiencing homelessness. In this approach, a case worker assesses the needs of the client (and potentially their families) and when appropriate, arranges coordinates and advocates for delivery and access to a range of programs and services to address the individual's needs.

Chronically Homeless – An individual or family that is homeless and resides in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, and has been homeless and residing in such a place for at least one year or on at least four separate occasions in the last three years. The head of household must have a diagnosable substance use disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, post-traumatic stress disorder, brain injury, or chronic physical illness or disability.



Co-location – Refers to the practice of housing services in a single location to improve service access and communication/collaboration between service providers.

Coordinated Entry System (CES) – A process through which the most vulnerable homeless residents of Los Angeles County are matched with the available and appropriate housing resources.

Continuum of Care (CoC) – Term that serves dual purposes in the arena of homeless service delivery. As a service delivery system, a Continuum of Care is an integrated system of care that guides and tracks homeless individuals and families through a comprehensive array of housing & services designed to prevent and end homelessness. As a jurisdictional body, a Continuum of Care is a regional or local planning body that coordinates housing and services funding for homeless families and individuals. The Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) serves as the CoC for the City and most of the County of Los Angeles. Through its Continuum of Care program the Department of Housing and Urban Development allocates homeless assistance grants to CoCs.

Councils of governments (COGs) – Regional governing and/or coordinating bodies that work together on issues of mutual interest to their constituents.

Diversion/Prevention – Service programs that divert persons who are at imminent risk of losing their housing from entering the homeless system.

Emergency Shelters (Non-Disaster Related) – Temporary shelter and services designed to facilitate homeless individuals and families' transition from the streets to appropriate housing.

Everyone In – United Way's campaign focused on ending homelessness across Los Angeles County by providing critical services to those who need it most and helping transition people experiencing long-term homelessness with short-term and permanent housing solutions.

Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count - The Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count gives a snapshot (or a Point-In-Time Count) of homelessness in Los Angeles. It shows us the amount of people experiencing homelessness, the demographics, the distribution across the County, and where they are staying.

Harbor Interfaith Services – Harbor Interfaith Services is a nonprofit, secular organization that provides support services including shelter, transitional housing, food, job placement, advocacy, childcare, education, and life-skills training to the homeless and working poor within the South Bay of Los Angeles County, Service Planning Area 8.

Harm Reduction – Similar to Housing First, the Harm Reduction philosophy prioritizes housing stability among persons who have experienced homelessness and who may be facing disabilities.



Home For Good – United Way’s Action Plan to end chronic and veteran homelessness in L.A. County by 2016. The plan was launched in December 2010 by the Business Leader’s Task Force on Homelessness, a partnership of United Way of Greater Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce.

Homeless – (a) People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency or transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided. (b) People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which may include a hotel or a doubled-up situation, within 14 days and lack resources or support to remain in housing. (c) Families with children, or unaccompanied youth, who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state, defined as no lease or ownership interest in a housing unit in the last 50 days, have had two or more moves in the last 60 days, and who are likely to continue to be unstably housed. (d) People who are fleeing domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack resources to obtain permanent housing.

Homeless Outreach Mobile Engagement (HOME) – DMH’s HOME provides countywide field-based outreach and engagement services to homeless persons and the mentally ill who live in encampments or other locations where outreach is not provided in a concentrated manner.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) – Is a local information technology system used to collect client-level data and data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. Each Continuum of Care is responsible for selecting an HMIS software solution that complies with HUD’s data collection, management, and reporting standards.

Housing First – An approach that offers permanent housing as quickly as possible for people experiencing homelessness, particularly for people with long histories of homelessness and co-occurring health challenges, while providing the supportive services people need to keep their housing and avoid returning to homelessness. Income, sobriety and/or participation in treatment or other services are voluntary and are not required as a condition for housing.

Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) – Provides housing assistance and related supportive services.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Integrated Case Management Teams (ICM) – This “refers to a team approach taken to co-ordinate various services for a specific child and/or families through a cohesive and sensible plan. The team should include all service providers who have a role in implementing the plan, and whenever possible, the child or youth’s family.”

Joint Powers Authority (JPA) – An entity that is established when two or more public agencies by agreement jointly exercise any power common to the contracting agencies.



Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) Commission – The governing body for LAHSA. It is politically appointed, ten-member board with five members selected by the County Board of Supervisors and five members chosen by the Mayor and City Council of Los Angeles. The Commission has the authority to make budgetary, funding, planning, and program policies. For more information visit <https://www.lahsa.org/>

Measure H – The approval of Measure H by L.A County voters will authorize the County to impose a one-quarter percent (0.25%) tax that will generate \$355 million annually for services and programs to prevent and combat homelessness. The tax applies to all the cities within the County of Los Angeles and will be in effect for 10 years.

Measure HHH – Assures \$1.2 billion over 10 years for construction projects to provide "safe, clean, affordable housing for the homeless and for those in danger of becoming homeless."

Mental Health First Aid – An 8-hour course that teaches how to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis.

Mental Health Evaluation Team (MET) – Often composed of mental health clinicians, outreach workers, and law enforcement representatives they offer mental health assessment, treatment and care to people experiencing homelessness.

Motivational Interviewing – An evidence based practice in working with clients that has proven to be successful. In this approach, the service provider allows the client to direct the change rather than telling the client what they need to do. This approach is about having a conversation about change.

No Wrong Door – A philosophy that helps structure a response to homelessness. Any government agency regularly interacting with the general public is a means of connecting homeless individuals with homeless service providers capable of providing basic care, shelter, and housing. Any interaction between homeless individuals and City employees is an opportunity for meaningful engagement that ultimately results in a homeless person connecting with a care provider or case manager.

People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) – The South Bay Cities Council of Governments contracts with PATH for local homeless outreach and case management services, including connecting individuals with medical and mental healthcare, interim housing, veteran services, employment services and providing benefits enrollment and advocacy.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – A housing intervention with indefinite rental assistance and supportive services to assist homeless persons with a disability achieve housing stability.

Point-in-Time (PIT) Count – A count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons on a single night in January. HUD requires that Continuums of Care conduct an annual count



of homeless persons who are sheltered in emergency shelter, transitional housing, and Safe Havens on a single night. Continuums of Care also must conduct a count of unsheltered homeless persons every other year (odd numbered years). Each count is planned, coordinated, and carried out locally.

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) – A housing intervention that connects homeless individuals and families (from emergency shelters or the streets) to permanent housing through the provision of time-limited financial assistance and targeted supportive services.

Recovery – A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.

Safe Parking Program – A program that provides a safe parking environment and supportive services for transitional homeless individuals living in their vehicles for overnight stays. Onsite service providers work with participants to help develop a plan with a final emphasis on permanent housing, employment and training.

Service Planning Area (SPA) – A specific geographic region within Los Angeles County. These distinct regions allow the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health to develop and provide more relevant public health and clinical services targeted to the specific health needs of the residents in these different areas.

Sheltered Homeless – A homeless person that resides in an emergency shelter, including temporary emergency shelters only open during severe weather; or in transitional housing for homeless individuals who originally came from the streets or emergency shelters.

Supportive Services – The supportive services provided in supportive housing are what distinguish supportive housing from other types of affordable housing. To the extent possible, the supportive services available in a supportive housing project should be customized with the needs of the tenants in mind. Supportive housing support services are intended to help ensure housing stability and to maximize each tenant's ability to live independently.

Transitional Age Youth (TAY) – Young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four who are in transition from state custody or foster care and are at-risk of homelessness. Once they turn 18 they can no longer receive assistance from the systems of care that previously provided for many of their needs.

Transitional Housing (TH) – A housing intervention that provides homeless individuals and families with the interim stability and support to successfully move into and maintain permanent housing.

Unsheltered Homeless – A homeless person that resides in a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, or on the street.



The Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT)
– A pre-screening tool for communities that can be conducted to quickly determine whether a client has high, moderate, or low acuity.