



# Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities

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*Celebrating 44 Years of Leadership & Advocacy*



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January 2, 2020

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities (Commission), the Policies on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ad-Hoc Committee (Committee) respectfully requests that the Board of Supervisors (Board) review and support our recommendations regarding the housing crisis for people with the intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD).

### **Ad-Hoc Committee Composition**

The Committee is comprised of Commissioners who are either parents of adult children with developmental disabilities, or who provide direct service to this vulnerable population. The housing crisis is a top priority for the Committee, and it is our sincere hope that the Board directs the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) to increase its focus on the developmentally disabled community. The Committee consulted with LACDA, as well as various state-wide coalitions and alliances, such as Lanterman Housing Alliance and local Regional Centers, in order to prepare these recommendations.

### **Statistics of Quantified Housing Need**

Of approximately 324,000 individuals with I/DD served by Regional Centers in the State of California, nearly 25% (81,000 people) live in Los Angeles County. The 2016 Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority Homeless Count found more than 1,480 people with developmental disabilities living in the streets.<sup>1</sup> According to data from the California Department of Developmental Services, 16% (12,960 people) of Los Angeles County's I/DD population are ages 42 and older. Further, of these same residents approximately 30% (3,934 people) of Los Angeles County residents with I/DD, are living with aging parents who will increasingly be unable to continue to care for and house their adult children in the coming decades.<sup>2</sup> These particular I/DD individuals are at risk of finding themselves un-housed as the current housing infrastructure is insufficient to meet the needs of adults with I/DD when their aging caregivers are no longer able to continue to provide the same level of support and housing stability.<sup>3</sup>

Due to their disability and lack of employment opportunities, 8 out of 10 people with developmental disabilities must rely on Social Security Income (SSI) to support themselves. The current, typical SSI payment is under \$900/month or \$10,700/year. Thirty percent of \$900/month amounts to an affordable rent of no more than \$270/per month based on this SSI income. A person with a developmental disability, whose sole income is SSI, cannot afford fair market rent in any city within Los Angeles County.<sup>4</sup>

People with I/DD are among the most economically disadvantaged and vulnerable populations in our country. Yet this population was not explicitly included in new statewide and regional affordable housing programs designed to create permanent, supportive housing for people with mental health diagnosis, people who are chronically homeless, or veterans. Because people with I/DD were not explicitly included, housing developers are not currently utilizing newly available resources to partner with Los Angeles County Regional Centers and community-based service providers to plan and make available, critically needed affordable supportive housing for residents with I/DD.

### **Recommendations**

To address this housing crisis for Los Angeles County residents with I/DD, the Commission respectfully urges the Board to support these recommendations and direct the LACDA to increase the focus of the I/DD population in its activities as follows:

1. Encourage the purchase, design, building, and renovation of new and existing affordable housing; set aside units in new or existing developments; and preserve housing in already existing units;

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1. *The Greater Los Angeles Homeless County, LASHA (2016)*

2. *CDER, DDS (2018)*

3. *Statewide Strategic Framework for Expanding Housing Opportunities for People with I/DD, SCDD (2018)*

4. *Priced Out, TAC (2018) (Final Version 12-6-19)*

2. Through a combination of various strategies, such as rental subsidies, developmental capital funding assistance, access to vacant public housing units, etc., set a goal to achieve a 5% allocation of all future affordable housing in Los Angeles County to be developed specifically for low and extremely low-income residents with I/DD;
3. Review for consideration and inclusion in the Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool individuals with I/DD who can also demonstrate a mental health diagnosis and are currently un-housed, or imminently at risk of experiencing homelessness;
4. Consider directing housing choice voucher programs to specifically include a percentage of people with I/DD;
5. Consider rental subsidies to be made specifically available for low and extremely low-income residents with I/DD;
6. Specific allowances, incentives and discounts should be created to encourage the construction of Accessory Dwelling Units by families to meet the needs of relatives with I/DD;
7. Consider revising existing County affordable housing programs through the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and housing related measures in order to better qualify developers utilizing best-practice strategies to include supportive and inclusionary housing for people with I/DD;
8. Consider waiving County associated development fees for affordable housing projects serving people with I/DD. Fees waived should correspond with the percent of I/DD affordable housing units created or set aside as part of the project;
9. Provide technical assistance to all interested parties such as Regional Centers and housing developers on how to best utilize current County funding streams to house people with developmental disabilities;
10. Evaluate all existing unutilized or underutilized County properties with the intent to make all suitable properties for housing people with I/DD available through a Request For Proposal process; and
11. Encourage all proposed and subsequently approved affordable housing developments for residents with I/DD to be designated as Inclusive, Integrated, Supportive, Affordable Housing.

Honorable Board of Supervisors

January 2, 2020

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The Commission strongly believes that these recommendations will help the LACDA allocate resources and create tools to address the lack of affordable housing specific to the needs of I/DD people. In addition, these recommendations will encourage direct capital investment to fund the acquisition, renovation, and construction of affordable housing units, or provide new rental subsidies for the I/DD population at a proportional rate to the local population.

The Commission thanks the Board for its continued support of people with disabilities and strongly seeks the Board's help to assist LACDA with the implementation of these proposed recommendations.

If you have any questions or wish to discuss the recommendations further, please contact the Committee at (213) 974-1053 or at [laccod@bos.lacounty.gov](mailto:laccod@bos.lacounty.gov).


Sincerely,



Carlos Benavides, President  
Commission on Disabilities



Jack Darakjian, Co-Chair  
Commission on Disabilities  
Policies on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ad Hoc Committee



Cathy Gott, Co-Chair  
Commission on Disabilities  
Policies on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Ad Hoc Committee

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- Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
- Acting Executive Officer, Los Angeles County Development Authority
- County Counsel