

# Skid Row Homeless Families Diversion Plan

# Child Safety

- Child safety is our first concern
- DCFS staff working on Skid Row clear all cases on the Child Welfare System/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)
- CWS/CMS “clear” identifies if family has past involvement with DCFS
- If probable cause, DCFS also accesses the Dept. of Justice database
- DCFS conducts child risk assessment on all Skid Row families encountered

# Skid Row Early Morning Screening Teams

- Teams include DCFS and DPSS staff
- Two teams: at Midnight Mission (MM) and Union Rescue Mission (URM)
- Begin at MM at 6 a.m. and at URM at 7 a.m. work until 7:30 p.m. Monday through Friday
- Collaborative agreement with MM and URM to identify families and connect them with the County Team
- DHS, DMH and LAHSA on-call to assist the teams with housing vouchers, transportation, mental health assessment, clinical needs
- Purpose is to move families to transitional housing outside of Skid Row

# Single Homeless Families Data Base

- Web-based data base for use by all County departments and LAHSA
- Data included: family name, location, service dates, reasons for homelessness, family circumstances, service needs, services provided, any other information to assist in providing appropriate services
- DCFS, DPSS and other County departments able to share data per Welfare and Institutions Code permission for multi-disciplinary teams to share data when engaged in “prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse”
- Families asked to sign *Consent to Share Information* form if needed to facilitate the sharing of information beyond County teams

# Housing Assistance Needs of Skid Row Families

- Goal: Permanent housing for Skid Row families with strong case management to ensure families stay connected to supportive services
- Use extended stay hotels outside Skid Row as short term housing
- Request assistance from the City of Los Angeles re Section 8 vouchers or other rental subsidu
- If appropriate, utilize the Mental Health Services Act Housing Fund to provide rental assistance
- Use County general fund by accessing the Homeless and Housing Program Fund

# Families Ineligible for DPSS Housing Assistance

- These families, including undocumented families, must also be removed from Skid Row
- DCFS Family Preservation funds maybe available
- County and City general fund will need to be used
- Need same services as DPSS eligible families: short term housing, permanent housing with strong case management
- DCFS will provide case management

# Housing Locators

- DPSS housing locators will assist families eligible for DPSS benefits
- Role of housing locators:
  - Develop network of landlords willing to take Section 8 and other tenants receiving rental subsidies
  - Locate affordable housing with supportive services as needed by the clients
  - Obtain credit counseling
  - Educate clients on tenants rights and responsibilities
  - Assist with rental agreements and move-in

# Transportation

- Use transportation available through the Skid Row Family Outreach Team
- Transportation from missions to
  - Weingart Family Access Center
  - DMH Skid Row Clinic
  - Housing outside Skid Row

# Uniform Assessment Tool and Case Management Protocol

- Uniformity needed to ensure all agencies working together, gathering consistent information and using the same standards to assess the needs of Skid Row families
- DMH has customized its case management protocol for Skid Row families; the protocol is currently being used
- The case management protocol is being used by DPSS, DCFS, DMH, and LAHSA
- Collaborating with Midnight Mission and Union Rescue Mission to have the case management protocol also used by these agencies
- DPSS/DCFS/DMH Case management will geographically move with the family as it transitions out of Skid Row

# Training

- County will develop training program for County staff and other Skid Row providers
- Training will cover:
  - Zero Tolerance for Families on Skid Row Diversion Plan goals and objectives
  - Roles and responsibilities of various service agencies – County and private
  - Use of uniform assessment tool and case management protocol

# Accountability

- Convene County staff, LAHSA, Weingart, Midnight Mission and Union Rescue Mission representative bi-monthly to collect information and data about outcomes for Skid Row families served by screening and outreach teams
- Outcomes measured include:
  - Where families are housed
  - Type of housing occupied: emergency, transitional permanent
  - Planned next step for housing
  - Supportive services each member of the family is receiving
  - DCFS' assessment of child(ren)'s well-being
  - Case manager's assessment of family stability

# Homeless Family Access Center

- Located initially in Skid Row area of Los Angeles
- Serve homeless families: assess service needs and connect with services and housing outside of Skid Row
- Include drop-in child care so that children are supervised while parents receive service assessment and connection information
- Will be staffed by the County departments of DPSS, DCFS, DHS, DMH
- Private partners will be contracted to provide family outreach and child care services