

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
MEMORANDUM**

TO: HACL A Board of Commissioners

FROM: Jenny Scanlin  Chief Strategic Development Officer

THROUGH: Douglas Guthrie, President & CEO 

DATE: February 25, 2021

**SUBJECT: Workforce Development Unit Annual Report FY2020**

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**Purpose:** Update the Housing Authority for the City of Los Angeles' Board of Commissioners on the performance of the Workforce Development Unit's Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center goals, contracts and other workforce development initiatives.

*Regarding:* Each year, the Workforce Development Unit of Strategic Initiatives provides a complimentary report to the Board of Commissioners along with the Authority's Section 3 report to review activities for prior year's metrics and a look forward to our work plan for 2021.

**Issues:**

*Background* The Strategic Initiatives Unit was created to oversee the People component of HACL A's 25-Year Vision Plan. The Workforce Development Unit is a component of Strategic Initiatives providing direct case management services to clients in need of skills training, supportive services and job placement. The Unit works closely with Development Services to link public housing residents, youth, and local qualifying residents with construction and permanent job opportunities associated with all of HACL A's redevelopment projects and is a key resource to all of HACL A's contractors engaged in Section 3 hiring. In collaboration with other partners the Workforce Development Unit works to support employment goals of residents and facilitate upward mobility.

Since 1992, the Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center (the "Center") has been in operation. Originally, the Center operated as a Portal until 2014 when it was granted full designation as a WorkSource Center. To date, it is the only WorkSource Center co-located on public housing property.

Throughout 2020, the Watts/LA WorkSource Center remained open five days a week with the Center open to the public by appointment on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the COVID 19 pandemic. Attached is the COVID-19 Protocol that the Watts/LA WorkSource Center adopted early on as a protective measure for staff and clients. This was approved by the Employment and Workforce Development Department.

*2020 Year in Review*

Certainly, 2020 was a trying year for all workforce development agencies and nationwide. Our Watts/LA WorkSource Center has faced the normal challenges attributed to the pandemic. Nevertheless, our WorkSource Center succeeded in remaining open to walk-in clients at least two days per week and by appointment on the other three days. COVID safety precautions notwithstanding, *our Center served a total of 2,248 individual clients in 2020* through our Adult & Dislocated Worker Program, Jobs Plus Initiative grant program and Youth Employment Program. This feat has been lauded by the City of Los Angeles Economic & Workforce Development Department. If imitation is the ultimate compliment, EWDD adopted and implemented our COVID-19 business practices protocol for all sixteen of its WorkSource Centers in Los Angeles.

*2021 Goals*

The 2021 goals include continuing to address the COVID-19 pandemic issues which requires us to be responsive to our clients during this difficult time of need. The Center looks to increase its leverage funding for services and training for clients and will be working on increasing its Adult Worker outreach numbers. The Center is already kicking off 2021 with new funding for clients through a CalVIP grant received in collaboration with the Watts Gang Taskforce, a new contract for dislocated services with the Los Angeles World Airports, and additional funding from the City for our Youth Employment Program.

**Vision Plan: PEOPLE Strategy #7 Enhance resident access to education opportunities, workforce readiness training, and skills development**

The Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center provides high school equivalency training, and sector-specific training in industries such as construction, healthcare, hospitality, security and logistics to name a few. Via the Youth Employment Program, youth receive skills training, financial literacy, personal development training, career development and college-readiness workshops as part of their employment experience.

**Funding:** The Watts/LA WorkSource Center contracts partially fund the cost of staff as well as training and supportive services for clients. HACLA generously supplements the grant contracts every year with additional funding to cover staff and operating overhead. It is the Center's goal to continually increase grant funding. In 2021, our WorkSource Center expects to increase its contracts and grants.

**Attachments:** COVID-19 Office Protocol  
WFD Powerpoint

# HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES

## COVID-19 GUIDELINES MEMORANDUM

June 4, 2020

**TO:** Economic and Workforce Development Department

**FROM:** HACLA Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center

**cc:** *HACLA Internal File: Strategic Initiatives/Workforce Development*

**SUBJECT: Covid-19 Response from the Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center**

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The HACLA Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center immediately pivoted when the Coronavirus announcement was made. Urgent efforts were enforced to ensure the safety of staff and clients to ensure program operations could continue in a safe manner.

### **Workforce Development Unit**

The Workforce Development Unit is a component of the Strategic Development Department under the direction of Jenny Scanlin, Chief Strategic Development Officer. Jenny leads all real estate development projects for HACLA. Strategic Initiatives is the department that leads community and economic development initiatives and oversees partnership and workforce development, procurement and contracts and HACLA's non-profit affiliate, Build Hope, Inc. which is led by Jennifer Thomas, Assistant Director. Lastly, the Workforce Development Unit is led by Pamela Paige, Workforce Development and Section 3 Manager. Together, the workforce development unit is able to build out its service provision with partnerships at all public housing developments as well as external collaborative partners.

### **COVID-19 Protocol**

For any Workforce Development Unit that is interesting in implementing an effective COVID-19 prevention program, the starting point is an awareness that the County of Los Angeles has several free testing sites and appointments may be made at this [link](#). Any staff members with a positive test or who suspect exposure to the COVID pathogen are advised to not report to work and to self-quarantine. The principal symptoms of Covid-19 are a fever of 100°F or above, cough, or shortness of breath. In every weekly meeting, Management staff assure staff that the Human Resources Department is available to support them if they have questions and that they should call in if they feel sick.

### **Alignment with the City of Los Angeles Protocol for Business**

Attached are two documents published by the City of Los Angeles that the HACLA Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center adheres to. This is part of the guidance and training that has been provided to staff to ensure that everyone is operating in compliance with City guidelines. *(see attached)*

## **PPE and Cleaning Supplies**

In gauging risks of contagion, the causes of infection are (in order of probability):

- **First and foremost, virus-laden** droplets launched into the air by a sneeze, cough, spitting or conversation. The source of infection accounts for constant warnings to keep a social distance of at least 6 feet based on the descent of droplets from the height of a person 6' tall.
- **Droplets on hands** that touch other people and then mouth, eyes or nose.
- **Viral pathogens on surfaces**, such cell phones, as furniture, telephones and other shared furniture and equipment.
- **Vital pathogens on food.** Surface and food-caused infections as sources of infection have neither been proven or disproved. Until research proves otherwise, washing of food, wiping of mail and wiping of desk- and tabletops, and computer equipment is compulsory.

With those spread risks in mind, the Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center is sufficiently stocked with:

- Digital Thermometers to check staff and clients upon entry to the Center
- Surgical-grade face coverings (an order of N65 masks is forthcoming) required for use by all staff and clients unless they are wearing their masks. In the interim, disposable masks have been provided.
- Non-latex gloves are always available at the front desk.
- Disinfectant wipes to be used to wipe telephones, keyboards, doorknobs, tops of desks, arm rests, light switches, refrigerator handles, or other places people are likely to touch. The surfaces are wiped down at 3 PM on each workday. Phone and computer equipment are wiped down at the start of the workday or 8 AM and at the end of the workday.
- Warning signage reminding persons to stay safe and the phone number for testing appointments are posted throughout the Center.

## **Additional Resources for Clients**

HACLA has a non-profit affiliate that allows for the receipt of donations for residents who reside in HACLA's properties. This includes public housing and Section 8. The Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center also has its own partners that leverage additional resources above and beyond WorkSource Center supportive services. To this end, the Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center was able to provide clients with essential items such as food boxes, diapers, snacks for youth and other incidentals to soften the blow of the Coronavirus. These small essential items help to build out the service delivery to the clients while assisting them with their employment needs. We encourage them to tell a friend and to fill out their Census online!

## **Special Hours**

The major difference between Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center and other service providers are its office schedule and interactions with clients:

The City of Los Angeles Economic & Workforce Development Department considers WorkSource Centers as essential businesses to cope with the steep and ongoing rise in unemployment in Los Angeles. New Dislocated Workers often need assistance with enrolling for unemployment benefits and navigating the employment and training system.

The Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center is open to see clients from 8 AM to 4 PM, Tuesday and Wednesday. A reduced staff comes in on Friday mainly to catch up on administrative duties. On all other days, staff are telecommuting. To maintain social distancing, clients may visit only by appointment made by phone at 323-249-7751. The Center is closed on Monday and Thursday, as advised by EWDD.

All visitors to the Center are given a facemask at the front desk to immediately wear and are required to wash their hands in the bathroom. They are also provided with gloves, upon request.

Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center accommodates employees with preexisting health conditions, that represent the greatest risk of a grave infection by allowing them to telework full-time. They are expected to log into HACLA's virtual network every morning and perform their responsibilities throughout the workday.

The Center also makes liberal use of the Zoom app for meetings and makes a diligent effort to assist clients by phone before offering an office visit.

### **Next Steps**

We expect that COVID-19 is the new normal and has set a new standard for how we will operate moving forward. With this in mind, we have added updates to our space plan design guidelines for the new HACLA Watts/Los Angeles WorkSource Center. It is our hope that we can inspire other WorkSource Centers as they shift their business operations to accommodate the people we serve. We look forward to presenting the final design specifications for our new facility slated to open in the Fall of 2020.

*\*For additional information regarding these guidelines, please contact Jennifer Thomas, Assistant Director, HACLA Strategic Initiatives [Jennifer.Thomas@hacla.org](mailto:Jennifer.Thomas@hacla.org) or 213.252.1207*

Thank You.