

INCOME ASSISTANCE FOR SENIORS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ONE PAGER

Through the City's front funding of \$150 million toward ULA, there will be \$23 million dedicated toward Income Assistance for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities. The primary goals should be to prevent seniors and people with disabilities from experiencing homelessness through resolving immediate rental arrears and targeted income assistance based on need. Below is recommended allocation of funding:

- Up to 40% for Component One: Rental Debt Resolution for Seniors and Disabled Persons
- At least 50% for Component Two: Targeted Income Assistance Based on Need
- Up to 10% for Program Administration

Component One: Rent Debt Resolution for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities

There continue to be wait-listed seniors and persons with disabilities for the Short-Term Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) due to the significant back-rent that continues to burden renters. On any given day in the City, there are about 100k senior renters who are severely rent burdened and there are at least 8,700 seniors and persons with disabilities facing significant rental arrears, based on the LA Housing Department's ULA [Short Term Emergency Rental Assistance Program data](#). Therefore, the first component of ULA's Income Assistance for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities Program must be:

- Immediate Rent Debt Resolution for wait-listed LA City Seniors and Persons with Disabilities
- Administer through ERAP, a separate TLS Income Assistance Fund or Flexible Funds
- If the previously rent-burdened senior can live independently or in shared housing but continues to need a modicum of financial support (e.g., by supplementing their SSI/SSP income with a housing allowance or shallow subsidy), then the City should quickly transition participants to the income assistance program funded by Component Two as a viable next-step prevention strategy.

Component Two: Targeted Income Assistance Based on Need

Recent evidence is increasingly showing that direct cash transfers to tenants in poverty are more efficient at reducing administrative burdens and give recipients freedom of self-determination. Therefore, we recommend the City structure Component Two as a direct-to-tenant income "assistance based on need" and pair that assistance with other ULA-funded supports like Right to Counsel and/or Tenant Outreach/Education. The second component should be administered as follows:

- Use the CA Policy Lab's existing [Prevention Targeted Tool \(PTT\)](#) to determine the individuals at highest risk of experiencing homelessness, like the Community Investment and Families Department's use of PTT for the Solid Ground Homelessness Prevention Program.
- Ensure the front-door of self-identification is clear and accessible to the aging and disability communities and the multiple systems that serve them (e.g., Senior Centers, Area Agencies on Aging, Disability Resource Centers).
- Provide \$500 to \$800 a month in targeted income assistance based on need.
- Model the method of payment after the [California Middle Class Tax Refund \(MCTR\) Program](#) and the City of Santa Monica's Preserving Our Diversity (POD) program - a debit card system to transfer the assistance to a separate account for each eligible participant. If an outside agency is already providing these services, the City should consider contracting with a provider equipped with appropriate tech that can provide this recommended direct income assistance service.