



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

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July 12, 2022

TO: Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Chair
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl
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Supervisor Kathryn Barger

FROM: Max Huntsman
Inspector General

SUBJECT: **SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAMILY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ITEM NO. 14, AGENDA OF JULY 9, 2019)**

On July 9, 2019, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion establishing a Family Assistance Program (Family Assistance) as a one-year pilot program and instructing the Office of Inspector General to report back quarterly in the first year and semi-annually thereafter. This is the Office of Inspector General's second report back for 2022.

BACKGROUND

In July 2019, the Board established Family Assistance, aimed at improving compassionate communication and providing trauma-informed support to families of those who died following a fatal use of force by a Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Sheriff's Department) employee or while in the custody of the Sheriff's Department.

On February 22, 2022, the Office of Inspector General, the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission (COC), and the Office of Violence Prevention of the Department of Public Health (OVP), in consultation with other County departments, submitted to the Board a report including recommendations to make the Family Assistance Program permanent, comprising a design and implementation plan, an annual budget, a data tracking

system, and a plan for quickly processing payments to affected families for burial assistance.¹

FAMILY ASSISTANCE FUNDING STATUS

The Chief Executive Office (CEO) reports that it has not yet identified funding for permanent Family Assistance. The CEO has identified \$100,000 in bridge funding to continue providing burial assistance to affected families until Family Assistance is funded. The Department of Public Health is working together with the Department of Mental Health to administer these bridge funds.

As stated in the Office of Inspector General's report of February 22, 2022, the County should continue to play a pioneering role in assisting families grieving an in-custody death or the death of a loved one due to a fatal use of force by the Sheriff's Department. The success of a restructured permanent Family Assistance will depend on the timely allocation of permanent funding and continuing close coordination between the Department of Mental Health, the COC, the OVP, the Department of Medical Examiner-Coroner, the Sheriff's Department, and other stakeholders.

MH:md:bo

c: Alex Villanueva, Sheriff
Fesia Davenport, Chief Executive Officer
Celia Zavala, Executive Officer
Dawyn Harrison, Acting County Counsel
Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed., Department of Public Health
Jonathan E. Sherin, M.D., Ph.D., Director, Department of Mental Health
Jonathan Lucas, M.D., Chief Medical Examiner
Department of Medical Examiner-Coroner
Brian K. Williams, Executive Director, Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission

¹ [Office of Inspector General's Semi-Annual Report on Implementation of the Family Assistance Program and Report Back on Permanent Support for Families Affected by Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department: Identifying Sustainable Funding for and Streamlining the Family Assistance Program.](#)