

**PRESS RELEASE
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L.A. COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PASSES HISTORIC MOTION DESIGNATING UNACCOMPANIED WOMEN AS AN OFFICIAL HOMELESS SUBPOPULATION

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously this morning to approve a historic motion designating unaccompanied women as a recognized homeless subpopulation. The vote makes Los Angeles only the second county in the country to recognize unaccompanied women experiencing homelessness without children or dependents as a distinct subpopulation.

The motion, authored by Supervisor Hilda Solis and co-sponsored by Board Chair Kathryn Barger, calls for funding to be set aside for programs that address unhoused women's unique needs. It also initiates the planning of a countywide needs assessment documenting the experiences of unhoused women, and instructs LAHSA and other County departments to incorporate relevant statistics on unaccompanied women into public-facing dashboards. Tailored research and programs have proven to be much more effective than a "one-size-fits-all" approach at reducing rates of homelessness among other designated subpopulations, including veterans, families, and transition-age youth.

"Single women are especially vulnerable when homeless because they have fewer resources available to them since most services for women are geared toward those living with children in a family unit," said Supervisor Solis. "As a result of systemic inequities, women of color are disproportionately experiencing homelessness. Rent increases, evictions, and the COVID-19 economic downturn have pushed many into homelessness. Today's motion gives voice to unsheltered single women who deserve the type of support that will set them on course to self-reliance and hope. I thank the Downtown Women's Center for its support of my Board motion and advocacy on behalf of unsheltered single women."

According to the [2020 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count](#), women now account for roughly 32% of the County's homeless population, following a 15% increase from 2019. While more than 21,000 women were experiencing homelessness throughout the County at the time of the Homeless Count in January, these figures are likely much higher today, due to the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Los Angeles, unhoused women, who are disproportionately Black, live on average [35 years less](#) than women in stable housing, and are at extreme risk of gender-based violence.

"As the only organization dedicated to serving unaccompanied women in Los Angeles, the need we're facing today is unprecedented and still growing," commented Amy Turk, Chief Executive Officer of the Downtown Women's Center (DWC). "Supervisor Solis and this designation are providing a literal lifeline to these women. And for service providers like DWC, we now have a path forward for addressing women's homelessness on a much larger scale."

“The Downtown Women's Center saved my life,” added Vikki Vickers, a peer specialist at DWC for women with lived experience of homelessness. “With the help of the additional research and funding this designation will provide, they can save many more.”

Today’s motion firmly positions Los Angeles County as a national leader in ending women’s homelessness. It calls for the state of California and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to recognize unaccompanied women as a subpopulation, and likewise to set aside funding and programs to address their unique needs.

Read the full text of this historic motion [here](#).

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*The **Downtown Women’s Center (DWC)** is the only organization in Los Angeles focused exclusively on serving and empowering women experiencing homelessness and formerly homeless women. DWC envisions a Los Angeles with every woman housed and on a path to personal stability. Our mission is to end homelessness for women in greater Los Angeles through housing, wellness, employment, and advocacy. For more information, visit www.DowntownWomensCenter.org.*