Community Members Served

Over the past 10 years, the Housing & Support Services Department has increased its capacity to serve South Los Angeles community members in need of housing placement and homelessness prevention. Initially aimed at providing housing assistance to Youth Development participants, the department has expanded to include 9 grant supported programs, aimed at preventing and relieving homelessness in South Los Angeles. With the introduction of the LAHSA funded Access Center program in 2015, the department experienced a steady increase in enrollment, culminating in over 2000 community members served by June 2020.

Ruth’s Place Access Center Increases Capacity to Serve

Ruth’s Place Access Center is the main driver of the department’s increased enrollment. It is the primary entry point for youth seeking housing services in South Los Angeles. Staff support youths’ basic needs, such as food, clothing, transportation, and connection to immediate shelter. As of June 2020, Ruth’s Place Access Center has supplied over 45,000 meals, 9,000 bus tokens/passes, and 2,000 pieces of clothing. Staff also assess the youth for housing needs and supply referrals to housing search and placement programs including those within the Housing & Support Services Department. Staff supplied over 2,000 referrals to housing programs and assessed over 1,000 youth for their housing needs.

New Programs Expanding Capacity for Outreach

The Housing & Support Services Department is continuing to expand its reach by taking advantage of opportunities to meet youth where the needs are great. In early 2020, the department started two innovative programs, Problem-Solving and College Peer Navigation. These programs place specially trained staff in key locations with access to youth at increased risk of homelessness, such as the reentry population, youth aging out of foster care, and community college students. These specialists help resolve housing crises and connect youth to the coordinated entry system for services. The DCFS/Probation Problem-Solving specialist builds relationships with leadership at four DCFS sites in SPA 6; Wateridge office, Vermont office, Hawthorne office, and Compton office; and three Probation offices; Crenshaw Juvenile Area office, South Los Angeles AB109, and South Central Area office. The Access Center Problem solving specialist serves youth who drop into the Access Center. The College Peer Navigator is co-located at two community college campuses, Los Angeles Southwest College and Compton College.
Increasing Capacity for Permanent Housing

The primary aim of the Housing & Support Services Department is to find and secure permanent housing for participants in need, once they complete their program. There were 100 housing placements at the end of participants' program stays in 2019, up from 55 placements in 2018. Over 90% of the placements made at program end for both years were made for transitional aged youth. The number of participants placed in Permanent Supportive Housing doubled from the prior year and the number of participants permanently reconnected with family increased by 540%.

Expanding Permanent Supportive Housing

Since 2010 the department has placed many participants in CRCD’s permanent supportive housing (PSH) units, which include units at 36th Street, Broadway, 28th Street, CRCD, and Epworth Apartments. These PSH programs provide extra support and ongoing case management to help participants maintain their housing. Many units are set aside specifically for Transitional Age Youth (TAY), young adults aged 18-24 who have experienced homelessness and other barriers to stable housing. Currently, 52 active units house TAY participants. With the introduction of the LAHSA funded Rapid Rehousing program in 2017 and the DHS funded Scattered Site program in 2018, the Housing & Support Services Department has been able to increase its capacity to provide supportive housing to participants. Cumulatively 197 participants have been housed in supportive housing, more than half of which are TAY (109 participants).

Expanding Real Estate – Housing in Development

CRCD as an organization is continuing to expand the availability of affordable permanent housing in South Los Angeles. Currently, there are over 700 housing units in development and over 400 units in the pipeline, 142 of which are reserved for Transitional Aged Youth. The Residences on Main, with half of its units reserved for TAY, is up next for completion, opening in October 2020.