

City Council Meeting: February \_\_\_\_, 2023

Santa Monica, California

RESOLUTION NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ (CCS)

(City Council Series)

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA  
RELATED TO COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE, RECOVERY, AND EMPOWERMENT  
(CARE) COURT PROGRAM / MENTAL ILLNESS / ADDICTION / HOMELESSNESS /  
CITY ROLE / SB 1338 (UMBERG, EGGMAN)

WHEREAS, homelessness is an ongoing, unresolved crisis that negatively affects virtually everyone in the City both housed and unhoused, constituting a humanitarian crisis of historic proportions; and

WHEREAS unhoused residents and visitors living in the City's public spaces face particular risks to their mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health and well-being; and

WHEREAS unhoused residents and visitors are far more likely to be victimized by violent crime, including bodily harm and property theft, from which unhoused people have a particularly difficult time recovering; and

WHEREAS independent studies estimate the percentage of "hardcore" homeless – those living long-term in situations not intended for human habitation – suffering from mental illness is much higher, perhaps as much as three-quarters; and

WHEREAS, without proper care and supervision, these individuals face difficult, often insurmountable challenges in obtaining shelter and achieving their independence.

WHEREAS the California State Legislative Analyst's Office has indicated that the degree to which the City would be involved in the CARE Court following its implementation may be on a case-by-case basis; and

WHEREAS The Community Assistance, Recovery, and Empowerment (CARE) Court program, approved by Governor Newsom on September 14th, 2022 under SB 1338 (Umberg, Eggman), aims to connect people who are struggling with untreated mental illness, addiction, and are vulnerable to homelessness with a court-ordered CARE plan for up to 24 months; and

WHEREAS the CARE Court is a groundbreaking strategy for addressing the serious problems of mental illness and addiction among unsheltered people in California; and

WHEREAS CARE Court is a statewide program implemented at the County level; and

WHEREAS Under the CARE Court, families, clinicians, first responders, and others will be able to refer individuals suffering from schizophrenia spectrum, psychotic disorders, or substance abuse; and

WHEREAS Care Plans are managed by a community-based care team, and services include short-term stabilization medications, wellness and recovery supports, social services, and housing; and

WHEREAS participants who do not successfully complete Care Plans are subject to hospitalization or referral to conservatorship; and

WHEREAS the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (“LAHSA”) reported in 2022 that about 25 percent of all homeless adults in Los Angeles County suffer from severe mental illnesses such as psychotic disorders and schizophrenia; and

WHEREAS the City Attorney prosecutes all misdemeanor criminal offenses and infractions occurring in the City of Santa Monica, the City Attorney could be involved in cases that may ultimately end up in a CARE Court; and

WHEREAS perhaps the greatest immediate challenge for the County with regard to the CARE Court is its rapidly approaching deadline for implementation; and

WHEREAS Los Angeles County was initially scheduled to implement CARE Court in Phase 2 of the program, but moved to accelerate its deadline to January 2024; and

WHEREAS, as a result the County has until December 2023 to have the program with its signature courts up and running; and

WHEREAS while the County is confident that it can successfully steer the program once it has been implemented, the task of developing the CARE Court over a period of one year presents operational challenges; and

WHEREAS although the CARE Court is a County-level program, its outcomes will impact, and could potentially strengthen, the City's efforts to manage and ultimately eliminate Santa Monica's homelessness crisis; and

WHEREAS, as a result, it is important that the City has a clear understanding of how it may contribute to the CARE Court's successful implementation;

NOW THEREFORE THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SANTA MONICA DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

The City Manager, with assistance of the City Attorney, the Director of Community Services, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority, and other individuals and/or departments as appropriate, investigate and report on the City's

options for immediate and long-term roles in the CARE Court program within 60 days. This report shall include preliminary strategies by which Santa Monica can become a role model of CARE Court success for other cities in Los Angeles County and statewide.

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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Douglas Sloan, City Attorney