



How We Must Address Our Homeless & Housing Crisis

- End Homelessness
- Strengthen Tenants' Rights
- Prevent Displacement
- Preserve Existing and Build New Affordable Housing



Daily News

LOS ANGELES

What does Mayor Karen Bass' emergency homeless order mean for LA?

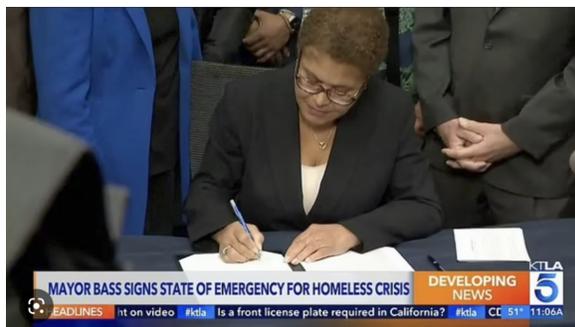
The new mayor's rare use of emergency powers hearkens to Richard Riordan's dramatic rebuilding after 1994 quake

by LINH TAT - Monday, December 12, 2022



As her first act as mayor of Los Angeles, Karen Bass on Monday, Dec. 12, declared a state of emergency on homelessness, [delivering on a promise](#) she made on the campaign trail to treat the city's homeless situation – which she called a “humanitarian crisis” – with urgency starting Day One of her administration.

By declaring a state of emergency, Bass and her administration can more aggressively confront roadblocks that have hampered or delayed efforts to address homelessness, fast-track the process for getting more housing built, and allow Bass, as director of the city's Emergency Operations Organization, to coordinate a citywide response to homelessness.



Her administration will be able to remove rules and regulations that prevent or delay the construction of permanent and temporary housing for those living on the streets, expedite contracts that prioritize bringing homeless individuals indoors, and clear the way for the city to acquire rooms, properties or land to house Angelenos.



Bass pointed to how quickly the city rebuilt its freeways after the magnitude-6.7 Northridge earthquake in 1994 during Mayor Richard Riordan's administration.

"It's because those projects were not run through the traditional process," she said. "They were run through an emergency structure like the one we are harnessing today. We must drive a proactive citywide strategy that solves problems at scale and ultimately

drives a solution."

Her remarks came during a news conference at the city's Emergency Operations Center shortly before she signed her declaration of an emergency.

"My mandate is to move Los Angeles in a new direction with an urgent and strategic approach to solving one of our city's toughest challenges and creating a brighter future for every Angeleno," Bass said.

"Today, on my first day of office, we hit the ground running with a sea change in how the city tackles homelessness. ... I will not accept a homelessness crisis that afflicts more than 40,000 Angelenos and affects every one of us. It is a humanitarian crisis that takes the life of five people every day," Bass said, later adding, "There will be no holding back on my watch."

The mayor said she'll release more details this week about a program she's launching called "Inside Safe" to move individuals living on the streets indoors by master-leasing motels near current homeless encampments. Bass said her team has been in contact with motel owners and that they're open to the idea.

"We would like to also see the same commitment to ensuring that people are able to not lose the homes they are currently living in and ensure the preservation of existing affordable housing. We can't deal with our homeless crisis unless we also deal with ensuring people are not displaced and communities are not gentrified."

- LARRY GROSS, Executive Director, Coalition for Economic Survival

Ahead of the press conference, Bass early Monday morning met with her department heads, the overseers of the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority and LA Metro, and various city and county elected officials to lay out her vision for a unified response to homelessness.

The emergency declaration — which is scheduled to last six months — allows Bass to take more aggressive executive actions, although the City Council will have to sign off on it every 30 days.

City Council President Paul Krekorian said in remarks at the [mayor's inauguration](#) on Sunday that Bass will have a "very strong partner in the Los Angeles City Council." The council, with five new members who began their terms on Monday, Dec. 12, will take up the emergency declaration at Tuesday's meeting.

Help is on the way," Krekorian said during Monday's press conference.

L.A. County Board of Supervisors Chair Janice Hahn said at the event that it's not up to the

EVERYONE DESERVES A HOME

city, county or state, by themselves, to fix the homeless crisis, but that all levels of government must “link arms,” borrowing a phrase that Bass repeatedly used in her inaugural speech on Sunday when the latter called on everyone to “link arms” to combat homelessness.

Hahn announced that she plans to introduce a motion in the coming weeks to ensure that county resources can “match the urgency of this emergency declaration,” especially in providing mental health and health care.

Several homeless and tenant rights advocacy groups and city residents welcomed Bass’ declaration of an emergency on Monday.

The Committee for Greater LA, a cross-sectional group of civic leaders that advocates for systemic changes and the dismantling of institutional racism, said Bass’ plan will deliver immediate action that Angelenos have called for.

“By declaring a local state of emergency on day one, managing the use of city-owned land, expediting approvals and permits for all affordable housing projects, and addressing the needs of individuals living in encampments, Mayor Bass’ plan sets in motion bold and systemic solutions that match the magnitude of the issue with the fervor we’ve been calling for,” Miguel Santana, the committee’s chair, and Sarah Dusseault, chair of the committee’s housing and homelessness action team, said in a statement.

Jennifer Hark Dietz, CEO of People Assisting The Homeless (PATH), said in a statement that Bass was right to declare a state of emergency.

“The city’s approach to homelessness has become more piecemeal and politicized and this state of emergency can leverage the power of the executive branch to make sustainable improvements to our service system and dramatically increase the production of desperately needed housing,” Dietz said.



Larry Gross, executive director of [Coalition for Economic Survival](#), said his group supports Bass’ commitment to addressing homelessness, but he wants to make sure tenants’ rights aren’t neglected in the meantime.

“We would like to also see the same commitment to ensuring that people are able to not lose the homes they are currently living in and ensure the preservation of existing affordable housing,” Gross said. “We can’t deal with our homeless crisis unless we also deal with ensuring people are not displaced and communities are not gentrified.”

Gross raised concerns that the city’s eviction moratorium will expire on Feb. 1 when the city’s State of Local Emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic ends. Other tenant rights’ protections may now be in jeopardy as well, due to the ending of the pandemic-related state of emergency, he said.

Maria Pavlou Kalban, founder of United Neighbors and a board member on the Sherman Oaks Homeowners Association, said she supports Bass' intention and is hopeful the new mayor is sincere about including homeowners' input in identifying where new affordable housing should be developed.

Pavlou Kalban said the organizations she's involved with aren't opposed to affordable housing in their neighborhoods, but they believe it doesn't necessarily make sense to locate them among single-family residences when there are areas along commercial corridors that are underutilized.

'Tis the Season to Secure



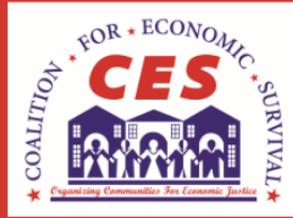
"We have to be at the table because we know where we would do it, we know how we would want it ... to enhance our communities," she said, adding that she agrees all communities must welcome new housing – a sentiment that Bass stated during her inaugural speech.

The last time a mayor declared a local emergency related to homelessness was in 1987, when Mayor Tom Bradley cited the effect of winter weather on people experiencing homelessness, according to Bass' declaration. The conditions now, her declaration claimed, are "even more dire."

There are an [estimated 41,980 unhoused people](#) in the city of Los Angeles, up 1.7% from 2020, according to the latest count by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority.

City News Service contributed to this story.

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COALITION FOR ECONOMIC SURVIVAL

TENANTS' RIGHTS

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Tenants' Rights Zoom Clinic**

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Tenants' Rights Clinic via ZOOM

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HelpingLarenters@gmail.com

The Clinic serves the entire Southern California area.
Accommodations for Spanish, Russian speakers are provided.

CES holds the Clinic **Every Saturday** via Zoom at 10 am.
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To request a link to register for any Clinic
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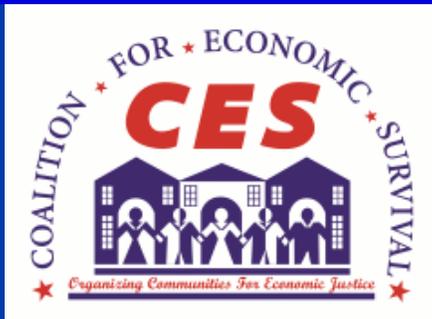
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