



**City of Long Beach**  
*Working Together to Serve*

**Memorandum**

Date: October 30, 2019

To: Thomas B. Modica, Acting City Manager *T.M.*

From: Glenda Williams, Director of Library Services *Glenda*

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: **Social Work Intern Pilot at Long Beach Public Libraries**

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The City of Long Beach prides itself on welcoming patrons of all backgrounds to its public libraries. This openness poses challenges to Long Beach Public Library (LBPL) staff and patrons. In recent years, public libraries in urban areas have struggled to serve the needs of people experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and/or substance abuse, while also maintaining a safe and welcoming environment for all patrons.

In an effort to better meet the needs of LBPL users experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and/or substance abuse challenges, the Department of Library Services (Department) is exploring models of integrating Social Work into the public library setting, similar to other urban library systems. Through a partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services' Trauma and Resiliency-Informed Long Beach (TRI LB) initiative, the Department has implemented a pilot program to connect LBPL users with social services, including mental health care, legal support, food security benefits, and housing resources. Two Master's in Social Work (MSW) interns from CSULB and USC began working with staff in September 2019. They are based at the Mark Twain and Billie Jean King Main Libraries. The pilot program is anticipated to end in May 2020.

The primary role of the interns is to build trust with people experiencing homelessness, mental illness, and/or substance abuse challenges, and ultimately to connect them to critical resources. While the interns will not be providing individual case management, their clinical Social Work expertise will provide a level of support to these individuals in a welcoming environment. Additional roles for the interns include aiding staff in mitigating and deescalating stressful situations, and helping LBPL staff process the trauma that accompanies having to handle hazardous or unpleasant public interactions.

The outcomes at the end of this pilot program will be reviewed for a robust LBPL Social Work service for all LBPL patrons.

For additional information, please contact me at (562) 570-6016 or [Glenda.Williams@lbpl.org](mailto:Glenda.Williams@lbpl.org).

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