

# The People's Guide

Information about opportunities to help you get through hard times



to  
**Welfare**  
**Health** &  
other  
**Services**

LOS ANGELES  
COALITION TO  HUNGER &  
HOMELESSNESS

31st Edition **2005**  
Los Angeles County

# Introduction

The People's Guide gives practical information about how to get food, money, housing, health care and other help from government programs and community services if you live in Los Angeles County and need the help in hard times. You do not have to read the entire book, just find the topic you need in the table of contents. However, remember that people who are eligible for one kind of help often qualify for other programs as well.

The People's Guide also gives advice on what to do if you are treated unfairly or do not receive what you are entitled to by law.

Lately, massive government budget cuts have meant less help for low income families, seniors, and homeless people: fewer workers at some agencies, clinics and hospitals closing, tighter eligibility rules, reduced benefits, and in some programs, waiting lists for help.

There are other problems with the safety net: rumors and false information that discourage eligible people from even trying to get help their family desperately needs, people not knowing what the application steps are, language barriers, people being made to feel embarrassed for asking for needed help.

The People's Guide is dedicated to helping all people overcome barriers when they try to get help. Every person has the right to enough food, housing, and health care. The whole world is better off when all of us have these basic necessities!

You help when you share this information with other people who need help. You can be their advocate, part of their safety net.

There is another important way to help. In Sacramento, Washington DC and in County and local governments, the programs and services described in the People's Guide are always being debated. There is a huge conflict about the money for these services.

Your voices are needed in those debates. Tell politicians how the programs help or don't help and what your problems are. Government officials need to be reminded of the tragic crises, pain, and lost opportunities that happen in people's lives when they can't get food, housing, or health care.

To get names and addresses of your local, state and federal lawmakers, (800) 481-8683, County Registrar. <http://regrec.co.la.ca.us/voter/roster.htm>

Politicians who want to use money for other things often try to make health, welfare and social services so unpopular that the public will oppose the programs and people who need the help feel so bad they turn it down. But remember that wealthy people and businesses do not feel bad when they get grants, subsidies and other "welfare" from their government. When the rich get too much richer and the poor get too much poorer, the gap has very bad effects on the whole society.

You can help restore balance and close the gap. You don't have to be an expert. Simply let those in authority know how a budget cut affects you or your neighbors. For more information on how to be part of this work, write or call us.

**The Los Angeles Coalition to End Hunger & Homelessness** and our members struggle for legislation and procedures that save and improve the safety net. To find out the latest in public policy changes affecting the programs in this book, (213) 439-1070 x. 111 or 115. Visit [www.lacehh.org](http://www.lacehh.org) for a wealth of advocacy news, discussion forums and resources for community organizations, homeless people, and social change activists.

Other advocacy information sources:

**ACORN** (213) 747-4211  
**California Food Policy Advocates** (213) 482-8200  
**Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles** (213) 353-1333.  
**Community Coalition** (323) 750-9087  
**Community Health Councils** (323) 295-9372  
**L.A. Alliance for a New Economy** (213) 486-9880  
**L.A. Community Action Network** (213) 228-0024  
**Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles** (800) 399-4LAW  
**Maternal & Child Health Access Project** (213) 749-4261  
**Mental Health Advocacy Services** (213) 484-1628  
**Neighborhood Legal Services of Los Angeles** (800) 433-6251.  
**Strategic Actions for a Just Economy** (213) 745-9961

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**INFO LINE: Just Dial 211 (in LA County)**

**INFO-LINE** is a 24 hour per day, 7 day a week telephone information and referral service. Operators are available in many languages. They can help you find emergency food and shelter, legal and financial assistance, counseling and many other resources. **INFO-LINE** is very busy, but each caller receives good service. Be prepared to wait for the phone to answer; let the phone ring and ring. Just dial 211 or one of the numbers below:

**General Number**(800) 339-6993

**Los Angeles** (323) 686-0950

**San Fernando Valley** (818) 501-4447

**West Los Angeles** (310) 551-2929

**L.A. Airport area** (310) 671-7464

**San Gabriel Valley** (626) 350-6833

**Burbank/Glendale** (818) 956-1100

**Long Beach/South Bay**(562) 603 8962

TTY line

(800) 660-4026