

A Survey of General Relief Recipients

**Housing,
Utilization of Systems of Care,
and Employability Status**

An Issue Paper by:

Shelter Partnership, Inc.

and

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I. Introduction

A. Overview of the Los Angeles County General Relief Program

The General Relief (GR) Program serves as the final government safety net for individuals who are facing extreme poverty or homelessness in Los Angeles County. General Relief is a County funded welfare program with a current caseload of approximately 60,000 people. The program is mandated under California Welfare and Institutions Code section 17000, which requires every county to “relieve and support all incompetent, poor, indigent persons.”

In order to be eligible for General Relief, an applicant must have no more than \$50 in a bank account or \$500 in personal property, and may not own a car worth more than \$4,500 or a house worth more than \$34,000. Such strict eligibility criteria limit receipt of General Relief benefits to the poorest and most vulnerable. General Relief provides a monthly cash grant of no more than \$221 that is usually accompanied by \$100 - \$135 in federally funded food stamps. In addition, the program provides welfare-to-work services, transportation assistance, supportive service referrals, medical care, and other assistance.

B. Purpose of Study

There is very little data to determine whether the General Relief program succeeds in its mission to effectively “relieve and support” recipients. Los Angeles County has limited information about how GR recipients survive. The County knows very little about the housing status and food security of recipients, and knows even less about what happens to recipients when their benefits are terminated.

Shelter Partnership, Inc. and Public Counsel had three primary concerns that shaped the design of the survey presented in this paper: (1) the housing status and stability of General Relief recipients, (2) the eligibility for and receipt of services from other government systems of care, and (3) the service needs of recipients determined to be too disabled to work, and deemed “unemployable” by the County. This survey project was intended to provide preliminary information regarding these issues.

1. Housing

An effective public benefits program should provide cash assistance that allows recipients to find and maintain housing. The maximum GR cash grant for a single person is \$221 a month, which is generally not sufficient to support a person in rental housing in Los Angeles County. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Fair Market Rent (FMR) for a 0-bedroom unit (i.e., studio apartment) in Los Angeles County is \$543 per month for Fiscal Year 2002. Even the most affordable housing option for non-shared housing, a Single Room Occupancy (SRO) unit (without a Section 8 subsidy) rents for approximately \$200 per month. In this case, remaining income after rent expenses is no more than \$21. Advocates know from both anecdotal experience and research¹ that while some GR recipients are able to use their grants to find housing, many others are homeless or become homeless after their time limit on GR takes effect.

¹ “A Report on the Impacts of the Implementation of the Five Month Time Limit on General Relief Cash Benefits in Los Angeles County.” Shelter Partnership, Inc. April 1999; “Downtown Women’s Needs Assessment.” Downtown Women’s Action Coalition. October 2001.

2. Other Systems of Care

One hypothesis of this survey project is that many GR recipients are currently eligible for and/or have previously utilized various federal and state funded programs. For example, there are approximately 40,000 individuals in Los Angeles County who are currently on state-monitored parole. As parolees, they are the legal responsibility of the state of California. Preliminary research showed that the characteristics of this group closely matched those of GR recipients. Shelter Partnership, Inc. and Public Counsel were interested in obtaining information about whether state parolees have had to rely on the County-funded General Relief program as a means of subsistence. For similar reasons, information on former foster youth, veterans, and other subgroups within the population was also of interest.

Additionally, if General Relief recipients have had connections to other government systems of care, it is important to know whether those systems provided benefits that could have helped people avoid having to secure General Relief benefits. For example, young people coming out of foster care are currently entitled to access various “Independent Living Program” benefits, including transitional housing. The benefits are intended to help emancipated foster youth become self-sufficient and, therefore, avoid the General Relief program. Again, services provided by other systems of care were also of interest.

Given the multitude of local, state and federal government agencies that could be in a position to assist General Relief recipients (i.e., Department of Mental Health, Department of Health Services, Department of Rehabilitation), it is important to know the proportion of recipients that are in need of additional services, and how many have connected with such services. If those who want or need additional support services do not receive them, this would suggest that there should be better coordination of service delivery.

3. People with Disabilities or “Unemployables”

Under current General Relief regulations, most recipients are classified as either “employable” or “unemployable.” Employable recipients are those who indicate they are able to work. Unemployable recipients are those who have been determined unable to work due to physical or mental disabilities, chronic health problems, or other health-related reasons. The requirements imposed on recipients, and the benefits they receive, differ significantly based upon whether they are classified as employable or unemployable.

Those classified as employable may receive benefits for only 9 out of 12 months. They are also required to participate in a welfare-to-work program called General Relief Opportunities for Work (GROW), which requires 20 hours of participation per week. Employable recipients are subject to sanctions for failure to participate in GROW and/or substance abuse recovery programs. GROW provides access to employment services, education, and supportive services. Through GROW, employable participants are entitled to receive bus passes, clothing allowances, and additional money to pay for work supplies or books. Unemployable recipients may receive cash aid year-round, but are not allowed to participate in GROW or access any of its benefits, even on a voluntary basis. Furthermore, there are no vocational rehabilitation or case management services provided to unemployable recipients. It is unclear whether the needs of those classified as unemployable are being addressed through the General Relief program.

II. Methodology

Shelter Partnership and Public Counsel developed a survey instrument that was administered verbally to General Relief applicants and recipients in Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) offices over a seven-week period from June 18 to August 3, 2001. The purpose of the survey was to perform exploratory research regarding the housing status, employability status, and other characteristics of General Relief recipients as well as their eligibility for and/or use of other systems of care. The survey consisted of 26 closed-ended questions pertaining to GR status, housing status, employability status, other systems of care, and demographics, as well as additional closed and open-ended questions for specific populations such as veterans (Attachment A).

There were 153 people surveyed at 8 Los Angeles County DPSS offices: Civic Center, Metro East, Metro Special, Rancho Park, San Gabriel, South Special, Southwest Special, and Wilshire Special. Summer law clerks, interning with Public Counsel, and Shelter Partnership staff administered the surveys. The law clerks received a four-hour training before working in the DPSS offices, which included a section on the purpose of the survey and appropriate administration of the survey instrument.

The survey data were cleaned and entered into SPSS for statistical analysis. Of the 153 completed surveys, 10 were discarded due to ineligible respondents or incomplete surveys. Although 143 surveys were analyzed, the total sample size for each question varies due to questions that respondents chose not to answer and sub-questions that did not apply to all respondents. Data were analyzed using frequency distributions and cross-tabulations.

III. Findings

The findings are solely based on surveys of 143 GR applicants/recipients (see Attachment B for complete results). Given the exploratory nature of this project, no attempt was made to survey a representative or random sample of GR applicants/recipients. However, when compared to DPSS statistics, the sample of applicants/recipients surveyed is fairly similar to the full GR population, with the exception of assigned GR district (see Attachment C for comparison statistics). The applicants/recipients were surveyed at only 8 of the 13 districts, and the Civic Center district is greatly over-represented in the survey results. The findings presented in this section refer to the survey respondents as GR recipients, based on the assumption that most applicants would become recipients.

A. Housing Status and Stability

In the survey instrument, the questions regarding places respondents sleep included six responses that meet the federal definition of homelessness²: on the streets, abandoned building, car, park or beach; encampment; church or mission; emergency or transitional homeless shelter; a hotel,

² The federal definition of a homeless person, established in the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, is an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or an individual whose primary nighttime residence is a temporary shelter or place not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

motel, or SRO paid for with a GR housing voucher; and a hotel, motel, or SRO paid for by an agency besides DPSS. Three of the responses indicated stable or semi-stable living arrangements: hotel, motel, or SRO paid for with own money; own apartment or house; and friends or family.

Homelessness was very prevalent among the respondents. The majority of respondents (69.5%) had been homeless at some point during the past year and 58.2 percent had been homeless during the past 30 days. A notable percentage (41.3%) of respondents was usually homeless over the past 30 days.

A significant percentage of respondents (47.8%) usually stayed in stable or semi-stable housing during the past 30 days, indicating that some GR recipients are able to find permanent housing. However, maintenance of these housing situations is dependent on the receipt of General Relief benefits. Over half (52.2%) of respondents in stable or semi-stable housing reported that they would not have been able to maintain the same housing arrangement for the past 30 days if they did not receive a GR check.

The housing patterns of respondents were generally very unstable. Over the past year, just 18.4 percent of respondents had slept in only one place and 60.3 percent had slept in three or more places. In the past 30 days, 60.2 percent of respondents had slept in two or more places.

B. Other Systems of Care

1. *Probation/Parole*

People in the criminal justice system comprised a fairly large group of respondents; 12.0 percent of respondents were currently on parole and 9.9 percent were on probation. Over one-quarter of the respondents (28.4%) had been on parole at some point during their lifetimes.

Of those who had been on parole at some point, 43.6 percent were homeless within three months of release and only 12.5 percent had received a housing voucher from their parole officer upon release. Additionally, 56.3 percent of current or former parolees had applied for GR within three months of release.

2. *Veterans*

A notable percentage of respondents (16.8%) was United States veterans. Over half (54.2%) of these respondents reported that they wanted or needed services from the Veteran's Administration (VA) during the past year; 31.8 percent of those in need reported that they had not received services. Over half (57.9%) of veterans had applied for services from the VA (including medical and cash benefits) at some point; only 60.0 percent of those who had applied received the benefits.

3. *Foster Youth*

A significant portion of the respondents (14.6%) had been in foster care; 8.6 percent had been in foster care in Los Angeles County. Half of all of those who had been in foster care were age 30 or under, but only one respondent who had been in foster care was age 21 or under (age limit of eligibility for Independent Living Program services for emancipated foster youth).

4. Supportive Services

The General Relief program offers referrals to domestic violence and mental health services if needed and/or requested by the participant. Among all respondents, 7.1 percent reported that they wanted or needed domestic violence counseling services. Of those in need, only 11.1 percent received services. Among women only, 14.0 percent wanted or needed domestic violence counseling and only 16.7 percent of those in need received services. Almost one-quarter of all respondents (23.4%) reported that they wanted or needed outpatient mental health services and 59.4 percent of those in need received services.

C. The “Unemployable” Population

Approximately one-third (35.7%) of the respondents reported that they were classified as unemployable. The data show some unique characteristics of this group of unemployables when compared to employables³. First, the unemployable population is more likely to experience homelessness than the employable population (Figure 1). Homelessness during the past year and past 30 days is much more prevalent for unemployables than for employables. More than half of the unemployables (53.1%) have usually been homeless during the past 30 days, compared to 35.7 percent of employables.

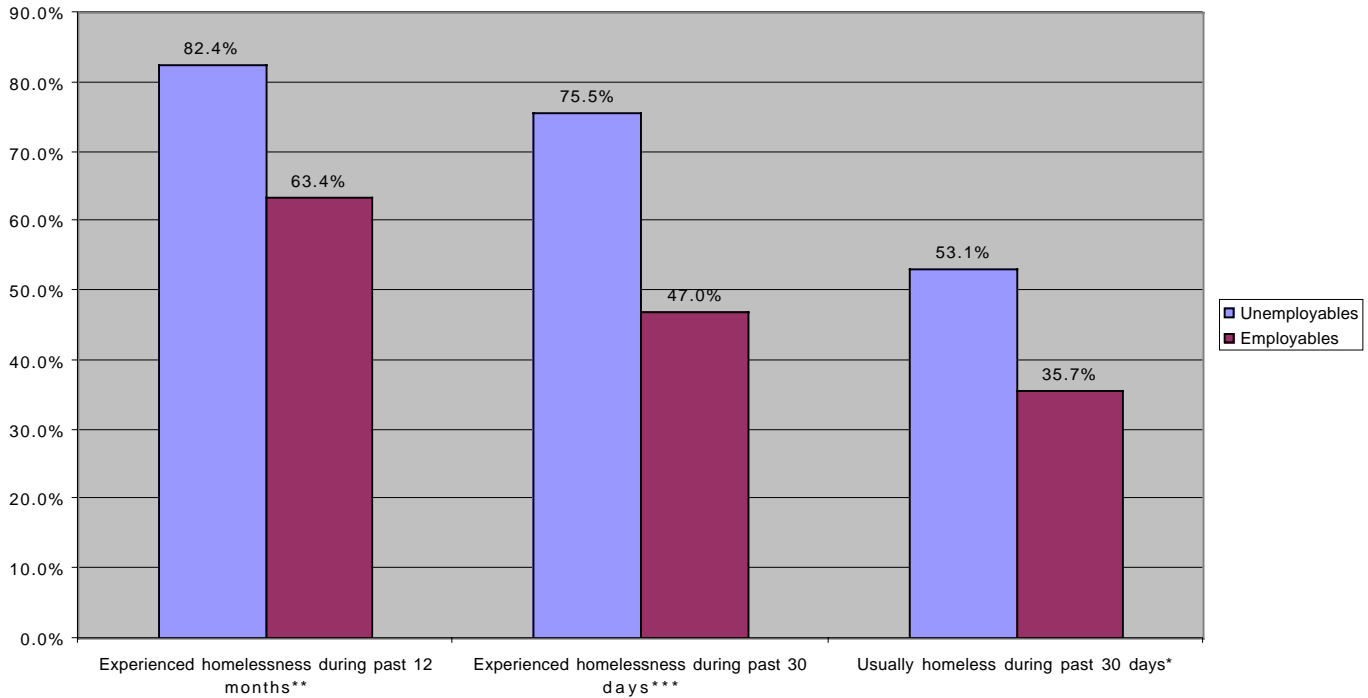
Other differences in the populations are shown in Table 1. The housing of the unemployable population living in stable or semi-stable situations is more dependent on receiving GR benefits than for employables. Over three-quarters (77.8%) of unemployables could not have maintained their stable/semi-stable housing without their GR check, compared to 38.5 percent of employables. Unemployables are more likely to need or want outpatient mental health services, services from a hospital or medical clinic, and services from the Social Security Administration office. Also, unemployable GR recipients are more likely to be over age 40 than employables; 70.8 percent of unemployables are over age 40, compared to just 38.0 percent of employables.

Over one-quarter of unemployables (26.6%) have been receiving GR with an unemployable classification for five years or more. Over half (56.1%) have a permanent disability and 60 percent reported that they are in the process of applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Over three-quarters of the unemployable respondents (76.9%) reported that they would like to receive services that would help them address their disabilities so that they would be more able to work and 61.5 percent said that they would like to participate in a program to help them find work. Additionally, 14.0 percent of unemployable respondents reported that they wanted or needed services from the State Department of Rehabilitation and 57.1 percent of those in need received the services.

³ 13.3 percent of respondents stated that they did not know their employability status; the majority of these respondents (63.2%) were applying for GR for the first time and may not have been classified at the time of the survey. The subgroup of “unknowns” is not included in the comparisons between employables and unemployables.

Figure 1: Differences in Experiences of Homelessness Between Employables and Unemployables



*** Statistically significant at a 99% confidence level.
 ** Statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.
 * Statistically significant at a 90% confidence level.

	<i>Unemployables</i>	<i>Employables</i>
Unable to maintain stable/semi-stable housing without GR**	77.8%	38.5%
Need or want outpatient mental health services***	41.2%	8.5%
If yes, received outpatient mental health services	60.0%	66.7%
Need or want services from a hospital or medical clinic***	54.0%	25.4%
If yes, received services from a hospital or medical clinic	80.8%	66.7%
Need or want services from the Social Security office***	60.0%	14.1%
If yes, received services from the Social Security office	39.3%	44.4%
Over age 40***	70.8%	38.0%

*** Statistically significant at a 99% confidence level.
 ** Statistically significant at a 95% confidence level.

IV. Discussion and Recommendations

A. Housing Stability

Homelessness and housing instability were extremely prevalent among respondents. The majority of respondents had been homeless at some point during the past year as well as during the past 30 days. Lack of stable housing is a clear barrier to obtaining and maintaining employment. For example, homeless individuals may not have a place to shower, a phone, a place to keep their belongings, may be subject to time limits of housing programs, and simply may have to focus most of their energy on where they are going to sleep and eat each day.

General Relief recipients who are able to obtain permanent housing are very dependent on GR to maintain that housing. Over half of respondents in stable or semi-stable housing reported that they would not have been able to maintain the same housing arrangement for the past 30 days if they did not receive a GR check. Over the past year, less than one-quarter of respondents had slept in only one place. This instability could be partly attributed to the mobility of homeless people (shelters are time-limited, people tend to not sleep outdoors in cold weather, etc.). However, the prevalence of housing instability could also be attributed to GR time limits, which force employable recipients who depend on GR to maintain housing into homelessness during the three months each year they are not eligible for benefits.

To address homelessness and housing instability among GR recipients, the following recommendations should be explored.

- A1. Consider lack of housing a primary barrier to employment and address housing need (through referrals to emergency or transitional housing) before individuals begin GROW activities.
- A2. Eliminate the shared housing penalty.
- A3. Eliminate GR time limits for those individuals in full compliance with GROW.
- A4. Investigate the possibility of tracking housing status over time in order to gather data about housing and homelessness and the effect of time limits on housing status.

B. Other Systems of Care

The findings suggest that the GR program needs to create stronger linkages to various other social service systems. As evidenced by our findings regarding victims of domestic violence, parolees, veterans, and people once in foster care, other systems of care are not being utilized to their full potential.

There are shelters that specifically serve victims of domestic violence that could help GR recipients escape homelessness. However, there are specific criteria for entry to this type of housing, including the amount of time that has passed since fleeing a domestic violence situation. Therefore, it is imperative for recent victims of domestic violence to be identified and referred to housing programs in a timely manner. For non-recent victims of domestic violence, referrals to counseling services for those who want these services need to be improved.

There are federally funded Independent Living Program (ILP) benefits for people between 18 and 21 years of age who have emancipated from the foster care system. ILP benefits include rental assistance, transitional housing, vocational training, tuition support, clothing stipends,

transportation, and other important services that could help a young GR recipient escape homelessness. Additional emancipated foster youth programs serve individuals up to age 25.

Beyond connecting GR recipients to other services, questions must be raised about the adequacy of government programs that serve populations such as parolees and veterans. Close to 30 percent of survey respondents were on parole at some point in their lifetimes. Almost half of such respondents became homeless within three months of leaving prison. The reliance of so many parolees on General Relief benefits places an unfair burden on Los Angeles County's General Relief program, which is mandated to serve the population using County General Funds. The State of California Department of Corrections needs to create a system of discharge planning that does not transfer the financial responsibility of caring for parolees to the County, and also does not leave so many people homeless after they are released by the corrections system.

Veterans are another population for which stronger services must be provided. The fact that 40 percent of veterans surveyed had not connected with services suggests that far too many veterans in Los Angeles County are surviving on the inadequate funds and services provided through General Relief. Although not all veterans are eligible for cash benefits, they may be eligible for other benefits and services.

Case management is at the core of improving the fragmented service delivery system that General Relief recipients encounter. It is often unrealistic to expect GR recipients to connect with a wide array of services in the absence of effective case management. Recipients may not feel comfortable expressing their need for supportive services such as domestic violence counseling and mental health care until sufficient trust is established between a case manager and a recipient. Other reasons that recipients may not access available services include lack of information, lack of transportation, and other barriers such as mental health problems, substance abuse issues, lack of education, illiteracy, and homelessness. By improving links to other programs and services that GR recipients may be able to access, and through strengthening case management services, Los Angeles County could make significant progress in creating a system of care that more effectively addresses the holistic needs of GR recipients.

To enhance the coordination of systems of care, the following recommendations should be explored.

- B1. Improve the training and knowledge of DPSS case managers regarding all relevant systems of care, including health and mental health care, domestic violence services, emancipated foster youth programs, Veterans Administration, and the Department of Corrections.
- B2. Create a specialized unit at each DPSS/GR office that has expertise in identifying the need for social services and making immediate and effective referrals for services.
- B3. Investigate, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of methods to disseminate information to DPSS staff and GR recipients regarding other systems of care and available services.
- B4. Advocate for a State-level discharge planning program, similar to the Massachusetts model, to prevent homelessness and hold systems of care accountable for the people they serve⁴.
- B5. Develop formal collaborative partnerships and pilot projects with appropriate agencies such as the State Department of Rehabilitation, Federal Department of Veterans Affairs, and others.

⁴ This recommendation is consistent with the recommendations of the California State Senate Bipartisan Task Force on Homelessness report, June 2000.

C. The “Unemployable” Population

The housing status of respondents classified as unemployable is of great concern. They are much more likely than employables to have experienced homelessness or to be usually homeless in the past 30 days. People with disabilities, particularly those who are mentally ill, are extremely vulnerable living on the streets or in group shelters. Additionally, they generally receive fewer services than employables and do not receive case management. Lack of housing is not only a barrier to future employment, but also puts people at greater risk of health problems and becoming victims of crime, further exacerbating their situations. Increasing the income of unemployables, by helping qualified persons access SSI benefits, may increase the likelihood that they could find and maintain housing.

Since welfare reform in 1996, the focus of public benefits programs has been helping people transition from “Welfare-to-Work.” Those who are viewed as unable to work have been lost in the discussion. In GROW, employable GR recipients are entitled to receive bus passes, clothing allowances, additional money to pay for work supplies or books, supportive services, and education. Under current DPSS policy, unemployables are not eligible for any of the services offered through GROW. This policy may violate the Americans with Disabilities Act. Over half of the unemployable respondents wanted to participate in an employment service program and three-quarters said they would like to receive services that would help them address their disabilities so that they would be more able to work.

In reality, many people with disabilities are able to work. A fundamental problem with the current GR system is the process of minimally evaluating close to 60,000 people and deciding that half can work and half cannot. The unemployable classification and lack of access to employment services goes against the federal and state trends of providing employment support and incentives for people with disabilities, as seen in the federal Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act and state health care policies. It is frightening that in Los Angeles County this population of people is simply given \$221 a month and expected to survive.

To address the unique needs of the unemployable population, the following recommendations should be explored.

- C1. Evaluate the effectiveness of DPSS’ Supplemental Security Income Assistance Program⁵ (SSIAP) and implement appropriate changes.
- C2. Give unemployables voluntary access to GROW services, while continuing to exempt them from time limits due to their specific needs and vulnerabilities.
- C3. Develop pilot programs with the EmployABILITY Partnership and others to connect unemployables with appropriate employment and rehabilitative services.
- C4. Consider developing a more extensive classification system that accounts for the characteristics, circumstances, and strengths of all applicants, does not institute time limits on those with extreme vulnerabilities, and does not exclude any recipient from access to employment services.
- C5. Address the incidence of homelessness among unemployables by targeting Section 8 housing vouchers to GR recipients who are unemployable and offering comprehensive case management services to connect unemployables to other appropriate systems of care.

⁵ SSIAP provides physically and mentally disabled General Relief (GR) participants with assistance through the initial phases of the SSI application process.

Attachment A
Survey Instrument

Survey Number _____

Date: _____

Interviewer: _____ DPSS Site: _____

Introduction:

- *Introduce yourself and purpose of survey (to find out about other services that GR recipients are eligible for and to try to improve coordination of services and access to needed services).*
- *Your answers are completely confidential – I will not put your name on the survey form. You do not have to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable.*
- *The survey will only take about 10 minutes. We can provide some personal care products if you would like them.*

I. Qualifying Questions

Have you completed this survey before? Yes No
If yes, do not continue with survey.

Are you receiving and/or applying for GR at this time? Yes No
If no, do not continue with survey.

II. GR Status

Instructions: Read the question and each of the responses. Allow only one answer.

A. Which best describes your current GR status?

1. Receiving GR with no sanctions
2. Applying for GR (for the first time ever)
3. Applying for GR (for the first time in a year or more)
4. Re-applying for GR (after a sanction)
5. Re-applying for GR (after being time limited off)
6. Other, please specify: _____

B. Are you (or were you) considered employable or unemployable by the GR Program?

1. Don't Know
2. Employable
3. **Unemployable**

- 1. Temporary status
 2. **Permanent status**

→ Have you applied for SSI?
 1. No, reason _____
 2. **Yes**

↓
 Did you receive assistance with the SSI application from someone in the GR office?
 1. Yes 2. No

II. Housing Status

A. Have you slept in any of the following places in the past 12 months (if yes, in past 30 days)?

	<u>12 months</u>	<u>30 days</u>
1. On the streets, abandoned building, car, park or beach	N Y	N Y
2. Encampment	N Y	N Y
3. Church or Mission	N Y	N Y
4. Emergency or transitional homeless shelter	N Y	N Y
5. A hotel, motel or SRO paid for with a GR housing voucher	N Y	N Y
6. A hotel, motel or SRO paid for with a voucher from an agency besides DPSS	N Y	N Y
7. Your own rented room in a hotel, motel or SRO	N Y	N Y
8. Your own apartment or house	N Y	N Y
9. With friends or family	N Y	N Y
10. Jail, prison, or halfway house	N Y	N Y
11. Hospital or nursing home	N Y	N Y
12. Drug or alcohol treatment facility	N Y	N Y
13. Mental health facility	N Y	N Y
14. A foster home	N Y	N Y
15. Other, please specify: _____		

B. Of these places you've been staying, where have you usually slept in the past 30 days? (**circle number of category above – allow only one answer**)

If answer in question B is number 7, 8, or 9, ask question C. If not, continue to next page.

C. Would you have been able to maintain the same housing arrangement for the past 30 days if you did not receive a GR check?

1. Yes 2. No 3. N/A, have not received a GR check in the past 30 days

Please Explain _____

III. Other Systems of Care

A. During the past 12 months, did you receive any cash benefits besides GR?

1. **Yes** 2. No



If yes, did you receive:

CalWORKs	1. Yes	2. No
SSDI (Social Security Disability Income)	1. Yes	2. No
SSI (Supplemental Security Income)	1. Yes	2. No
Unemployment Benefits	1. Yes	2. No
Veteran's Benefits	1. Yes	2. No
Worker's Compensation Benefits	1. Yes	2. No

B. *Question B continues to page 4. Refer to the attached instructions and examples if necessary. The questions correspond to columns (1), (2) and (3).*

(1) During the past 12 months, did you want or need services from any of the following places or people?

(2) If yes, did you receive these services during the past 12 months?

(3) *If no, what was the main reason that you did not receive the services you needed?*

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Domestic Violence Counseling (non-residential)	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____
Mental Health Services (outpatient)	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____
Hospital or Medical Clinic	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____
Social Security Office	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____
Mental Health Worker in the GR Office	1. Yes	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____
Veteran's Administration	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Program for Foster Youth/Emancipated Foster Youth	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____
Department of Rehabilitation	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____
Department of Community and Senior Services	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____
Unemployment Office (EDD)	1. Yes →	1. Yes	
	2. No	2. No →	_____

V. Demographics

A. What is your gender?

1. Man 2. Woman 3. Transgender

B. What is your date of birth?

Month/Day/Year: _____/_____/_____

C. Which best describes your race/ethnicity?

1. African American
2. Asian or Pacific Islander
3. Caucasian/White (Non-Hispanic)
4. Hispanic/Latino
5. Native American/American Indian
6. Multi-Racial/Ethnic
7. Other, please specify: _____

D. Are you on probation? Yes No

E. Are you on parole? Yes No

For questions F through J, if the survey participant needs more room to provide an answer, use the lines provided in the back of the survey.

F. Have you ever been on parole: yes no *If yes, answer remaining questions. If no, skip to G.*

1. When you were released from prison, were you provided with a housing voucher from your parole officer? Yes No
2. Were you able to designate your reporting office? Yes No
3. Did the location of your reporting office cause you any problems? Yes No
4. Did you apply for GR within 3 months of leaving prison? Yes No
5. Were you ever homeless within 3 months of leaving prison? Yes No
6. Do you go back to jail or prison while you were on GR? Yes No
7. Was GR sufficient to help you find housing and work? Yes No Please explain:

G. Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces? Yes No *If yes, answer remaining questions. If no, skip to H.*

1. Have you ever applied for services from the Department of Veterans Affairs, including medical services or cash benefits?

No Why not? _____

_____ (please skip to H)

Yes (please continue)

2. Did you receive benefits?

No Why not? _____

_____ (please skip to section IV)

Yes Which benefits? _____

H. Were you ever in foster care somewhere in the United States? Yes No

I. Were you ever in foster care in Los Angeles County? Yes No *If No, skip to J.*

1. Before you emancipated, did your social worker complete an ILP (Independent Living Plan) for you? Yes No

2. Did you participate in any specialized training programs before emancipating (e.g. life skills classes, parenting, mental, emotional, or health programs)?

Yes Which programs? _____

No, I did not want these services

No, although I wanted this service I was not able to obtain it

Please explain _____

No, I was unaware such services existed for emancipating foster youth

3. Were you given any information regarding post-emancipation services or support?

(e.g., phone number of foster alumni organizations in your area, public services, etc.) Yes No

4. Were you provided with any housing or linked up with any housing programs at the time you emancipated?

Yes Please describe _____

No

5. Did you receive any foster care program money to assist with the security deposit on your first housing rental (e.g. first and last month's rent)?
 Yes How Much? _____
 No, I did not request it
 No, although I wanted this service I was not able to obtain it
 Please explain _____
 No, I was unaware such services existed for emancipating foster youth
6. Did you receive any foster care program money to assist you with startup home costs (e.g. buying furniture, silverware, appliances, sheets, towels, etc.)
 Yes How Much? _____
 No, I did not request it
 No, although I wanted this service I was not able to obtain it
 Please explain _____
 No, I was unaware such funds existed for emancipating foster youth
7. Before you emancipated did you have:
 a. A valid driver's license? Yes No
 b. A car? Yes No
 c. auto insurance?
 No
 Yes → If yes, Did you receive any foster care program money to help pay for it?
 Yes How Much? _____
 No, I did not request it
 No, although I wanted this service I was not able to obtain it
 Please explain _____
 No, I was unaware such funds were available
8. Did you receive any foster care program money to purchase a bus pass or were you provided tokens for public transportation? Yes No
9. Did you graduate from high school or do you have a GED or equivalent? Yes No
10. Did you participate in any educational or vocational programs before emancipation?
 Yes Which ones? _____
 No

J. Do you have children under the age of 18 that are not currently in your legal custody?

1. Yes → Do these children receive benefits from CalWORKs?

- 1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't know**

2. No

K. Employable Status Questions

1. In the GR program, how are you classified: __employable __unemployable
 If you are classified as unemployable, continue with the questions in this section.
 If you are classified as employable, skip to section VI.

2. If unemployable, are you: NSA physically disabled.

3. How many years have you received GR since you have been classified as unemployable:

4. Would you like to participate in a free program that would help you find work that you could do in order to make more money than your GR grant: yes no

5. Would you like to receive services that would help you address your disability so that you would be more able to work: yes no

6. Please describe your disability and what services you think you need to address it:

7. Please describe what type of work you think you could do if you received help to address your disability:

8. Have you ever received or tried to receive help from the State Department of Rehabilitation: yes no

If yes, please describe your experience with the Department of Rehab:

If no, please explain why:

9. Is your disability permanent? Yes No If yes, has your disability been verified as permanent by a doctor or medical professional? Yes No

10. If you went to the WATTS mobile health unit, how many minutes was your examination?
0-5 5-10 10-15 15-20 20-30 30 or more

11. If you went to the WATTS mobile health unit, have you received medical treatment for your disability? Yes no

If yes, how long after you appointment with WATTS did you begin to receive treatment?

0-10 days 10-20 days 20-30 days 30-60 days 60 days or more

12. Are you currently in the process of applying for SSI benefits: yes no

13. If yes, is an SSI advocate from the GR system helping you apply : yes no

If yes, please describe any problems you are having working with your SSI advocate:

Attachment B

Data Tables

Survey Question/Answer Choices	Percent of Total Respondents (Total N=143) ¹	Percent of Employable Respondents (Total N=73) ²	Percent of Unemployable Respondents (Total N=51) ²
GR STATUS			
A. Which best describes your current GR status?			
Receiving GR with no sanctions	26.8	22.2	37.3
Applying for GR (first time ever)	21.8	23.6	3.9
Applying for GR (first time/year)	17.6	23.6	9.8
Re-applying for GR (after sanction)	16.2	15.3	23.5
Re-applying for GR (after time limited off)	9.2	8.3	11.8
Other	8.4	6.8	13.7
B. Are you (or were you) considered employable or unemployable by the GR Program?			
Don't know	13.3	0	0
Employable	51.0	100.0	0
Unemployable	35.7	0	100.0
<i>B1. If unemployable, temporary or permanent status?</i>			
Temporary status	44.0	N/A	44.0
Permanent status	56.0	N/A	56.0
<i>B2. If permanent, have you applied for SSI?</i>			
No	21.4	N/A	21.4
Yes	78.6	N/A	78.6
<i>B3. If you have applied for SSI, did you receive assistance from someone in the GR office?</i>			
No	57.1	N/A	57.1
Yes	42.9	N/A	42.9
HOUSING STATUS			
A. Have you slept in any of the following places in the past 12 months?			
<i>(Note: Percent of 'yes' replies only, respondents could choose all applicable places)</i>			
1. On the streets, abandoned building, car, park, or beach	49.6	42.3	58.8
2. Encampment	9.9	7.0	11.8
3. Church or Mission	26.2	25.4	29.4
4. Emergency or transitional homeless shelter	27.7	22.5	37.3
5. Hotel, motel, or SRO paid for with a GR housing voucher	27.7	22.5	39.2
6. Hotel, motel, or SRO paid for with a non-DPSS voucher	9.2	7.0	15.7
7. Own rented room in a hotel, motel, or SRO	42.6	49.3	43.1
8. Own apartment or house	32.6	32.4	23.5
9. With friends or family	50.4	59.2	37.3
10. Jail, prison, or halfway house	20.6	18.3	19.6
11. Hospital or nursing home	11.3	7.0	17.6
12. Drug or alcohol treatment facility	10.6	11.3	9.8
13. Mental health facility	8.5	4.2	9.8
14. Foster home	1.4	1.4	2.0

¹ While the total number of respondents (N) is indicated for each category, the total number of responses varies in each question due to questions respondents chose not to answer and questions that did not apply to all respondents.

² 19 respondents did not know their employability status and therefore were not included in either subgroup of respondents.

Survey Question/Answer Choices	Percent of Total Respondents (Total N=143) ¹	Percent of Employable Respondents (Total N=73) ²	Percent of Unemployable Respondents (Total N=51) ²
A1. If yes in the past 12 months, have you slept in any of the following places in the past 30 days? (Note: Percent of 'yes' replies only)			
1. On the streets, abandoned building, car, park, or beach	38.1	31.9	43.1
2. Encampment	5.0	2.9	7.8
3. Church or Mission	19.6	19.1	21.6
4. Emergency or transitional homeless shelter	20.3	15.7	28.6
5. Hotel, motel, or SRO paid for with a GR housing voucher	18.7	14.3	28.0
6. Hotel, motel, or SRO paid for with a non-DPSS voucher	7.1	2.8	15.7
7. Own rented room in a hotel, motel, or SRO	29.2	35.3	28.0
8. Own apartment or house	21.4	18.6	15.7
9. With friends or family	40.1	47.8	30.6
10. Jail, prison, or halfway house	10.0	8.5	8.0
11. Hospital or nursing home	6.4	2.8	12.0
12. Drug or alcohol treatment facility	5.7	4.3	5.9
13. Mental health facility	4.3	1.4	6.0
14. Foster home	0.0	0.0	0.0
B. Of these places you have been staying, where have you usually slept in the past 30 days?			
1. On the streets, abandoned building, car, park, or beach	21.0	14.3	28.7
2. Encampment	0.7	0.0	2.0
3. Church or Mission	5.1	8.6	2.0
4. Emergency or transitional homeless shelter	7.2	5.7	12.2
5. Hotel, motel, or SRO paid for with a GR housing voucher	5.1	5.7	4.1
6. Hotel, motel, or SRO paid for with a non-DPSS voucher	2.2	1.4	4.1
7. Own rented room in a hotel, motel, or SRO	10.9	15.7	8.2
8. Own apartment or house	15.2	8.6	16.3
9. With friends or family	21.7	30.0	12.2
10. Jail, prison, or halfway house	5.1	4.3	4.1
11. Hospital or nursing home	1.4	0.0	4.1
12. Drug or alcohol treatment facility	2.2	0.0	2.0
13. Mental health facility	0.7	2.9	0.0
14. Foster home	0.0	0.0	0.0
15. Other	1.5	2.8	0.0
C. If in stable/semi-stable housing, (7, 8 or 9 above), would you have been able to maintain the same housing arrangement for the past 30 days if you did not receive a GR check?			
No	52.2	38.5	77.8
Yes	29.9	38.5	16.7
N/A, Did not receive GR check in past 30 days	17.9	23.0	5.5

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² 19 respondents did not know their employability status and therefore were not included in either subgroup of respondents.

Survey Question/Answer Choices	Percent of Total Respondents (Total N=143) ¹	Percent of Employable Respondents (Total N=73) ²	Percent of Unemployable Respondents (Total N=51) ²
OTHER SYSTEMS OF CARE			
A. During the past 12 months, did you receive any cash benefits besides GR?			
No	90.1	87.5	92.2
Yes	9.9	12.5	7.8
A1. If yes, did you receive any of the following (Note: 'yes' responses only):			
CaWORKs	14.3	22.2	0.0
SSDI	21.4	11.1	50.0
SSI	14.4	0.0	50.0
Unemployment	50.0	55.6	25.0
Veteran's	7.1	0.0	25.0
Worker's Comp	7.1	0.0	25.0
B. During the past 12 months, did you want or need services from any of the following places or people? (Note: 'yes' responses only)			
Domestic violence counseling	7.1	7.0	5.9
Mental health services (outpatient)	23.4	8.5	41.2
Hospital or medical clinic	38.6	25.4	54.0
Social Security office	32.9	14.1	60.0
Mental health worker in the GR office	17.0	7.0	31.4
Veteran's Administration	10.6	9.9	15.7
Foster youth/Emancipated foster youth program	1.4	1.4	2.0
Department of Rehabilitation	10.0	8.5	14.0
Department of Community and Senior Services	1.4	0.0	2.0
Unemployment office	28.6	36.6	17.6
B1. If yes, did you receive these services during the past 12 months? (Note: 'yes' answers only)			
Domestic violence counseling	11.1	20.0	0.0
Mental health services (outpatient)	59.4	66.7	60.0
Hospital or medical clinic	77.4	66.7	80.8
Social Security office	37.2	44.4	39.3
Mental health worker in the GR office	52.4	60.0	57.1
Veteran's Administration	60.0	57.1	62.5
Foster youth/Emancipated foster youth program	50.0	100.0	0.0
Department of Rehabilitation	57.1	66.7	57.1
Department of Community and Senior Services	50.0	N/A	0.0
Unemployment office	59.0	53.8	87.5

¹ While the total number of respondents (N) is indicated for each category, the total number of responses varies in each question due to questions respondents chose not to answer and questions that did not apply to all respondents.

² 19 respondents did not know their employability status and therefore were not included in either subgroup of respondents.

Survey Question/Answer Choices	Percent of Total Respondents (Total N=143) ¹	Percent of Employable Respondents (Total N=73) ²	Percent of Unemployable Respondents (Total N=51) ²
DEMOGRAPHICS AND OTHER INFORMATION			
A. Gender			
Man	64.1	63.9	58.8
Woman	35.2	36.1	39.2
Transgender	0.7	0.0	2.0
B. Age			
18 - 20	2.2	4.2	0.0
21 - 30	21.3	23.9	12.5
31 - 40	26.5	33.8	16.7
41 - 50	39.7	31.0	58.3
51 - 59	8.8	5.6	12.5
60 +	1.5	1.4	0.0
C. Race/Ethnicity			
African-American	62.0	68.1	60.8
Caucasian/White	10.6	6.9	13.7
Hispanic/Latino	16.2	16.7	11.8
Native American/American Indian	2.8	1.4	3.9
Multi-Racial Ethnic	6.3	5.6	5.9
Other	2.1	1.3	3.9
Other Characteristics (Survey Questions D – I; ‘yes’ responses only)			
D. Currently on probation	9.9	11.1	5.9
E. Currently on parole	12.0	12.5	7.8
F. Has been on parole during lifetime	28.6	22.4	31.9
G. Veteran (has served in U.S. Armed Forces)	18.2	17.2	22.4
H. Was in foster care somewhere in United States	14.6	12.7	16.7
I. Was in foster care in Los Angeles County	8.6	9.7	8.5
J. Do you have children under the age of 18 that are not currently in your legal custody?			
No	76.2	73.4	74.5
Yes	23.8	26.6	25.5
J1. If yes, do these children receive benefits from CalWORKs?			
No	73.3	64.7	90.9
Yes	20.0	29.4	0.0
Don't Know	6.7	5.9	9.1

¹ While the total number of respondents (N) is indicated for each category, the total number of responses varies in each question due to questions respondents chose not to answer and questions that did not apply to all respondents.

² 19 respondents did not know their employability status and therefore were not included in either subgroup of respondents.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC POPULATIONS	
	<i>Percent of 'Yes' Responses</i>
Parolees	
Parole officer provided a housing voucher upon release	12.5
Able to designate reporting office	59.4
Location of reporting office caused problems to the respondent	28.1
Applied for GR within 3 months of release	56.3
Homeless within 3 months of release	43.6
Returned to jail or prison while on GR	12.5
GR was sufficient to help respondent find housing and work	42.3
Veterans	
Ever applied for services from the VA (including medical and cash)	57.9
If yes, benefits were received	60.0
Former foster youth	
Not reported due to recent implementation of benefits referenced in the survey – almost all respondents answered no to every question	N/A
Unemployables	
Classified as Needs Special Assistance (NSA)	33.3
Physically disabled (temporary or permanent)	64.3
Received GR as Unemployable for less than one year	35.8
Received GR as Unemployable for one to four years	38.0
Received GR as Unemployable for five years or more	26.2
Would like to participate in a free program to find work	61.5
Would like to receive services to address disability so that respondent would be more able to work	75.0
Received or tried to receive services from the State Department of Rehabilitation	12.2
Disability is permanent	56.1
If yes, permanent disability has been verified by a doctor	87.0
Length of WATTS mobile exam was 15 minutes or less	46.2
Received medical treatment after WATTS exam	34.6
Currently applying for SSI	60.0
If yes, SSI advocate from the GR system was helping respondent	33.3

Attachment C

**Comparison of All General Relief Recipients and
Surveyed Recipients**

Comparison of All GR Recipients and Surveyed GR Recipients		
Characteristic	Percent of Total GR Caseload	Percent of Survey Respondents
Gender¹		
Man	62.0	64.1
Woman	38.0	35.2
Transgender	Not reported	0.7
Age¹		
18 – 20 years	3.4	2.2
21 – 59 years	87.6	96.3
60 – 65 years	7.5	1.5
Over 65 years	1.5	0.0
Employability Status²		
Unemployable	51.0	51.0
Employable	49.0	35.7
Don't Know	N/A	13.3
GR District³		
South Central	2.4	0.0
Glendale	5.2	0.0
Lancaster	3.2	0.0
Pasadena	3.5	0.0
Pomona	2.9	0.0
San Gabriel	4.8	1.4
Metro East	8.9	0.7
Civic Center	9.0	49.6
Metro Special	15.8	9.8
Rancho Park	7.7	21.7
South Special	16.8	8.4
Southwest Special	14.1	3.5
Wilshire Special	5.7	4.9

¹ General Relief January 2000 caseload data, reported on dpss.co.la.ca.us.

² DPSS Statistical Report, November 2000.

³ DPSS representative, reporting February 2001 data.