



FEBRUARY 2016

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES



Skye Patrick

New County Librarian



On February 1, Skye Patrick began her tenure as Los Angeles County Librarian upon appointment by the Board of Supervisors. She oversees one of the largest library systems in America, providing a five million item collection to 3.4 million residents via 86 community libraries and three bookmobiles in 49 of the County’s 88 cities and all of its unincorporated areas.

Patrick relocated from Florida to Los Angeles for the position. Most recently, she served as the Director of Libraries for Broward County, Florida. Prior to her Florida assignment, Patrick was Assistant Director of the Queens Public Library, where she managed 20 branch locations in that system.

As Library Director, Patrick will be responsible for all aspects of the County Public Library’s programs, services and day-to-day operations, including management of the library’s \$126.3 million annual budget.

“I am thrilled to be the new County of Los Angeles Library Director,” said Patrick. “While the work the County Public Library has done is exceptional, there is a wonderful opportunity to build upon current successes and move ahead with a vision towards an

Making it official.

enriched and engaged community.”

Patrick has been recognized for introducing innovative programming and expanding library hours with no increase of budget. She also has been credited with reinforcing the library system’s role in the community as a civic and cultural center, as a hub for public information and services, and as an institution of literacy, innovation and lifelong learning.

Patrick earned her Master’s degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh and her Bachelor’s degree in Fine Arts from Northern Michigan University. She also has volunteered with the Sandy Relief Action/ Libraries Without Borders.



Library staff and commissioners welcome the new County Librarian.

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Calendar of Events

Los Angeles County Museum of Art

(323) 857-6010

www.lacma.org

Through March 20 – Frank Gehry

Through May 29– Japanese Paintings: Figures from Life, Figures from Allegory

Through July 4 – Vitality of New Forms

Through July 4 – Morris Graves: The Nature of Things

Through September 5 – Catherine Opie: O

Center Theatre Group

(213) 628-2772

www.centertheatregroup.org

Ahmanson Theatre

Through March 13 – An Act of God

March 22 through May 1 – A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder

Kirk Douglas Theatre

March 6 through April 3 – Women Laughing Alone with Salad

Mark Taper Forum

Through March 20 – The Mystery of Love & Sex

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

April 15 through April 17 – Complexions Contemporary Ballet

June 17 through June 19 – Compagnie Kafig

Grand Park

www.grandparkla.org

(213) 972-8080

Every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday – Lunchtime Lunch Trucks

Every Wednesday and Friday – Lunchtime Yoga + Lunch Trucks

Every Friday – Lunchtime Yoga

Walt Disney Concert Hall

www.hollywoodbowl.com

(323) 850-2000

Through February 23 – City of Light

March 12 – Jose Gonzalez with yMusic

Visit <http://hr.lacounty.gov> for information on employment opportunities with the County of Los Angeles



Members of the Board

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Check out the DIGEST at

<http://hr.lacounty.gov/county-digest/>



health talk



by **Christopher Metchnikoff, M.D.**
 Physician Specialist, Internal Medicine
 Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

Prescription Opiate Abuse A National Epidemic

Chronic pain is among the most common reasons for seeking medical attention and is reported by 20-50% of patients seen in primary care.

- Over 100 million Americans suffer chronic pain and roughly 63% of pain sufferers seek help from their primary care clinicians.
- However, the current management of chronic pain in the United States, including the inappropriate use of chronic opiate narcotics – including, but not limited to, morphine, hydromorphone, codeine, hydrocodone, oxycodone, and fentanyl has led to a national prescription opiate crisis.

Studies show the inappropriate role of chronic opiate therapy for chronic non-cancer pain.

- *No convincing evidence exists* that chronic opiate therapy is effective in the relief of chronic pain *not* related to *underlying cancer*; however, chronic opiate therapy is associated with increased risk of serious – *even life-threatening* – harms.
- Studies have shown that approximately **78%** of people on **chronic opiate therapy for pain** display behavior consistent with **opiate misuse** and approximately **26%** of patients receiving chronic opiate therapy for pain meet DSM-5 criteria for a **Substance Use Disorder**, including opiate addiction.

Prescription painkiller overdoses are a public health epidemic.

- Overdose deaths from prescription painkillers have skyrocketed during the past decade. Prescription painkiller overdoses **killed nearly 15,000 people** in the U.S. in 2008. This is more than 3 times the 4,000 people killed by these drugs in 1999.

- There were **over 38,000 deaths** in the U.S. in 2010 due to **drug overdose, of which 43%** involved **opiod analgesics**.
- Nearly half a million emergency department visits in 2009 were due to people misusing or abusing prescription painkillers.
- Non-medical use of prescription painkillers in the past year was reported by 12 million Americans (age 12 and older) in 2010.
- Nonmedical use of prescription painkillers costs health insurers up to **\$72.5 billion annually** in direct health care costs.

The supply of prescription painkillers is larger than ever.

- The quantity of prescription painkillers sold to pharmacies, hospitals, and doctors' offices was four times larger in 2010 than in 1999.
- Many states report problems with "pill mills" where doctors prescribe large quantities of painkillers to people who don't need them medically. Some people also obtain prescriptions from multiple prescribers by "doctor shopping."
- Overall, opiates are the most commonly prescribed class of medication in the United States.

What can be done to help quell our national prescription opiate abuse epidemic?

1. The U.S. government is:

- Tracking prescription drug overdose trends to better understand the epidemic.
- Educating health care providers and the public about prescription drug abuse and overdose.
- Developing, evaluating and promoting programs and policies shown to prevent and treat prescription drug abuse and overdose, while making sure patients have access to safe, effective pain treatment.

2. Individuals can:

- Use prescription painkillers only as directed by a health care provider.
- Make sure they are the only one to use their prescription painkillers. Not selling or sharing them with others helps prevent misuse and abuse.
- Store prescription painkillers in a secure place and dispose of them properly.
- Get help for substance abuse problems by calling **(800) 662-HELP**. For more information, visit <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>.

Animal Transports

Department of Animal Care and Control

One of the newer developments in the animal sheltering industry is the inter-shelter/inter-state transportation of dogs and cats. It has been recognized in recent years that some animal shelters across the country have higher adoption rates than others. Through progressive communication and collaboration, animal shelters all over the country slowly developed programs to alleviate the homeless animal population on a more global scheme.

In 2015, the Department of Animal Care and Control, in collaboration with private agencies and adoption partners, has transported over 2,500 animals to various adoption locations beyond the County borders. This was made possible by dedication, organization and diligence of County employees in the six (6) Animal Care Centers.

Upon intake, animals are evaluated for potential transport candidacy. If they meet the criteria, they are placed on a list to await the next transport once they are available. Prior to transport, they are examined by our medical staff for any signs of disease or illness. They are given the standard core vaccines, which includes rabies vaccine, microchip, and testing for heartworm (dogs) or FIV/FelV (cats). Most animals are spayed or neutered, unless the receiving shelter takes on the responsibility to perform this surgery in their location.

On the day of the transport, all animals undergo an exit examination by the medical staff and are loaded in crates to be transported by van or plane to their receiving shelter. Upon arrival at the receiving shelter, most animals (approximately 80%) are adopted within 24 hours. News of such positive outcomes makes all the hard work in preparing the animals worthwhile. The department works together with humane societies in Northern California and in the states of Oregon, Utah, and Washington.

On average, each transport, which occurs once or twice a week, relocates 10 to 50 animals. The department has seen a significant reduction in euthanasia due to the transport collaboration efforts with ASPCA and Wings of Rescue. It is everyone's hope that one day every animal can have a forever home and with the animal transport programs, this may soon be a reality.



New Landlord VIP Program

Help End Veteran Homelessness

The Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA) has been on the forefront of the fight to end veteran homelessness and has implemented measures to accomplish this goal. Recently, HACoLA received funding from the Board of Supervisors through the Homes for Heroes Initiative to help address the lack of available housing units for homeless veterans. HACoLA has committed this funding to implement its Landlord Veteran Incentive Program. The ground-breaking program incentivizes renting units to homeless veterans by offering landlords the equivalent of a rental payment to hold available rental units while a homeless veteran is referred and paperwork to contract the unit is completed.

Participating landlords receive:



- Monetary incentives to hold vacant units
- Expedited housing quality standards inspections
- Qualified referrals to fill vacancies
- Reliable rental payments from the Housing Authority

For more information, please visit the HACoLA website at www.hacola.org, e-mail at LandlordVIP@hacola.org, or call (626)586-1572.

Working for You

Department of Public Health

In addition to improved physical health, youth sports provide kids an opportunity to learn the importance of teamwork, time management and plays a role in positive youth development. As friends and family members, we can promote activities that help youth stay active, healthy, and safe while participating in sports activities. There is growing awareness about the danger and frequency of concussions sustained while playing sports. The Department of Public Health's recently published report *Concussions: How Sports-Related Injuries Are Impacting Our Youth in Los Angeles County*, provides information and recommendations that can be used to target prevention efforts and reduce the impact of concussion injuries, particularly among youth and young adults. The report highlights the following:

- Each day in Los Angeles County, more than 26 individuals are treated for concussions in emergency departments (ED), and the number of people being treated for concussions is increasing.
- The highest rates of ED visits are among teenagers and young adults. Team sports, particularly football, are responsible for many of the ED visits among this age group.

Department of Public Health offers some tips about how to minimize sports related injuries and increase safety:

- Provide appropriate and properly-fitted sports gear and protective equipment.
- Ensure proper warm-up and stretching before and after sports play to promote increased flexibility.
- Encourage hydration. It is important to drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after playing sports. In most cases, water is best. Kids rarely need sports drinks and should not consume energy drinks.
- Don't forget to apply sunscreen. Practice sessions and sports games can mean long periods in the sun.
- Insist on proper sports technique and form. This will increase safety and performance.
- Take rest breaks during practice and games and plan at least one day off per week from a particular sport to allow the body to recover and prevent overuse injuries.
- Stop activity if there is pain. Encouraging sports players to "shake it off" in order to continue playing can lead to more serious injury.
- Know the signs and symptoms of concussions.

SPORTS

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Latin alternative artist De'Anza sings and plays the Mexican vihuela (five-string guitar).

2016 Musicians Roster

A Resource for Everyone

Are you looking to book entertainment for your next event and not sure where to start? You're in luck! L.A. County has a database of vetted local musicians to turn to for ideas. Featuring more than 100 musicians and bands representing a range of musical styles, the [Los Angeles County Musicians Roster](#) is a resource for concerts, parties, and private events. Administered by the Arts Commission, the Roster is also the pool of talent for organizations presenting concerts through the County's [Free Concerts in Public Sites](#) program.

A trusted directory of artistic excellence, the Musicians Roster is comprised of artists chosen by a panel of experienced and respected music professionals. From Latin Jazz and classical to hip-hop and bluegrass, the 2016 Roster spans the breadth of L.A. County's many cultures and traditions. So, have a look, take a listen, and find your new favorite artist along the way! And be sure to reference the Musicians Roster next time you're planning an event.

For more information about the Los Angeles County Musicians Roster, visit lacountyarts.org/musiciansroster.

Are You Ready for the Big One?

Every year, Los Angeles County has thousands of earthquakes, though many are too small to feel. A large earthquake can happen at any time. So, it's always best to remain calm, be aware of your surroundings, and have a plan before, during and after an event.

The Fire Department wants you and your loved ones to be prepared in case of a disaster by having a plan, keeping emergency supplies on-hand, and staying informed.

Here are some tips on how you can prepare for an earthquake:

- Create an evacuation plan.
- Familiarize yourself with all the exits in your house.
- Learn the locations of utility shut-off valves.
- Have food supplies ready that require little to no refrigeration as well as plenty of water.
- Create a supply kit with important items, such as an out-of-state-contact list, cash and credit cards, important documents, clothing, toiletries, photos, baby essentials, trash bags for sanitation, and special-need items like medication and pet essentials.
- Have a radio to stay connected.

If an earthquake hits, remember to duck, cover, hold, and protect your neck and head.

The Fire Department offers free Community Emergency Response Team classes to train community members in disaster preparedness. For more information, please visit fire.lacounty.gov/cert.



More Than Meets the Eye

As part of our protection of marketplace integrity, consumers are protected by the hard work of the County's Weights and Measures Bureau. The Bureau, which was formed over 100



years ago, acts both proactively and in response to complaints. Consumers usually don't have the time to check the count claims on packaging or the means to test volume claims or grocery scales, but Weights and Measures inspectors do. They make sure that in business, a pound is a pound, a gallon is a gallon, a dozen is a dozen, and the price listed on the shelf is the price charged

at the checkout stand. From residential gas meters to your local gas stations to airport luggage scales, inspectors verify accuracy.

Weights and Measures Week will be celebrated nationally and locally March 1 through 7 to commemorate the nation's first weights and measures law enacted March 2, 1799 by Congress. This year's theme is "More Than Meets the Eye!" Inspectors are often the invisible third party in commercial transactions.

If you think there is a problem with a count, weight, or some measurement in a purchase you've made or if you are charged more than the advertised, tagged, or listed price for an item at a store, call (800) 665-2900. For price scanner overcharges, it is helpful if you can provide:

- A complete description of the item or items
- The shelf price and/or advertised price
- The price scanned at the checkout register
- The date the overcharge occurred
- The store name and location



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To find out more about preventing, recognizing, and responding to concussions in youth sports, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's HEADS UP initiative. Collectively, we can improve the health and well-being of communities in LA County. For more information please visit us online at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov.



Share Your Heart Share Your Home

*Become a Foster/Adoptive Parent
Department of Children and Family Services*

Love is in the air and all around us this time of year. February is a special time to shower those we love and care about with reminders of our love. Flowers, chocolates, stuffed animals, and love notes warm the hearts of millions. For Syphanie age 11, Tomas age 9, and Genya age 8, the love of a forever family would mean more than anything. These three siblings will bring more than their fair share of love, joy, and smiles to any family lucky enough to adopt them from the foster care system. With three times the love, three times the laughter, and three times the fun, all good things really do come in threes! These close knit and loving siblings are no exception to this rule. Syphanie is a sweet, caring, helpful, and kind big sister. She has an easy going and likable personality and does well in school, science and history being her favorite subjects. She also loves crafts and would love to have a mom to scrap book with someday! Tomas is the only boy and loves the attention of his sisters. He is very goal orientated and already has his college and career picked out. He states he “will attend California State University, Long Beach and will become a mechanical engineer.” His confidence and dedication at such a young age is inspiring. Tomas is also likable, friendly, and kind and has a smile that is contagious. He would like a family who can keep him in cub scouts and swimming classes. Genya is the adorable little sister. Sweetness must run in their genes because this young lady is truly as sweet and kind as her older siblings. Well-liked by all, she loves Hello Kitty and Mickey Mouse and would love a family to take her to Disneyland someday. Genya has had the hardest time out of the three adjusting to foster care but is making good progress in a stable foster home. With the right support and stability, Genya and her older siblings will truly bloom. Call (888) 811-1121 to learn more about adopting these kids today!



Photo: Susanne Elstein

DHR's Wellness Corner

Bringing you inspiration from around the County

My Journey to Better Health

By Araceli Crescencio (Auditor-Controller)

I am so grateful that I participated in the Countywide Fitness Challenge last year with my coworkers. I started my weight loss journey one year ago. I weighed 248 pounds, was very out of shape, and had really poor eating habits. I was constantly feeling sick and tired. At this time, I was also diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. That's when it hit me. I realized I needed to make some major lifestyle changes. As a single mother of three, I knew something had to change, as I knew I could not continue living this unhealthy lifestyle. I felt that as a mother, I needed to be able to care for my children and not the other way around. So, I took matters into my own hands and started running. I was so out of shape that I could not even complete one mile when I first began. Despite my early challenges, I was persistent and did not give up. I kept running and running, and after time, my body adapted.

I instantly began to shed weight. Soon thereafter, I was able to run up to 10 miles at a time, and lost a total of 50 pounds on my own. I participated in my first 5k race in May 2015 and my kids were right there cheering me on. It felt so good to see how proud they were of their mom.



In September, I decided to join The Camp Transformation Center and participated in a six-week challenge to lose 20 pounds. I enjoyed the experience so much that I participated in a subsequent challenge to lose an additional 20 pounds. I trained rigorously and ate healthy portion-controlled meals six times a day. As result, I lost a total of

BETTER HEALTH
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Studying Abroad: A Public Housing Success Story

Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles

The Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles (HACoLA) dedicates itself to improving the lives of residents and offering resources that enable them to take the next step on their journey to self-sufficiency. Through its Family Resource Centers (FRCs), on-site case managers, and a licensed clinical coordinator provide case management services. Services include information and referral intake and ongoing assessment, case plan development, crisis intervention, client monitoring, and non-client drop-ins which offer hope and the possibility of a brighter future for participants looking to make changes in their lives.



HACoLA is happy to report that it recently received an update from Rebecca Garfias, resident of its Harbor Hills public housing development located in the City of Lomita. HACoLA's case manager first met Garfias when she was having difficulties with her college admission for Humboldt State University (HSU) and a summer "bridge" program at Cal State Dominguez Hills (CSUDH). Through the FRC, Garfias received the assistance needed to apply for and finish the local summer program at CSUDH and went on to HSU. HACoLA's case manager also notified Garfias about its Housing Authority Resident (HAR) Scholarship, an annual competitive grant offered by the Community Development Foundation, HACoLA's non-profit partner, to high school seniors and adult public housing or Section 8 students, either attending or preparing to attend an accredited college, university, or vocational program. HACoLA staff helped with her scholarship application and provided a letter of recommendation.

Garfias was awarded a scholarship as she prepared for her junior year at HSU, and was also accepted to a foreign exchange program at Robert Gordon University, the top university in the United Kingdom for employment. She is studying and living abroad in Aberdeen, Scotland for 10 months. She will then return to HSU for her senior year to earn her Bachelor's degree.

According to Garfias, "studying abroad has been one of the best decisions I have ever made. Although it is so different here, I love it! I'm meeting people from all over the world. I feel so lucky. I just want to thank you for all the help you gave me and the information you provided when I was trying to apply to scholarships. It never went unappreciated!" While the odds of success are against her, her drive and dedication are propelling her to success. She is the first in her family to pursue higher education and as the oldest sibling, is hoping to set an example for her younger family members. She had never even been out of the local area, much less to Northern California and now she's sending best wishes from Scotland!

Since its inception, \$217,600 in HAR Scholarships have been awarded. The HAR Scholarships were made possible through the generous donations of public and private agencies, as well HACoLA employees. However, the Community Development Foundation was recently added as an eligible fund distribution agency under the County's charitable giving campaign. All County employees now have the option to contribute to assisting the County's Section 8 and Public Housing residents reach their educational goals and end generational poverty. Contributing to this worthy cause is a great way to share your love and help students like Rebecca Garfias prepare for their future.

Rideshare L.A. County!

from the CEO/Office of Workplace Programs

Have you considered starting a carpool or vanpool but have concerns about how you would get home in case of an emergency? Do you already Rideshare but wonder how you would get home in case you have to work overtime? No need to worry. The County's Rideshare Program has the perfect solution. The Guaranteed Ride Home (GRH) Program pays the cost to get you home in case of an emergency or unplanned overtime. This free service to County employees that Rideshare is designed to eliminate any concerns about Ridesharing. Contact your local Employee Transportation Coordinator (ETC) for more details. Take pride and share the ride. For more information or to find your departmental ETC, go to www.rideshare.lacounty.gov.

Retirees

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after their many years of service to the County of Los Angeles:

45+ Years

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES: Kaye Mc Kay
INTERNAL SERVICES: Larry Morris
PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Nina M. Sanders
SHERIFF: Richard Vasquez, Jr.
SUPERIOR COURT: William Mitchell

40+ Years

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES: Lawrence S. Silverman
HEALTH SERVICES: Steve Amparan
INTERNAL SERVICES: Beverly Russell, John F. Yates
MENTAL HEALTH: Laveta Booker, Mary Vivian
PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Rosario Felix, Jose F. Salas
SUPERIOR COURT: Elyse M. Gifford

35+ Years

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER/WEIGHTS & MEASURES: Richard G. Sokulsky
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Kristine K. Gay
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER: Kenneth E. Van Orden, Michele Victor
DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Olivia Contreras
HEALTH SERVICES: Chunyee Che, Gladys Torres, Melinda J. Wardell
HUMAN RESOURCES: Chona M. Navarro
INTERNAL SERVICES: Dao Q. Luu
MENTAL HEALTH: Irma Reyes-Kubota
PROBATION: Anastasia B. Adams, Margie J. Rodriguez
PUBLIC HEALTH: Barbara B. McDuffie
PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Nina T. Bargas, Martha Gomez, Yu-Chun L. Kolber, Felicia Madrigal
REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK: Steve Lopez, Leonidez F. Ner
SHERIFF: Julia M. Easley, Marsha F. Devot
SUPERIOR COURT: Edward M. Bush, Diane J. Moore

30+ Years

ASSESSOR: Lori L. Hough
BEACHES & HARBORS: William L. Field III
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS: Morena G. De Sario
CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Terri A. Doyle, Martha T. Martinez
CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES: Stella S. Kwok
FIRE: Timothy A. Baker, Thomas D. Brady, Derek J. Rice, James E. Wheeler

HEALTH SERVICES: Teodora F. Ellis, Marcia A. Hamilton, John W. Haworth, Elisa Hill, Virgilio F. Manalansan, Ernest A. Pierre, Guillermina G. Robles, Adelbert Terrebonne, Victoria A. Yarbrough

MENTAL HEALTH: Zohreh Zarnegar

PROBATION: Kathryn A. Meeks, Marina M. Rojas

PUBLIC HEALTH: Eunice Edmond

PUBLIC WORKS: George G. Sagata

SHERIFF: Jesus M. Anguiano, Richard C. Bowman, Daniel J. Bujer, Johnny R. Debets, Mark A. Dunkel, Ricardo L. Esquibel, Antonio Garza III, Joseph S. Hartshorne, Thomas R. La Rose, Loy A. Lina, Joseph G. McCleary, Scott K. Motoyasu, Denise Oglesby, Clay S. Porlier, Esteban M. Ramos, Gregory S. Salcido

SUPERIOR COURT: Richard W. Burns, Ronald S. Cyger, Elizabeth A. Ouellette, Mark T. Willman

25+ Years

ASSESSOR: Jerelyn C. Aguilon, Veronica J. Moser

AUDITOR-CONTROLLER: Diana M. Parhms

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Hanako L. Sunday Brown

CHILDREN & FAMILY SERVICES: Jeffrey S. Gibbs, Martha C. Salinas

DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Melissa A. Daly, Deborah L. Winston, Cuc T. Le, Stephanie Sparagna

FIRE: Benjamin E. Nunes II, Bernard E. Weston

HEALTH SERVICES: Lucita A. Castro, Joy A. Garcia, Errol Griffin, Michael P. Jelf, Cheewan P. Putra, Sonia N. Reyes

HUMAN RESOURCES: Juana Gonzalez Kennedy

INTERNAL SERVICES: Terence J. Gucwa

MENTAL HEALTH: Denise M. Maguire

PROBATION: Dennis M. Collison, James O. Ogbeide, Lafoina S. Paala

PUBLIC HEALTH: Marina Riebeling

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: V Diana Aghakhanian, Hilda Avitia, Shooshanik Baghdasarian, Lilia Borrayo, Yeghia Harutunian, Kuang P. Khy, Henry Marchena, Viola M. Patton, Susie M. Rebustes, Lewis W. Roach

PUBLIC WORKS: Tsung-Ta Chang, Thomas E. Milton
SHERIFF: Jose G. Arellano, Barbara J. Baker, Henry A. Boyd, Mark E. Brewster, Jean E. Casaus, Davy T. Clark, Thomas E. Cox, Clarence G. Gallegos, William G. Gilbert Jr., Paul S. Hodgkinson, Philip J. Johnson, Benjamin H. Katz, David S. Kim, Kimberly B. Kim, Eugenia Lopez, David K. Miklos, Shirish A. Munshi, Joann Sanfilippo, Glenn J. Vanzuylen, Michael B. Willoughby

SUPERIOR COURT: Judith Citron, Bruce Mitchell, Teresita J. Zaballa

TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR: Bethel M. Griffin-Sawyers, Edgardo C. Tuason



by the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs

New Laws Protect California Consumers This Year

The Department of Consumer and Business Affairs is committed to providing the most up-to-date information on consumer rights and protections. California has passed more than 800 new laws going into effect this year. Here are a few:

In case of a data breach, health information is protected and notifications must include specific information

When a data breach occurs, a consumer's personal information may be compromised. The types of personal information now includes health information such as insurance policy number, policy holder unique identifier or any insurance application and claims history (AB 1541).

If you are a victim of a data breach, you should receive a notice titled, "Notice of Data Breach." Followed by sections labeled: "What happened," "What information was involved," "What we are doing," "What you can do," and "For more information." The notice should be in plain language and sections cannot be written in less than 10-point font (AB 570).

Visible mold is now considered a substandard living condition

By adding mold to the list of substandard living conditions, it allows a code enforcement officer to cite a landlord for repair. A landlord may enter a unit to repair problems related to the mold as long as proper notice to enter is provided.

Short-term rental sites must notify users of potential legal action from landlord

Tenants using a short-term rental hosting platform (such as Airbnb and VRBO) to rent their room, home, condominium, or apartment should be provided with a disclosure regarding potential risks of listing their unit. The notification from the servicer should state that by listing the residence it may violate the users lease or contract. A landlord could take legal action, including possible eviction.

Bypass probate court to transfer real property upon death

A faster and less expensive process, individuals may complete a revocable Transfer on Death deed (revocable TOD deed)

to transfer real property to a beneficiary and bypass probate court upon death. When the beneficiary receives the property, a new tax will be assessed.

Collection of upfront fees for immigration services is prohibited

It is prohibited to collect upfront fees for performing immigration services related to President Obama's Executive Order on November 20, 2014 to extend the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and "any relief, as provided, under federal law."

Buy-here-pay-here dealers to provide additional notice before using starter interrupt technology

Buy-here-pay-here dealers are now required to provide a buyer at the time of purchase a written disclosure that a five-day warning will be provided before activating the starter-interrupt technology for weekly payment contracts. There will be a 10-day warning for all other payment contracts. A final notice will be provided 48 hours before the vehicle is shut down remotely. In case of an emergency, the buyer can start a disabled vehicle for no less than 24 hours after the vehicle was initially disabled.

Visit dca.lacounty.gov or call (800) 593-8222 to find out about 2016's most important new laws for small business owners.

BETTER HEALTH

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42 pounds in 13 weeks. My coworkers were inspirational and continued to support me through my progress. I'm so happy that I participated in the Challenge because with their support and encouragement, I WON!

Now, I'm healthier and happier than ever, and best of all, I can keep up with my four-year-old son. My two older daughters are so proud of me and are picking up some of my healthy habits.

The most incredible news is that because my doctors were so pleased with my test results that I no longer have to take diabetes medication! I am controlling my blood glucose with diet and exercise. I love my new lifestyle and I am glad there are programs such as the Fitness Challenge for County employees to keep us healthy and happy.

