



# Refugee Awareness Month

## Celebrating the County’s Rich Cultural Diversity

Home to 10.4 million residents, 140 cultures, and as many as 224 languages, Los Angeles County is the most populated and culturally diverse County in the United States. To celebrate the numerous contributions that refugees have made to enhance the culture in Los Angeles County, the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) and other government and community-based providers paused last month to recognize June as “Refugee Awareness Month.”

The annual observance serves as a unique opportunity to highlight the collaboration between the DPSS Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) Refugee Employment Program, Public Health, and community and faith-based partners to help refugee families and individuals begin their new lives in the County. The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Refugee Programs Bureau partners with counties throughout the State to celebrate the occasion.

The United States is historically recognized around the world as a nation that welcomes refugees who pursue freedom, opportunity and integration. The United States offers refugees a chance for a new start and a better future for their families, free of religious and political persecution, war, and civil turmoil. The decision to leave their country often involves unimaginable risks.

This County partnership provides culturally and linguistically sensitive resettlement assistance, including specialized employment and training services to eligible refugees and asylees residing in the United States. The services are provided up to five years from date of entry in the United States or from the date asylum was granted, to assist refugees in adapting to the American workplace and ultimately achieving self-sufficiency to end their dependence on public assistance.

For more information about DPSS Refugee Employment Services, or for a listing of community partners, please visit <http://dpss.lacounty.gov/dpss/gain/refugee/default.cfm>.

# LACERA Elections

## General members are encouraged to vote in the elections being held for LACERA

LACERA elections are being held this year to elect the Third Member of the Board of Investments and the Third Member of the Board of Retirement for terms of office commencing January 1, 2019. The elections are being held this summer and will conclude on **Tuesday, July 24, 2018**.

Completed ballots must be received by the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, July 24, 2018. For more information or to read the Candidate’s Statements of Qualifications, you may visit the Board of Supervisors’ LACERA Election Information web page at: <http://bos.lacounty.gov/Services/Conflict-of-Interest-Lobbyist/LACERA-Election> or you may contact your Department Election Coordinator.

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# Calendar of Events

## Center Theatre Group

(213) 628-2772

[www.centertheatregroup.org](http://www.centertheatregroup.org)

### Ahmanson Theatre

Through July 29 – The Humans

August 21 through September 30 – Ain't Too Proud

### Mark Taper Forum

August 29 through October 7 – Sweat

## Grand Park

(213) 972-8080

[www.grandparkla.org](http://www.grandparkla.org)

Every Tuesday through Thursday – Lunch A La Park Food Trucks

Every Tuesday through September 25 – Bootcamp

## Hollywood Bowl

(323) 850-2000

[www.hollywoodbowl.com](http://www.hollywoodbowl.com)

July 12 – Dudamel Conducts Rachmaninoff

July 13 and July 14 – Michael McDonald, Kenny Loggins and Christopher Cross with the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra

July 18 – Seal with Hollywood Bowl Orchestra and Corinne Bailey Rae

## The Music Center

(213) 972-7211

[www.musiccenter.org](http://www.musiccenter.org)

### Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

July 13 through July 15 – American Ballet Theatre's La Bayadere

### Walt Disney Concert Hall

July 29 – Symphonic Dances

August 12 – Beethoven Celebrates Bernstein's 100th Birthday

August 19 – John Williams Greets Our Orchestra

July is  
**Parks**  
**Make**  
**Life**  
**Better!**  
Month

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



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Third District

**Hilda L. Solis**

First District

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Second District

**Janice Hahn**

Fourth District

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Fifth District

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Submissions to the DIGEST may be edited or otherwise altered for clarity.

Check out the DIGEST at:

<http://hr.lacounty.gov/about-the-county/>

# Suicide

## *Risk Factors, Signs, and Prevention*

The most frequent question that arises when we hear that someone has committed suicide is “why did the person kill themselves?” Unfortunately, this is a complicated question, since there are a number of reasons that individuals decide to end their lives and no single cause can account for it. Suffice it to say that suicide is considered the 11<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in California and the 10<sup>th</sup> in the United States, and its prevention should be taken seriously.

On a yearly basis, a staggering 45,000 individuals die by suicide, leaving behind family members and loved ones to deal with the tragedy and emotional impact of the loss. Thoughts of suicide afflicts many of us at one time or another, and the act of suicide transcends race, ethnicity, and gender. The most common method is by firearms, followed by suffocation and poisoning. Approximately 3.5 times the number of men die by suicide compared to women. However, statistically speaking, women are more likely to make a suicide attempt.

Given that “suicide changes everything” even for those who are not related to the individual in any way, it is important for all of us to develop an understanding of the warning signs, risk factors, and some common ways that we can each contribute to its prevention.

### *Warning Signs*

Most people who plan to take their lives exhibit one or more warning signs. They may talk about feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. They may discuss experiencing an unbearable pain, not wanting to be a burden to others, having no reason to live and voicing thoughts that are initially harmless, such as “I wish I wasn’t here,” which can later become more overt and dangerous.

Behaviors such as withdrawal from activities, isolating from friends and family, sleeping too much, making an effort to call or visit people in order to say goodbye, and giving away possessions may also be present as further indication of suicidal ideation. Some individuals may become more aggressive in dealing with others, increase their use of alcohol or drugs, or seem tired most of the time. If you note that they are researching ways to end their lives online, for example, being fascinated with how celebrities have done so, it should be taken as a serious warning sign.

Generally, those who are contemplating suicide exhibit either sadness, anxiety, irritability, and loss of interest in the activities that they enjoyed previously. At times, it even appears as if the individual who was suffering from depression has improved and they are feeling better. Unfortunately, at times, sudden improvement in energy and feelings of relief may be indications that the person has become more resolute and the

likelihood that they may take actions to end their life has increased.

**Risk Factors** are characteristics or conditions that may make it more likely that a person may consider to attempt suicide; they do not predict or cause suicide. The risk factors can be divided into three categories:

**Health factors** include existence of serious physical conditions and pain, as well as traumatic brain injury. The fact that someone has a mental health condition such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, psychotic disorders, substance abuse difficulties, as well as personality traits where aggression, interpersonal difficulties, and mood changes are prominent also increase the risk.

**Environmental factors** involve prolonged stress such as harassment; bullying; recent financial changes or job loss; stressful life events which may include rejection, divorce, or other life transitions; exposure to another person’s suicide or hearing sensationalized accounts of suicide; access to lethal means; cultural and religious beliefs where suicide is viewed as being a noble manner of ending one’s dilemmas and the stigma associated with asking for help.

**Historical factors**, on the other hand, include a family history of suicide, one’s previous attempts, and childhood abuse or trauma.

Even though suicide is a complex public health issue, there are ways that all stakeholders can contribute to the reduction of its occurrence. This can be achieved by everyone’s involvement.

State and communities can help reduce stress related to housing and unemployment and facilitate access to appropriate care and resources. Concurrently, healthcare systems can offer treatment options that are not widely available and make delivery of care more accessible. Media can avoid sensationalizing this tragedy and instead offer information about resources for prevention, identification of mental illness and substance use.

Employers can help foster environments that are more harmonious, while schools can teach coping skills so that the students can manage school problems and relationships more effectively.

Most importantly, all of us can learn the signs of suicide, where to seek help, and how to respond if someone whom we know needs support. When speaking to a friend or family member who you may feel may be at risk for suicide, consider helping

# Enjoy a Free Meal at the Library

Through August 3, 2018\*



Well fed, well read! Visit select L.A. County Library locations for a free meal this summer.

Come and enjoy a nutritious meal at a participating L.A. County library location. Free lunch is provided Monday through Friday from noon to 1 p.m. for those 18 years and younger. No restrictions on family income. First come, first served, while supplies last.

While you're there, sign up for our Summer Discover Program and sign up for a library card.

Summer Lunch at the Library is a partnership between the LA County Library and the Department of Parks and

Recreation, supported by the California Summer Meal Coalition and California Library Association.

\*Lunches will not be served at any County library on July 4, 2018. Lunches will not be served at the Norwalk Library on July 3, 2018.

Participating libraries include:

- A C Bilbrew Library
- Artesia Library
- Baldwin Park Library
- City Terrace Library
- Clifton M. Brakensiek Library
- Duarte Library

**FREE MEAL**  
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## FOSTER A FURRY FRIEND

Apply to be a Foster Volunteer Today!

### PROVIDE A TEMPORARY HOME TO KITTENS 4-8 WEEKS OLD

ARE YOU AN EXPERIENCED BOTTLE FEEDER? (AGES 0-4 WEEKS) LET US KNOW!

Fostering is a wonderful experience; you can feel good knowing you helped save an animal's life.

- Great for those who are unable to have an animal long term.
- Foster animals provide companionship and purpose.

To apply and more information visit: <http://animalcare.lacounty.gov/become-a-foster-parent/>

## Third-Person Sexual Harassment?

*“I wasn’t talking to you!”*

by Maricarmen Caceres

County Equity Investigations Unit

Department of Human Resources

Over the past few months the County Digest has featured several articles on sexual harassment and its various forms, including *quid pro quo* and *hostile work environment*. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors recognizes that understanding sexual harassment is key to eliminating this type of inappropriate conduct from the workplace. Therefore, this month’s focus is on a less familiar form of sexual harassment; a component known as “*third-person harassment*.”

Under State and federal law, *third-person harassment* typically transpires when an employee is harassed by an outsider (non-employee), such as a vendor, client, or customer. *Third-person harassment* must still meet the regular definition for sexual harassment — that is, it must be so severe or pervasive that it creates a hostile or offensive work environment.

*Third-person harassment*, under the County Policy of Equity (CPOE), is more expansive than State and federal law. It is not restricted to conduct by non-employees and also applies to conduct by employees which *indirectly harasses* another employee. Specifically, the CPOE defines *third-person harassment* as follows:

“Third-person unlawful harassment is indirect harassment of a bystander, even if the person engaging in the conduct is unaware of the presence of the bystander. When an individual engages in harassing behavior, he or she assumes the risk that someone may pass by or otherwise witness the behavior. The County considers this to be the same as directing the harassment towards that individual.”

What does this mean? Let’s look at the following scenario:

Lucy’s work space is comprised of cubicles with shared partitions. Sitting in the cubicle directly next to Lucy is her co-worker Stella. Stella is getting married next month and is having a “private” conversation with a colleague of which Lucy is not included, sharing the details of her bachelorette party that took place over the weekend. Stella is not shy in sharing the explicit and graphic details about the male entertainment. While Stella believes she is having a private conversation with her co-worker, Lucy can clearly hear the entire conversation, and is uncomfortable with the details and remains quiet.



Some may say the conversation was “none of Lucy’s business,” or “Lucy shouldn’t have been listening in on a ‘private’ conversation.” It’s a common misconception that because Stella and her colleague were engaged in mutually agreeable and consensual conduct, albeit inappropriate for the workplace, that the bystander cannot/should not be offended because it was not directed towards them. In this case, some may speculate that since Lucy merely overheard the conversation, she personally was not being harassed by her co-workers, and therefore the conduct would not violate the CPOE. However, as indicated in the CPOE, even if the person engaged in the conduct (Stella) is unaware of a bystander’s presence (Lucy), the County considers the conduct to be *the same as* if the conduct was directed towards the bystander (Lucy) – consequently, resulting in a potential CPOE violation.

All County employees should be aware that comments or conduct inappropriate for the workplace, which are witnessed by others, may create a *hostile work environment* and potentially violate the CPOE *Third-Person Harassment* provision. Managers, supervisors, and leads should take care to closely monitor the work environment.

Any form of sexual harassment in the workplace is unacceptable and will not be tolerated by the County of Los Angeles. County employees who believe they have overheard conversations which are inappropriate for the workplace as potential *third-person harassment* should contact the Board of Supervisor’s County Intake Specialist Unit at (213) 974-9868, or file a complaint on-line at <https://ceop.bos.lacounty.gov/>. For additional information, also visit <http://employee.hr.lacounty.gov/employee-resources/>.

## SUICIDE

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them develop a “Wellness Recovery Plan.” This entails compiling critical information (such as diagnosis, medications, previous attempts) and relevant phone numbers of psychiatrists, therapists, family members, suicide prevention hotline or other community resources available in one place so that in the event that there is a need. This tool can help friends and support system mobilized quickly in case of an emergency and reduce any costly confusion and delays.

Contacting mental health providers is another step. Mental health professionals have training to help and improve the resiliency of individuals with suicidal thoughts. Psychotherapy such as cognitive behavioral therapy can assist a person to recognize unhealthy patterns of thinking while validating troubling feelings and building effective coping strategies. It is important to note that if you or another co-worker or employee whom you know is having difficulties, contact can be made with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at (213) 738-4200. Alternatively speaking with one’s own treatment provider can be very beneficial. In the event that the situation is acute, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: (800) 273-TALK can be contacted. If the circumstances have escalated to an urgent level, if possible, going to a local emergency room is advised; otherwise 911 should be called.

In order to obtain more information, the following resources are available: <https://afsp.org>; <https://www.nami.org>; and <https://save.org>.

## Rideshare L.A. County

### Department of Human Resources

The County Rideshare Program will be giving away a total of five folding bikes to employees who Rideshare on a regular basis. The first bike was given away in June and the last in October. For your chance to win a folding bike, you must be enrolled in the Commuter Benefit Plan (CBP). You can sign up at [www.wageworks.com](http://www.wageworks.com) and choose a monthly pass. As long as you are signed up by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, you have multiple chances to win. It definitely pays to Rideshare, so sign up for the CBP now. For more information on Ridesharing, contact your departmental Employee Transportation Coordinator or visit [www.rideshare.lacounty.gov](http://www.rideshare.lacounty.gov). Take pride and share the ride.

## Spending Accounts Administrator Rebranded to WageWorks

The County is very pleased to announce that its spending account administrator, Benefit Concepts, Inc. (BCI) has rebranded to WageWorks, Inc. Effective July 1, 2018, the County’s spending accounts will be on the WageWorks web platform. This allows the County to provide participants enrolled in spending accounts access to:

- **An enhanced user-friendly WageWorks website**  
Participants can access their spending accounts at [mylacountybenefits.com](http://mylacountybenefits.com), click on the Spending Accounts link and connect to the WageWorks website.
- **A new award-winning WageWorks EZ Receipts mobile app**  
Participants can use their smart phones to manage their spending accounts, file claims, view transactions, check balances and upload photos of their receipts. They can download this app from the Apple App Store or Google Play App Store.
- **A health care spending account Visa card**  
Participants enrolled in a health care spending account will be mailed a Visa card. They will be able to use this Visa card to instantly pay most health care providers and pharmacies for eligible health expenses. It’s quick and easy to use, and it will eliminate the paperwork for many claims.

### Timeline for the Transition to the WageWorks Platform

- **June 19, 2018** – WageWorks mailed a Welcome Letter and Quick Start Guide to participants enrolled in spending accounts.
- **June 30, 2018** – Deadline for participants to submit 2017 claims to BCI. For questions about claims submitted, participants can contact BCI directly at (866) 629-6436.
- **July 1 through July 15, 2018** – WageWorks transition period. Participants will not have access to submit claims, receive reimbursements, or view account balances.
- **July 12, 2018** – WageWorks mailed Visa cards to participants enrolled in a health care spending account.
- **July 16, 2018** – Services resume and participants can access their spending accounts at [mylacountybenefits.com](http://mylacountybenefits.com).

**Have questions?** If you have questions about submitting a claim, or about spending accounts in general, call WageWorks at (877) 924-3967, Monday through Friday, 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Time. Or, visit [mylacountybenefits.com](http://mylacountybenefits.com).

**FREE MEAL**

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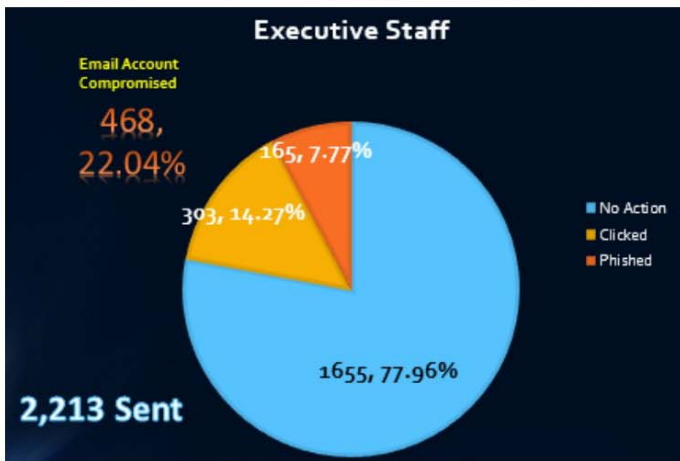
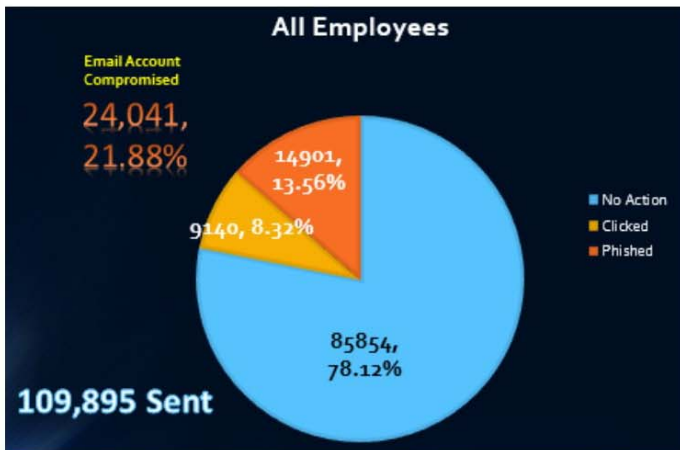
East Rancho Dominguez Library  
 El Camino Real Library  
 El Monte Library  
 Gardena Mayme Dear Library  
 Huntington Park Library  
 La Puente Library  
 Lake Los Angeles Library  
 Lancaster Library

Lawndale Library  
 Lennox Library  
 Littlerock Library  
 Los Nietos Library  
 Lynwood Library  
 Norwalk Library  
 Quartz Hill Library  
 San Fernando Library  
 San Gabriel Library  
 Sorensen Library  
 South Whittier Library

## Phishing Is a Real Threat

Phishing scams are a form of cybercrime that involves defrauding users to obtain sensitive information. Cybercriminals act as legitimate organizations to obtain information. The emails that are used appear to come from a legitimate company and look official. The sense of urgency and impending doom created by the email is done intentionally with the hope of coaxing the recipient into taking immediate action. Phishing scammers don't need to infect a computer with a virus in order to obtain information because the recipient willingly gives it up by following the link in the email.

In an effort to increase awareness of email phishing scams, the Countywide Information Security Program (CWIS) conducted two phishing tests in recent months. The first phishing test was focused on the traditional "email box full" message. It was sent to all LA County employees and contractors with an email box. The second phishing test targeted the executive staff and the message was related to approval of an invoice by a trusted individual. The results were as follows:



**Had this been a real phishing email message:**

- ⇒ **Virus and malware could have infected the computers**
- ⇒ **Cybercriminals could have gained access to the County's network or systems**
- ⇒ **Confidential information of our clients or other members of the Public could have been stolen.**

The County has taken steps to mitigate these phishing scams and continues to implement safeguards to strengthen our defenses. However, our employees also play a big part in safeguarding County's information by staying vigilant and think twice before clicking, downloading or providing sensitive personal information and to report all suspicious email.

**Don't be quick to click. Instead, hover to discover, and report it.**

Report IT Security Incidents to the Countywide Information Security  
 Hotline: (562) 940-3335

Or, go online to the Enterprise Service Management Self-Serve portal:  
<http://myselfservice.lacounty.gov>



# COUNTYWIDE FITNESS CHALLENGE 2018



A DAY AT THE FARMERS' MARKET

## STOP & SMELL THE FLOWERS!

Join us at the Farmers' Market for healthy foods,  
softball tournament, and power walks.

FITNESS WORKOUTS  
& BOOTCAMPS

FITNESS POWER WALKS

SCAVENGER HUNT

FREE GIVEAWAYS  
DRAWING PRIZES

SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT\*  
\*July 14 – Tournament  
September 22 – Championship playoff  
at Alondra Community Regional Park

### Wilson Park Certified Farmers' Market

2200 Crenshaw Boulevard  
Torrance, CA 90501  
4th Supervisorial District

**Saturday,  
July 14, 2019**

**8:00 a.m. – Noon**

EVENT SPONSOR



RSVP to secure your giveaways at:

<http://employeee.hr.lacounty.gov/countywide-fitness-challenge-2/>

