

# St. Margaret's Center

St. Margaret's Center, a program of Catholic Charities of Los Angeles Inc., has served low-income and homeless families since 1987. The Center provides a comprehensive range of emergency and supportive services to about 10,000 unduplicated individuals annually in the Los Angeles "L.A.X." area, primarily those living in the cities or streets of Lennox and surrounding communities.

St. Margaret's Center's mission has remained the same throughout its history, but the Center's programs have grown and evolved to respond to the needs of the community. St. Margaret's Center's programs target individuals and families who live at or below the poverty level, and are administered by a paid staff of ten, and an average of 75 volunteers per month. Programs are offered in both English and Spanish, and are free of charge, with the exception of nominal fees for immigration and counseling services. Two target groups have developed over the years as the Center's staff has become aware of their unmet needs: Spanish-speaking families, and homeless individuals. The Center provides assistance, though, to anyone in need, regardless of the person's race, national origin or religious affiliation.

St. Margaret's Center's goal is to provide relief, dignity and support to low-income persons in crisis and to assist individuals through case management and skills development to become more self-sufficient and to achieve economic security. St. Margaret's Center's services include:

- **Emergency Food:** Free monthly groceries for low-income families and sack lunches for homeless persons every M, W & F. Senior food program also available the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of every month.
- **Diaper Program:** Free diapers once a month for eligible babies and toddlers.
- **Coordinated Entry System (CES):** Outreach and navigation program to assess and support homeless individuals, and to assist them secure permanent housing.
- **Rapid Rehousing for Youth:** Case management, housing navigation and resources for homeless Transitional Age Youth (TAY) 18-24 y.o.
- **Emergency Shelter & Rent:** When available, short-term emergency hotel vouchers and rent assistance for eligible homeless families and individuals with special needs.
- **Homeless and Household Supplies:** Hygiene kits, blankets, and other supplies, as available, for homeless persons. Household items, as available, for families.
- **Haircuts:** Free haircuts the first Friday of the month, from 9 am to 12 pm.
- **Mailing Address:** For homeless persons, use of the Center for their mailing address.
- **Counseling Services:** Low-cost (\$10/session) counseling for individuals, couples, children and families provided by supervised interns.
- **CalFresh (Food Stamp) Application Assistance:** Free assistance with filling out the food stamp application and follow-up case tracking and troubleshooting. D.P.S.S. worker on site for this program on Wednesdays.
- **Health Insurance Application Assistance:** Information and free assistance in applying for low-cost and free health insurance programs. Certified Enrollment Counselor (CEC) processes MediCal, Covered California, and other programs.
- **Vision Screening:** Free eye exams provided quarterly by the U.C.L.A./Jules Stein Mobile Eye Clinic.
- **Mammograms:** Free mammograms for low-income, uninsured women over 40 who

- qualify. First Thursday each month, provided by Mobile Mammography Screening, Inc.
- **Health Screenings:** Provided by Providence Health on Monday afternoons and Claris Health one Friday per month.
  - **Utility Assistance:** Payment up to \$100 each for Gas and Edison bills, when program activated. PACE staff on site the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, from 1-3 pm to process LIHEAP applications.
  - **Immigration Processing:** Low-cost immigration processing (petitions for relatives, citizenship, renewal of green cards, DACA, adjustment of status, etc.) M,Th, F by appointment.
  - **ESL Classes:** Small intensive classes, Monday through Thursday, designed to provide beginning and intermediate levels English language fluency.
  - **Citizenship Classes:** Classes Monday and Wednesday afternoons for those who are preparing for their citizenship interview.
  - **Nutrition Education:** One-on-one and group educational sessions encouraging good nutrition, healthy habits, physical activity and disease prevention.
  - **Urban Agriculture Program:** Gardens in low-income churches and schools.
  - **Physical Activities:** Free yoga class offered Thursdays at 4 pm and walking club at Lennox Park every Friday at 10 am.
  - **Literacy Tutoring:** One-on-one tutoring for basic English language, math and literacy provided by volunteers for both adults and youth.
  - **Legal Aid:** Lawyer on site Thursday afternoons to assist homeless individuals/families.
  - **Job Referrals:** Employment info and training program referrals.
  - **Transportation Assistance:** Online free Metro trips for eligible participants.
  - **Information and Referral:** Information and referrals for free or low-cost services and programs, e.g., legal, medical, housing, employment, government programs. Advocacy with government assistance programs.
  - **Translation:** Assistance in filling out simple forms, mail, telephone calls, etc.
  - **Educational Workshops:** Community workshops are held periodically with topics of interest for low-income families, e.g., health, housing, employment, money management, public benefits, etc.
  - **Christmas Program:** Day-long party with new toys for children, food for 500 families.

A community center such as St. Margaret's offers a natural avenue to provide a range of services to poverty-level families. Over the past 32 years, persons with multiple needs have come to the Center for services and referrals for food, shelter, legal, medical, employment, housing, education and social services. Currently, about 700 persons come into St. Margaret's Center each week for one or more of its programs. They are all low-income, with the majority living below the federal poverty level.

**St. Margaret's Center**  
**10217 Inglewood Ave., Lennox CA 90304**  
**Phone: 310.672.2208 - Fax: 310.672.1841**  
**Email: [maerlandson@ccharities.org](mailto:maerlandson@ccharities.org)**  
**Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**  
**501( c ) 3 Tax I.D.#: 95-1690973**