



**THE PORT
OF LOS ANGELES**
Executive Director's
Report to the
Board of Harbor Commissioners

DATE: AUGUST 6, 2025

FROM: HUMAN RESOURCES

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION NO. _____ - AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES HARBOR DEPARTMENT AND EMPATHIA PACIFIC, INC. FOR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SERVICES

SUMMARY:

Staff requests approval of an Agreement with Empathia Pacific, Inc. (Empathia), located in Agoura Hills, California, to provide Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services to City of Los Angeles, Harbor Department (Harbor Department) employees. On July 28, 2022, Agreement No. 22-9876 for EAP services was approved for three years in the amount of \$120,000 expiring on August 10, 2025. The new proposed Agreement will also be for a period of three years and an amount not to exceed \$120,000. The recommendation to select Empathia was based on the Request for Proposals (RFP) conducted by the Harbor Department in April 2025. The Harbor Department will be financially responsible for the payment of EAP services under the new proposed Agreement.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Harbor Commissioners (Board):

1. Find that the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is administratively exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Article II, Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines;
2. Find that in accordance with the City Charter Section 1022, the services required can be performed more feasibly by an outside contractor than by City employees;
3. Approve the Agreement with Empathia for EAP services in an amount not to exceed \$120,000 for a total term of three years;
4. Authorize the Executive Director to execute and the Board Secretary to attest to the Agreement; and
5. Adopt Resolution No. _____.

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DISCUSSION:

Background and Context - The City of Los Angeles (City) has an EAP as part of its employee's benefits package administered by Optum Health. The EAP is a resource for employees dealing with work/life balance, family and relationship issues, stress and anxiety, alcohol and drug dependency, grief and loss, domestic violence, and other emotional and mental health issues. The Harbor Department offers its employees a more comprehensive EAP benefits package. Empathia has provided quality EAP services to Harbor Department employees since 1985 and been both sensitive and responsive to our employees' needs. The fully subsidized Harbor Department's EAP meets the same goals as the City's program and provides additional sessions as well as immediate trainings as need arises.

Spending for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025/26 is currently estimated at \$40,000. Actual spending for EAP services in previous years has been as follows: \$39,476 for FY 2024/25, \$35,236 for FY 2023/24, and \$35,065 for FY 2022/23. The Harbor Department is charged a monthly fee of \$2.20 per employee for EAP services and charged per incident for training and other as-needed services. The Harbor Department's 2025 employee utilization rate for EAP services is currently 3.8%. In 2024, EAP utilization rates were 6%, in 2023 it was 7.2%, and in 2022 it was 6.9% which, according to the Employee Assistance Professional Association, is above the government entity average of 5.5%. Utilization rates are based on employee usage of the services and are not reflective of the EAP provider's service quality or availability. Employees' utilization of EAP services is variable because it may be prompted by unknown factors.

Request for Proposal – An RFP was released on April 14, 2025, and posted on the Regional Alliance Marketplace for Procurement Los Angeles (RAMPLA) site and viewed by forty-two (42) unique users. The Harbor Department received one proposal, Empathia, by the May 14, 2025 deadline. Historically, the Department has only ever received one proposal aside from 2022 when we received two proposals. Additional outreach was done to determine why no other proposals were submitted and the consensus was that the companies were not interested because our Department was too small or did not meet the RFP requirements.

Empathia's proposal was evaluated by a selection committee of three individuals: a Personnel Director III (Human Resources), a Senior Personnel Analyst II (Human Resources), and a Labor Relations Specialist (Office of the City Administrative Officer).

The proposal was scored based on the following criteria:

- Firm Qualifications, Experience and References;
- Organization, Personnel and Staffing;
- Approach, Work Plan, Management
- Rates and Fees; and
- Clarity and Comprehensiveness of the Proposal

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All three members of the selection committee independently reviewed and rated Empathia’s proposal and determined that this company would be an excellent selection.

Proposed Agreement - The proposed Agreement (Transmittal 1) will ensure the continuity of EAP services to Harbor Department employees for three years. The proposed Agreement shall not exceed an amount of \$120,000 for a total term of three years.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

The proposed action is the approval of an Agreement with Empathia to provide EAP services to Harbor Department employees, which is an administrative activity. Therefore, the Director of Environmental Management has determined that the proposed action is administratively exempt from the requirements of CEQA in accordance with Article II Section 2(f) of the Los Angeles City CEQA Guidelines.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the three-year Agreement authorizes a total amount not to exceed \$120,000 for Employee Assistance Program services. FY 2025/26 funding in the amount of \$40,000 is available within Account 514210 (Misc. Employee Benefits), Division 65010 (Human Resources), Project 60000050. It is anticipated that funds under this Agreement will be expended as follows:

Fiscal Year	Amount
2025/26	\$ 40,000
2026/27	\$ 40,000
<u>2027/28</u>	<u>\$ 40,000</u>
Total	\$120,000

Future fiscal year funding will be requested as part of the annual budget adoption process. The Harbor Department’s obligations to pay any amount due for future fiscal years are contingent upon Board appropriation of funds for this purpose. Accordingly, the Harbor Department may terminate the Agreement and its future monetary obligations thereunder, effective at the end of any fiscal year.

CITY ATTORNEY:

The Office of the City Attorney has reviewed and approved the proposed contract as to form and legality.

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TRANSMITTAL:

1. Agreement with Empathia Pacific, Inc.

Judy Salazar

CATHY T. TANAKA
Director of Human Resources

FIS Approval: *JS*
CA Approval: *SO*

Dina Aryan-Zaklan for
ERICA M. CALHOUN
Deputy Executive Director and
Executive Officer

APPROVED:

Dina Aryan-Zaklan

EUGENE D. SEROKA for
Executive Director

CT/kd
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