



Dear Friends,

**We know that many of you may have been impacted by the wildfires here in Los Angeles. Bet Tzedek stands in solidarity with those affected and hope you all are safe. Please know that you and your loved ones are in our thoughts.**

Bet Tzedek remains open, but we have asked staff to keep their safety and that of their families their highest priority. Team members are working to put together FAQs, clinics, and other resources to support low-income Angelenos impacted by the fires. We are sharing as much information as possible via our **social media channels** (found at the bottom of the news digest), and we are sharing information with partners such as the Los Angeles County Department of Aging and Disability, and the Federation. You can also find resources on our webpage [here](#).

**"Hope takes diligence." Inspired by the fire and diligence of our founders, including Stan and Luis, our staff continues to work passionately to bring hope to the communities we serve, even in these most difficult of times.**

In addition to evacuation orders impacting the Palisades, Glendale, Altadena, Pasadena, Brentwood, Hollywood, and other parts of L.A. County, thousands of homes and business are destroyed, damaged, or remain without power. We hope our [resources](#) can provide assistance and guidance. [You can also get help here.](#)



FIRE SAFETY RESOURCES

# MEDIA ALERT: The Incomings Administration's Likely Chilling Effect on Low-Wage Workers

Bet Tzedek's **Employment Rights Project (ERP) Attorney Yvonne Medrano** was quoted in the **L.A. Times article**, "Employers and workers alike are wary of what the second Trump term will mean for labor."

From the article: Attorney Yvonne Medrano of Los Angeles-based Bet Tzedek Legal Services, a nonprofit legal advocacy group, said there is concern that employers of undocumented immigrants may feel emboldened to exploit workers if the government eases up on efforts to root out wage theft, child labor, and other violations.

[READ THE L.A. TIMES ARTICLE](#)

## Holiday Season Shone Bright for our Immigrant Child Clients

The holiday season shone bright for our clients Sergio\* and Pablo\*. Both came to the United States as young children and made fast friends in foster care after discovering they were from neighboring villages in Guatemala. When they were threatened by deportation orders, they were referred to Bet Tzedek's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) project.

Through Bet Tzedek's advocacy, both were granted SIJ status, their removal orders rescinded, and **they are now officially Lawful Permanent Residents!** Pablo currently works as an Amazon delivery driver, and Sergio is completing Job Corps training to become an electrician. They plan to visit their families in Guatemala soon with these worries behind them. **Congrats to Sergio and Pablo, and a big shoutout to our SIJS project for their hard work fighting for the safety of immigrant families!**

*\*Names have been changed*

[GET SIJS HELP](#)

## Victory for IHSS Consumers Statewide!



During a Center of Excellence Elder Abuse meeting last year, a psychiatrist from the Department of Mental Health highlighted an issue: Los Angeles County was not allowing nurse practitioners to sign the medical form certifying individuals for IHSS services. As a result, many eligible patients, particularly those under psychiatric care, were being denied much-needed IHSS services.

Following this, Bet Tzedek's **Medi-Cal and IHSS Policy Specialist Kim Selfon** collaborated with the Association of Nurse Practitioners, who confirmed that this problem was extensive throughout L.A. County, but that it was also an issue in other counties. Bet Tzedek engaged with the L.A. County IHSS office, which clarified that this was indeed their policy.

Recognizing the urgency of this matter, we escalated the issue to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). After review, CDSS determined that L.A. County's policy was incorrect. As a result, CDSS issued an All-County Letter to all IHSS agencies statewide, ensuring that **nurse practitioners are authorized to complete the medical certification form for IHSS services.**

**This outcome is a significant victory for our clients.** It allows their healthcare providers — nurse practitioners who are often more accessible than physicians — to certify their eligibility for IHSS services. This change will help prevent unnecessary service denials and save clients from having to visit providers who are not actively involved in their care.

## **MEDIA HIGHLIGHT: \$1.3 million in Fines to Repay Wages Stolen from Car Wash Workers**

Our **Employment Rights Project (ERP)** attorney **Matthew DeCarolis** was featured in a few news stories, including this [ABC7 Los Angeles video](#) covering a recent press conference held in relation to the California Labor Commissioner's Office (LCO) announcing the **issuance of \$1.3 million in fines for wage theft restitution and civil penalties against 19 car washes in the South Bay area of Los Angeles County and in Orange County.**

The LCO, a division of the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR), found that the car washes engaged in illegal business practices affecting 960 workers. Bet Tzedek is proud to represent workers at various of the Los Angeles facilities. This sends a strong

message warning scofflaw employers that no one is above the law, and that all workers must be paid the wages they are owed.

[WATCH THE ABC7 FEATURE](#)

[FULL DIR STATEMENT](#)

## California Paid Leave is Getting a Raise!



Great news! Starting January 1st of this year, if you need time off from work to bond with a new baby, care for a sick loved one, tend to health concerns, or take care of certain needs when a family member is deployed, **you can receive up to 90% of your regular income while you are unable to work.** As of this year, California's Paid Family Leave (PFL) and Disability Insurance (DI) Benefits will increase to 90% of regular wages for low to middle income workers (up from 60-70%).

[LEARN MORE](#)

## Join the Bet Tzedek Team!

Have a passion for helping underserved residents in the community? Want to work alongside dedicated staff and volunteers who help up to 100,000 people per year?

**Here are some critical positions we need to fill, plus more (see button below):**

[DIRECTING ATTORNEY: GENERALIST SERVICES FOR SPECIALTY POPULATIONS](#)

[STAFF ATTORNEY: SENIOR OUTREACH](#)

[STAFF ATTORNEY I: EVICTION DEFENSE PROJECT](#)  
[STAFF ATTORNEY II: EVICTION DEFENSE PROJECT](#)

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