



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA LETTER

Agenda Number:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
105 E. Anapamu Street, Suite 407
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 568-2240

Submitted on:
(COB Stamp)

Department Name: Social Services
Department No.: 044
Agenda Date: July 15, 2025
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Department Director(s): Daniel Nielson, Social Services Director
Contact Info: Heather Gardner, Social Services Operations Support and Special Projects Manager
SUBJECT: **Fourth Amendment to the Agreement with Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County dba CommUnify for 211 Helpline Service**

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management, Office of
Emergency Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence:

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve, and authorize the Chair to execute the Fourth Amendment to the Agreement with Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County dba CommUnify, a local vendor, to provide the 211 Helpline Service and Disaster Services for Fiscal Year 2025-26 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$249,808 for the period from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026; and
- b) Determine that the activity is not a "Project" subject to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review per CEQA Guideline Section 15378(b)(5), since the activity is an organizational or administrative activity of government that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes in the environment.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda in order to approve the Fourth Amendment to the Agreement with Community Action Commission of Santa Barbara County dba CommUnify (CommUnify) to provide the 211 Helpline Service, for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 for a total increased contract amount not to exceed \$249,808, for the period from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026.

Background:

The 211 Helpline Service (211) is a resource connecting individuals to critical health and human services. These services include, but are not limited to, information and referral to counseling, food assistance, domestic violence services, health care, senior services, legal assistance, and housing. The 211 program operates as a free resource on behalf of all county residents 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in over 150 languages.

The 211 Helpline Service also provides disaster response and recovery public information to the Santa Barbara County community at large. Since 2016, the 211 Helpline has supported multiple disasters within the county, including wildfires, floods, and the COVID-19 pandemic. As the County responded to the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a six-fold increase in the number of county residents in need of support from 211 Helpline Service, compared to FY 2018-19. As a result, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors approved an agreement between the County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and CommUnify on September 20, 2020, to provide additional funding for the COVID-19 related information and referral calls that ended on December 31, 2021. On March 1, 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved an extension of this agreement that was transitioned to the Public Health Department for the COVID-19 related information and referral calls from January 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022. This contract was extended (First Amendment) by the Board of Supervisors on June 16, 2023 and ended on June 30, 2024 (FY 2023-24).

On January 23, 2024, a Second Amendment was approved by the Board (to ratify FY 2023-24), to include emergency and disaster-related response and recovery agreement enhancements developed in collaboration with the County OEM, the Department of Social Services (DSS), and CommUnify.

The enhancements included:

1. Adoption of the 211 Helpline Communication and Disaster Activation Process flowchart that outlines communications, coordination, and decision points for disaster activation and non-activation events.
2. Revised Exhibit D - 211 Helpline Services: Disaster Activation Services & Terms that expand on disaster activation and deactivation processes, documentation and invoicing requirements, and negotiated rates for handled calls, tele-interpretation, and telephony services.
3. Contingency funding for authorized 211 disaster activations not to exceed \$25,000 during the contract term. These funds were utilized to reimburse 211 for services delivered in accordance with Revised Exhibit D stipulations and upon receipt of necessary documentation.

On June 25, 2024, a Third Amendment was approved by the Board to renew the Agreement from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.

Approval of this Fourth Amendment (FY 2025-26) before your Board continues the disaster-related response and recovery agreement enhancements and will allow the continued partnership between Santa Barbara County and CommUnify to provide critical services to our community.

Based on the FY 2025-26 available funding, service reductions are anticipated, including:

- **Increased call wait times**, currently at an average of 8 minutes and 26 seconds.
- **Higher abandonment rates**, currently at an average of 7%.

Below is the budget and revenue sources for FY 2025-26. Funding 211 is a County and community collaboration.

Revenues	County Revenue Source	Outside Entity Revenue Source	Total 211 Helpline (County and Outside Entity) Without Disaster Funding
County of Santa Barbara			
Child Support Services	\$6,500		
Housing and Community Development	\$34,650		
Behavioral Wellness	\$23,050		
Social Services	\$22,893		
Public Health	\$14,650		
General Fund Contribution	\$119,500		
City of Carpinteria		\$3,565	
Total Secured Contributions	\$221,243	\$3,565	\$224,808
Disaster Activation Contingency Fund ***	\$25,000		
Total 211 Helpline Costs with Disaster Activation Contingency Fund	\$249,808		
*** Disaster Activation Contingency Fund will be charged to EOC Activation Fund under the General Fund. Disaster Activation Services will only be expended per terms of Revised EXHIBIT D, and not considered billable under annual contract terms.			

211 Helpline Budget (DSS I & R)	
Direct Program Costs	
Director 3%	\$2,494.44
Program Manager 80%	\$56,291.63
Fringe – 30.5%	\$17,929.75
Total Salaries & Benefits	\$76,715.82
Technology Expenses	
Interface call center	\$107,600.00
Icarol Database Subscription	\$7,218.00
AIRS dues	\$225.00
211 CA dues	\$1,200.00
Mission web website management & updates	\$600.00
Website Licensing	\$1,200.00
Total Technology Cost	\$118,043.00
Basic overhead	
Communications	\$300.00
Mileage	\$1,000.00

Training and Conference	\$1,000.00
Office Supplies	\$300.00
Printing and Outreach	\$200.00
Postage/Mailing	\$100.00
Insurance	\$200.00
Equipment Lease	\$400.00
Rent & Utilities	\$3,725.00
Total Basic Overhead	\$7,225.00
Subtotal Program Expenses	\$201,983.82
Indirect Costs	\$22,824.18
Total 211 Helpline Expenses:	\$224,808.00

The total budget for CommUnify to run 211 Helpline is \$224,808.

***The Disaster Activation Contingency Fund of \$25,000 will come from the County General Fund and the 211 Helpline Costs and Disaster Contingency Fund costs combined are not to exceed total county costs of \$249,808.

Performance Measures:

CommUnify will track and provide quarterly updates on the following performance measures:

1. Maintain iCarol database information to be current, or less than one (1) year old.
2. Maintain the Uptime of 211 website at a minimum of 90 percent to remain accessible and provide referrals.
3. Information and referral text messages shall be provided to at least 10 percent of callers.

Contract Renewals:

Renew Agreement with CommUnify for the 211 Helpline Services for FY 2025-26. CommUnify is meeting the performance measures contained in the Agreement. The new annual contract amount is \$249,808 or 0.09% less than the FY 2024-25 contract.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes.

Fiscal Analysis:

General Fund	\$ 119,500
State	\$ 11,446.50
Federal	\$ 11,446.50
Operating Transfers	\$ 82,415
Other: General County Programs (Contingency Fund)	\$ 25,000
Total	\$ 249,808

Narrative: Approval and execution of this Fourth Amendment will result in total contract expenditures of no more than \$249,808. This contract will be funded by 48% General Fund, 32% Operating Transfers from other county departments, 5% federal, 5% state, and 10% from the Disaster Activation Contingency Fund. Appropriations and associated funding of \$224,808 for FY 2025-26 are included in the DSS, Social Services Fund Recommended Budget.

Appropriations and associated funding of \$25,000 is from the Disaster Activation Contingency Fund and will be funded with General Fund in General County Programs - Department 990. Contingency funds will remain in General County Programs. Should an incident incur 211 disaster activation costs, the County plans to pursue reimbursement of any eligible costs through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA). However, not all

incidents will meet FEMA and CDAA approval thresholds. The County will be required to reimburse CommUnify for services requested by the County and for which they submit appropriate documentation, regardless of whether FEMA and CDAA reimbursement is available or in the event County cost recovery efforts are unsuccessful. Any costs recouped through state and federal sources will be directed to reimburse the General Fund.

Staffing Impacts:

None.

Special Instructions:

Please scan, email and send one (1) duplicate original Agreement, and a copy of the minute order to:

DSS Contracts Unit
C/O Tricia Beebe
2125 S. Centerpointe Parkway, 3rd Floor
Santa Maria, CA 93455
Email: tbeebe@countyofsb.org

Attachments:

- **Attachment A** – Fourth Amendment to the Agreement with CommUnify – 211 Helpline Service FY 25-26
- **Attachment B** – Original BC and Amendments 1-3 – CommUnify – 211 Helpline Services

Authored by:

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