



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

Department Name: Social Services
Department No.: 044
For Agenda Of: 02/02/16
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Daniel Nielson, Social Services Director
Director(s) (805) 346-7101
Contact Info: Laura Mejia, Administrative Services Operations Division Chief,
(805) 346-7609

SUBJECT: Approval of Agreement with NEC Corporation of America for Interactive Voice Response System for the Benefit Service Center

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Supervisors:

- a) Approve and authorize the Chair to execute an Agreement for Services of Independent Contractor with NEC Corporation of America (NEC) in the amount not to exceed \$395,378.00 for the provision of an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System for the Benefit Service Center (BSC), for the period of 2/2/16 through 12/31/16.
- b) Determine that the approval and execution of the Agreement is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), finding that the execution of the Agreement is covered by the general rule that CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment, and where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment, the activities are not subject to CEQA.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda in order to approve the Agreement between the County and NEC to provide an Interactive Voice Response System for the Benefit Service Center. As discussed during April budget hearings and approved in the 2015/16 Adopted Budget, this contract enables the County to

continue to be efficient through process improvements, technology, and innovations to better serve the public. This additional telephone technology will improve the call handling for an estimated 150,000 annual calls to the BSC, which will allow automated call backs and provide estimated wait times to callers on hold. Additionally, this will modernize the infrastructure for the call center, which has been in place since 2008, and provide a platform that is flexible and scalable for necessary future enhancements. It is the recommendation of DSS for your Board to authorize and execute this Agreement with NEC.

Background:

DSS implemented the BSC on September 22, 2008 to effectively respond to the needs of the community, adapt to changing Medi-Cal and CalFresh program regulations, and leverage technology. The BSC provides a telephone connection with an eligibility worker during regular business hours while reducing client visits to regional offices.

Since the BSC opened, caseloads have continued to rise and the BSC infrastructure is no longer sufficient to support the increasing call volume. The most recent caseload growth is attributed to Medi-Cal Expansion with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. In a one year period of time, between January 2014 and January 2015, nearly 35,000 additional people were enrolled in Medi-Cal. Today, nearly 130,000 people are enrolled in Medi-Cal, which is nearly twice the number of people enrolled in the program when the BSC was implemented. This rapid caseload increase has resulted in many more recipients calling the BSC than the current telephone system design can effectively accommodate. This has resulted in less than ideal customer service, excessive call wait times, a large number of dropped calls, constituent complaints and repeated client callbacks, which results in a decrease in organizational efficiencies and requires resources be diverted to these additional calls rather than case processing.

In order to provide our Santa Barbara County residents with a modern call center experience, it requires DSS to enhance the current BSC voice mailbox style telephone infrastructure with an IVR telephone system. The functionality of the IVR will allow for the following additional efficiencies:

- Individual estimated wait times (expected time in queue)
- Queue depth (number of calls in queue at present)
- Automated Immediate (as soon as an agent becomes available) and Scheduled (at a future time) callback
- Reporting tools: Staffing, call flows, IVR system activity
- Improved customer satisfaction

The objective of the new IVR system is to improve the efficiency of customer service operations and provide a higher quality of customer service to DSS' clients by providing them with real time information. By providing the wait times and giving clients expanded options on how they can communicate with DSS, the client is empowered to decide how best to proceed based on their personal situation. One feature that is important for our clientele is the automated call back functionality which will maintain the caller's place in line without requiring them to physically stay on the phone. This will save cell phone minutes for our clients on limited phone services, such as Lifeline, which provides a fixed amount of minutes per month.

DSS received two (2) proposals in response to its Request for Proposal for the BSC - IVR System that was released on August 28, 2015. After consideration, the Review Committee recommended NEC be awarded the contract.

In order to implement the “Individual Call Waiting Expected Times and Automated Call Back” initiatives presented during the FY 15-17 budget hearings, a new IVR must be designed, installed and implemented. The Agreement with NEC that is before your Board contains two (2) phases each with distinct Service Level Agreements and Payment Arrangements that protect the County’s interests. The first phase would allow for acceptance and payment for the System design of the IVR (\$10,707.90). Once first phase has been approved and accepted, the second phase would allow acceptance and payment of the cost of the necessary equipment, installation, software and labor based on the final approved System design (\$351,393.16). The two phases (\$10,707.90 + \$351,393.16) plus a 9.2% contingency factor (\$33,277.00) result in a not to exceed contract of \$395,378.06. The separate service level agreements are to ensure that NEC meets the documented milestones timely and meets the desired Department outcomes.

Performance Measure:

The performance measures are prescribed in the attached Exhibit A to the Agreement-Statement of Work.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>FY 16-17 Cost</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
General Fund	\$ 26,508	\$ 2,154	\$ 28,662
State	\$ 178,351	\$ 14,494	\$ 192,845
Federal	\$ 160,803	\$ 13,068	\$ 173,871
Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other:	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ 365,661	\$ 29,717	\$ 395,378

Narrative:

The funding for these costs is provided through a combination of State (48.8%), Federal (44%), and General Fund (7.2%). Funding for FY 15-16 is included in the Department’s adopted budget. Additionally, the cost of this project will be capitalized as IT capital equipment and depreciated over its useful life.

Key Contract Risks:

The risk assessment worksheet has been completed. NEC is insured for General and Professional Liability. NEC has an ongoing relationship with the COUNTY, and DSS is confident of NEC’s abilities to provide the needed IVR services.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:

0

FTEs:

0

Special Instructions:

Please send one (1) duplicate original Agreement, and a copy of the minute order to:
DSS Contracts Unit
C/O Emma Duncan
2125 S. Centerpointe Parkway, 3rd Floor
Santa Maria, CA 93455

Attachments:

1. Attachment- Agreement with NEC for BSC IVR

Authored by:

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Maria Gardner, Deputy Director
Emma Duncan, Contracts Coordinator