



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: January 27, 2009
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Tme:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Department Kathy M. Gallagher, Director 346-7101
Director:
Contact Info: Melissa Hoesterey, CWS Operations Division Chief, 346-7248

SUBJECT: Amendment No. 1 with Community Action Commission for Enhanced Family Reunification Support Services

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: Risk Management

As to form: Yes

Recommended Actions: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve and authorize the Chair to execute an Amendment to the Agreement with Community Action Commission (CAC) for the purpose of Enhanced Family Reunification Services for an additional \$84,000 for the period 7/1/08 through 6/30/09, for an amount not to exceed \$274,000.
2. Authorize the Director of the Department of Social Services to approve amendments to the proposed contract provided any such amendments are not in variance of 10% of the contract's dollar amount.
3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Social Services, at her discretion, to negotiate renewals for up to two (2) additional years of service beyond the initial term to the aforementioned contract, provided that any such renewals to the contract are not in variance of 10% of the contract's dollar amount. The terms of the renewal will be subject renegotiation, based on performance measure and satisfaction with services provided.

Summary Text:

In July 2008, the County of Santa Barbara Child Welfare Services (CWS) entered into a contract with Community Action Commission (CAC) for the provision of Enhanced Family Reunification Services in the amount of \$190,000. The request is being made to increase the existing Agreement with CAC for this fiscal year because demand for services has been higher than was expected at the time the contract was initially executed. Court-ordered case plans have resulted in a need for additional supervised visitation. CWS is working with the Juvenile Court,

involved counsel, and Child Welfare Social Work staff to provide other alternatives for supervised visitation.

CWS offers several support services to children as well as their birth, adoptive and foster parents in order to promote safe and stable families within the communities. For families involved with CWS, the support services help facilitate successful family reunification. One of the Enhanced Family Reunification Services provided under this contract is supervised visitation. When children and youth are placed out of their parents' care because of abuse or neglect issues, the Juvenile Court often orders supervised visitation. Supervised visitation allows the parent to maintain contact with their children while there is some degree of protection for the children and youth. Supervised visitation permits a third person monitoring the visits between the parent and the child to assure the interaction between parent and child is healthy and the child is safe from further abuse or coercion by the parent. The contract also provides for transportation services. Transportation services assist the child who is placed outside of their family home to attend necessary appointments related to reunification such as counseling appointments, medical appointments, or transportation to/from parent/child visits that are unsupervised.

Referrals are made by Child Welfare Social Workers. These visits are at a site which allows for visits in an appropriate setting. On a case-by-case basis, visits occur at sites to be determined by the referring Social Worker. Visitation monitors are expected to supervise the entire visit, to intervene if necessary and to give written feedback about the visits to the social worker who made the referral. Transportation services provided also entail detailed feedback to the Social Worker.

Visitation is the single most predictive factor in whether a child is successfully reunified. Without these much needed services, these children would not have the same opportunity of consistent recurring visits with his or her parent(s). Moreover, the parent and child are legally entitled to visitation.

The average timeline associated with successful reunification is twelve (12) to eighteen (18) months. From inception of this contract, seventy-seven (77) children in foster care have been successfully reunified with their biological family. Of the children that reunified, forty-three percent (43%) of them received services under this contract, and the remainder of those who were reunified received similar services from CWS Case Aides.

Approval of this amendment would result in a cost avoidance of \$378,000 in staffing Case Aides for CWS. On average CAC has provided one thousand one hundred (1100) hours of service per month at an average cost of \$35,000 per month. If CWS were to continue to provide this level of service internally it would require an additional seven (7) FTE's at an estimated net cost of \$413,000.

Additionally, the funding needed to increase this contract for FY2008-09 is being redirected from the Child Welfare Services Outcome Improvement Project (CWSOIP) allocation, which does not require a county match. This will support county efforts to improve outcomes for children placed in foster care in accordance with the approved System Improvement Plan.

Background:

The Child Welfare Outcomes and Accountability Act (AB 636), adopted in 2001, mandates improvements in California’s Child Welfare System. In compliance with AB636, each county prepared a System Improvement Plan (SIP). On February 27, 2007, your Board approved Santa Barbara’s County’s SIP, which has three priority outcomes. Priority Area One: Safety. Santa Barbara Child Welfare Services (CWS) is committed to the goal of protecting children from abuse and neglect. Priority Area Two: Permanency and Stability. Permanency and Stability are crucial factors in “normal” child development and key to providing good outcomes for children. Priority Area Three: Child Well Being. To families involved with the Child Welfare System, reunification is often the primary permanency goal and the most likely reason a child will leave placement. The preference for the role of natural parents is codified in law and provides the rationale for retaining reunification as a core outcome for children placed in foster care. Parents have the fundamental right to direct the care, custody, and control of their children, and it is presumed that, until or unless proven otherwise, they will act in a child's best interest. Contracting out this much needed service in Santa Barbara County will allow DSS to focus on the SIP outcome to reduce the length of time to exit foster care to reunification.

Performance Measures:

1. For this contract period, 95% of the referrals received have been responded to within three (3) business days.
2. For this contract period there has been 100% compliance with scheduled appointments.
3. For this contract period, 100% of completed activities have been reported in an e-mail and documented in the CWS/CMS application within three (3) days of the completed contact.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

<u>Funding Sources</u>	<u>Current FY Cost:</u>	<u>Annualized On-going Cost:</u>	<u>Total One-Time Project Cost</u>
General Fund	\$ 57,000	\$ 57,000	\$ -
State	\$ 217,000	\$ 133,000	\$ 84,000
Federal			
Fees			
Other:			
Total	\$ 274,000	\$ 190,000	\$ 84,000

Narrative:

The Department has included \$274,000 in appropriations and associated funding in the FY 2008-09 recommended budget for this contract. \$190,000 of this contract which has been fully expended is 70% State funded and 30% County funded while 100% of the One-Time Project Cost is State Funded. The \$84,000 to increase this contract, for FY 2008 -09, will be redirected from CWSOIP funds which do not require a county match. Appropriations and associated funding, without the One-Time Project Cost, have been included in Department’s FY 2009-10 budget request if the contract is extended for the respective year. The same would apply to FY 2010-11 if extended for a third year. The Agreement contains a non-appropriation clause in the

event funds are not appropriated. The costs associated with the extension, of the original contract, would continue to be 70% State funded and 30% County funded.

Staffing Impacts:

Legal Positions:

0

FTEs:

0

Special Instructions: Please send one (1) fully executed copy of the Agreement and Minute Order to:

Department of Social Services
Attn: Judy Doughty-Contracts Coordinator
2125 S Centerpointe Parkway, 3rd Floor
Santa Maria, CA 93455

Attachments: One (1) copy of the Agreement

Authored by:

Melissa Hoesterey