



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 1/25/2022

To: Board of Supervisors of Sonoma County
Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services
Staff Name and Phone Number: Katie Greaves 565-8501
Vote Requirement: 4/5th
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Add 6.0 FTE Positions to the Human Services Employment and Training Division

Recommended Action:

1. Adopt a position resolution adding 6.0 FTE positions to the Employment and Training Division of the Human Services Department to provide additional and enhanced services to individuals who are receiving General Assistance benefits and are without housing. The positions are as follows:
 - A) 1.0 FTE Employment & Training Counselor II position for General Assistance and CalFresh Employment and Training case management.
 - B) 1.0 FTE time-limited Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst through June 30, 2024 to provide policy and program supports within the Housing Assistance Response Team.
 - C) 1.0 FTE time-limited Social Service Worker III through June 30, 2024 to provide expanded homeless and housing supports and case management within the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program.
 - D) 2.0 FTE Employment and Training Specialists to provide eligibility determinations, client-needs screening and referral to services for individuals applying for the General Assistance program.
 - E) 1.0 FTE Senior Employment and Training Specialist to provide eligibility determinations, client-needs screening, and referral to services for individuals applying for the General Assistance program, along with specialized technical assistance to the General Assistance unit.
2. Adopt a Budget Resolution to modify the Human Services Department Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Adopted Budget to increase appropriations in the amount of \$470,000 to reflect new funding from the California Department of Social Services for Housing and Disability Advocacy Program effective January 25, 2022, and to program expenditures for requested position allocations. (4/5 vote)

Executive Summary:

The Human Services Department Employment and Training Division requests the addition of 6.0 FTE positions: 2.0 FTE Employment and Training Specialists, 1.0 FTE Senior Employment and Training Specialist, 1.0 FTE time-limited Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst, 1.0 FTE time-limited Social Service Worker III, and 1.0 FTE Employment and Training Counselor II. The positions are being requested to provide additional high-quality services to individuals who receive General Assistance benefits and are without housing. Expanded services include Employment and Training services, Housing and Disability Advocacy services and social work supports. All of these services are supported with funding from the California Department of Social Services and no County General Fund is required for these positions.

Discussion:

The Human Services Department (HSD) Employment and Training (E&T) Division provides critical safety net services to the community including CalWORKs (SonomaWORKS) cash assistance, Job Link employment services, housing services and subsidies, and wrap around social services.

State-funded housing programs serving individuals and families served by the E&T Division continue to expand to meet growing community needs. E&T's Housing Assistance Response Team (HART) works in coordination with the Sonoma County Community Development Commission, Interfaith Shelter Network (IFSN) and other partners such as the Continuum of Care, Public Health, Behavioral Health, advocacy programs, and housing providers. The HART is a regular member of the various Interdepartmental Multidisciplinary Teams of ACCESS Sonoma and is therefore at the table for care coordination discussions involving current and potential HSD clients.

Within the current fiscal year, the E&T Division plans to expand services in the following areas:

- County General Assistance (GA) Program administration and oversight will move from the Economic Assistance (EA) Division to the E&T Division by March 2022. Movement of this program will result in enhanced needs assessment for GA participants, and will allow for an easier transition for clients to access employment services through Job Link as well as housing and wrap around services through the Housing Disability and Advocacy Program (HDAP). The GA program will continue to be housed in the HSD Paulin building, although this organizational change will include the ability to process GA applications at E&T's Capricorn building for individuals who come through the door there.
- Provision of E&T services for CalFresh recipients through the CalFresh Employment and Training program, prioritizing individuals receiving GA.
- Addition of the Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst will provide policy and program supports to the HART, which oversees several housing programs including HDAP, which focuses on wrap around social work and housing placement and subsidies for individuals in the GA program.
- Addition of the Social Service Worker III within the Housing & Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP) will address the waitlist and growing needs of those who are chronically homeless and have a need for disability application, advocacy and connection to safety-net services.

In preparation for these expanded services, E&T is requesting the following positions:

1.0 FTE Employment and Training Counselor II (ETC II)

This position will focus on increasing the employment, skills and earning capacity for CalFresh and GA recipients by maximizing access to E&T supportive services and skills credentialing. The ETC will work to help CalFresh and GA recipients:

1. Increase job placement, retention and wages
2. Increase participation in employment and training programs
3. Increase employability by removing barriers to employment
4. Increase skills attainment and credentialing

1.0 FTE time-limited Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst (PPEA)

This position is necessary for the HART to meet the programmatic needs of the HDAP homeless and housing services expansion, which prioritizes GA clients. This change also reinforces a strategic objective to pull together myriad services for individuals eligible for GA into one larger more cohesive program to include cash aid, employment services, housing and wrap around social work.

1.0 FTE time-limited Social Service Worker III (SSW III)

This position will expand and provide additional bandwidth for HDAP. The program contracts with IFSN for some housing services and assistance with the HDAP transitional home. HSD currently employs 2.0 FTE time-limited SSW III positions to provide supportive services and case management to chronically homeless individuals that need assistance and advocacy to apply for and receive disability benefits such as SSI. The addition of a third time limited SSW III will allow us to increase the number of homeless individuals served and reduce the current waitlist for access to HDAP services.

2.0 FTE Employment and Training Specialist (ETS) and 1.0 FTE Senior Employment and Training Specialist (SETS)

ETS staff conduct eligibility determinations for individuals applying for GA cash aid and rental assistance. Additionally, they conduct needs assessments and connect individuals with appropriate services including other safety net services, employment services, housing services and intensive wrap around social work. The primary goals for ETS staff providing these services to GA participants are to quickly grant benefits and to provide a warm handoff to needed services focused on increasing regular income, such as SSI or employment, as well as securing permanent supportive housing. ETS staff also provide the same type of services to families applying for and being served by the SonomaWORKs program. The GA program is linked to the SonomaWORKs program in terms of structure and policy framework, further underscoring the rationale for moving the GA program to the E&T Division.

The GA program is currently situated in the EA Division and is administered by two Eligibility Specialists (ES) for GA case management and a part-time Eligibility Specialist for GA intake. The program also includes a Social Service Worker II that offers SSI application advocacy for disabled GA and veteran clients. Maintaining the existing ES position allocations in the EA Division is necessary because these positions concurrently carry caseloads of CalFresh and Medi-Cal clients and spend approximately 80% of their time performing work in these programs, with only 20% of their time spent on GA. Removing these positions or transferring them to E&T with the GA program would decrease the ability to serve clients in need of CalFresh and MediCal benefits. Further, due to the ongoing challenges faced by EA to recruit and retain Eligibility Specialists, which has been exacerbated during the pandemic due to the labor shortage and competitive labor market, the PPEA position is needed to remain in EA to assist with recruitment and support the training team in coaching new trainees. The two ES positions that currently support the GA program at EA will transition to spending 100% of their time working in the CalFresh and MediCal programs to assist with an especially high backlog due to staffing shortages and pandemic-related delays.

Strategic Plan:

This item directly supports the County's Five-year Strategic Plan and is aligned with the following pillar, goal, and objective.

Pillar: Healthy and Safe Communities

Goal: Goal 1: Expand integrated system of care to address gaps in services to the County's most vulnerable.

Objective: Objective 2: Identify gaps in the Safety Net system of services and identify areas where departments can address those gaps directly, and seek guidance from the Board when additional resources and/or policy direction is needed.

Prior Board Actions:

June 2020: Approved a Position Resolution to add 2.0 FTE time-limited Social Service Worker III positions to the HSD E&T Division for HDAP.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 21-22 Adopted	FY22-23 Projected	FY 23-24 Projected
Budgeted Expenses		968,000	996,200
Additional Appropriation Requested	470,000		
Total Expenditures	470,000	968,000	996,200
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	470,000	968,000	A996,200
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	470,000	968,000	996,200

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The prorated payroll cost increase (base salary/wage + benefits) for the addition of 1.0 FTE Employment and Training Counselor II (ETC II) in FY 2021-2022 after Board approval is \$79,500. The increased costs for subsequent years are \$163,700 and \$168,600 in fiscal years 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. A 3% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is applied for each of the two subsequent fiscal years. HDAP will fund the ongoing payroll cost of this position.

The prorated payroll cost increase (base salary/wage + benefits) for the addition of 2.0 FTE Employment and Training Specialists (ETS) in FY 2021-2022 after Board approval is \$141,600 (\$70,800 each). The increased costs for subsequent years are \$291,600 (\$145,800 each) and \$300,400 (\$150,200 each) in fiscal years 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. A 3% COLA is applied for each of the two subsequent fiscal years. HDAP will fund the ongoing payroll cost of these positions.

The prorated payroll cost increase (base salary/wage + benefits) for the addition of 1.0 FTE Senior Employment and Training Specialist (ETS) in FY 2021-2022 after Board approval is \$73,400. The increased costs for subsequent years are \$151,100 and \$155,600 in fiscal years 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. A 3% COLA is applied for each of the two subsequent fiscal years. HDAP will fund the on-going payroll cost of this position.

The prorated payroll cost increase (base salary/wage + benefits) for the addition of a time-limited 1.0 FTE PPEA in FY 2021-2022 after Board approval is \$96,500. The increased costs for subsequent years are \$198,800 and \$204,800 in fiscal years 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. A 3% COLA is applied for each of the two subsequent fiscal years. HDAP will fund the payroll cost of this time-limited position through 6/30/2024.

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The prorated payroll cost increase (base salary/wage + benefits) for the addition of a time-limited 1.0 FTE SSW III in FY 2021-2022 after Board approval is \$79,000. The increased costs for subsequent years are \$162,800 and \$167,700 in fiscal years 2022-23 and 2023-24, respectively. A 3% COLA is applied for each of the two subsequent fiscal years. HDAP will fund the payroll cost of this time-limited SSW III through 6/30/2024.

The source of funding to pay for the payroll cost of all of the aforementioned 6.0 FTE positions being added (4.0 Permanent and 2.0 Time-Limited) is HDAP, which is made available through the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Sonoma County received a noncompetitive allocation (no County match required) of \$2,132,523 for FY 2021-22 for HDAP, per All County Welfare Directors Letter dated 9/13/2021. Sonoma County anticipates receiving the same allocation from CDSS of \$2,132,523 in fiscal years 2022-23 and 2023-24 each as the State expands housing and homelessness assistance through HDAP. Moreover, indicators in Sacramento point to strong budgetary sponsorship from the Governor's office, enthusiastic backing from the CA Legislature, and procedural assistance from the CA Department of Social Services (CDSS) for HDAP allocations to continue well into the next decade since its initial implementation in FY 2017-2018.

Although Sonoma County was awarded FY 2021-22 funds of \$2,132,523 for HDAP, only additional appropriations totaling \$470,000 will be added to the HSD FY 2021-22 Adopted Budget because this is the amount needed to fund new expenses for 6.0 FTEs being added that are not budgeted in FY 2021-2022. HSD budgeted to received HDAP funding of \$598,728 in FY 2021-22, however, due to the amount awarded of \$2,132,523, HSD has an additional \$1,063,795 in HDAP funding that may not be spent in FY 2021-2022. Although HSD does not anticipate using all HDAP funding awarded for FY 2021-22, HSD plans to continue to expand services for HDAP and plans to use all funds awarded in subsequent fiscal years 2022-23 and 2023-24.

No County General Fund is required for these positions.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Employment and Training Counselor II	\$5,308.24 - \$6,452.68	1	
Program Planning and Evaluation Analyst	\$6,572.69 - \$7,988.45	1	
Social Service Worker III	\$5,308.24 - \$6,452.68	1	
Employment and Training Specialist	\$4,645.58 - \$5,647.40	2	
Senior Employment and Training Specialist	\$5,014.31 - \$6,094.39	1	

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

This has no impact on existing positions.

Attachments:

- Position Resolution
- Budget Resolution

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Related Items "On File" with the Clerk of the Board:

None