



COUNTY OF SONOMA

575 ADMINISTRATION
DRIVE, ROOM 102A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95403

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 2/4/2025

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): County Administrator

Staff Name and Phone Number: Christel Querijero 565-2431, Maggie Luce 565-1796

Vote Requirement: 4/5th

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Undocumented, Immigrant, and Refugee Support

Recommended Action:

- A) Adopt a Resolution to appropriate \$500,000 from General Fund Contingencies, consistent with California Code, Government Code 26227, to provide one-time support to undocumented, immigrant, and refugee residents of Sonoma County.
- B) Provide staff direction on the distribution of funds regarding both the method and the intended community benefit and outcomes.
- C) Delegate authority to the County Executive to execute the distribution of funds as directed by the Board.

Executive Summary:

On January 10, 2025, the Board directed staff to return to the Board to program up to \$500,000 in one-time General Fund Contingencies to support Sonoma County's undocumented, immigrant, and refugee communities. The Board directed staff to develop and implement a process to award funding to local service providers to address urgent information and resource needs. This funding consideration is consistent with California Code, Government Code 26227, which allows for the County to appropriate and expend money from the general fund or to fund programs deemed by the Board of Supervisors to be necessary to meet the social needs of the population.

Discussion:

On [January 10, 2025 <https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7087194&GUID=630532E8-1F20-41A1-9DF5-331527EAB540&Options=&Search=>](https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7087194&GUID=630532E8-1F20-41A1-9DF5-331527EAB540&Options=&Search=>), the Board adopted a resolution intended to uphold the civil rights, dignity, health, and safety of our immigrant population and all Sonoma County community members. During this meeting, the Board discussed potential community impacts from anticipated federal policy changes in 2025. While we expect upcoming State efforts to support immigrant communities, the Board acknowledged an urgency for the County to consider ways to provide more immediate support to these communities. To that end the Board directed staff to bring back for the Board's consideration the use of \$500,000 of General Fund Contingencies for these efforts, including a possible Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process. This process will allocate one-time funding for services that support Sonoma County's undocumented, immigrant, and refugee communities.

Staff understands that services to be funded with these one-time discretionary dollars will focus on providing education on individuals' legal rights related to immigration status, rather than paying for direct legal fee for

services costs.

Staff also understands that the proposed funding approach should prioritize collaboration among community-based organizations (CBOs) to ensure consistency of information, accomplish collective impact, and avoid duplicative efforts. Agencies receiving funding through this process would be required to submit reports regarding the use of funding, which would be posted on a website where the community can view all resources in one place.

Given staff's interpretation of the Board's intent articulated during the January 10, 2025, Special Board meeting, below are two options for the Board to consider as a starting point to provide staff direction.

Option 1: Secure Family Collaborative Services

County Executive executes a funding agreement for the full \$500,000 with Secure Families Collaborative (SFC), who would work with partners to deliver educational services. In this approach, SFC would identify service gaps and implement a streamlined communication pipeline for accurate information sharing and service delivery, with the primary intent to provide education countywide on individuals' legal rights. This approach relies on SFC being responsible for administering the process to distribute funding to service providers and managing the contracts and services. Resource distribution and collaboration with non-SFC organizations will be expected as part of this agreement, with the intention to create equitable access to this funding. The intention is to engage community-based organizations beyond those already working with SFC. The agreement would specify that funded activities would serve existing SFC clients/families and non-SFC clients/families.

SFC would receive a maximum of 15% for indirect costs to cover the expenses associated with administering the coordination of these services. Staff anticipates that the \$500,000 agreement with SFC could be in place within two weeks of the Board's approval, and SFC anticipates the delivery of these educational services could begin within three weeks of the execution of the contract. The specific number of workshops and/or forums to be delivered through this funding will be negotiated and included in the funding agreement language. At a minimum, Know Your Rights educational activities will be conducted on a weekly basis. SFC will also coordinate with the County's Communication team to ensure the County's Immigrant Information webpage includes up to date information. In addition, should SFC find it relevant and helpful to effectively serve the community, funds can be used to develop and maintain a separate platform to post reports on how funds were spent, along with an easy to navigate design for the public to access immigrant rights information and legal representation resources.

The Board established the Sonoma County Secure Families Collaborative (the Collaborative, website: <https://sonomacountysecurefamilies.org/>) in 2018 to meet the needs of the community due to changes in federal immigration policy and the North Bay wildfires. The SFC is the backbone organization to a network that provides pro-bono legal services, wraparound social services, and mental health support for immigrants. By supporting existing organizations and facilitating working as a broad-based coalition on behalf of and with the immigrant community, SFC creates a collective impact that is much greater than that of an individual organization. The Collaborative's partners include nonprofit and community-based organizations such as the University of San Francisco Deportation Defense Clinic in Healdsburg, the Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, the Immigration Institute of the Bay Area, Sonoma Immigrant Services, North Bay Organizing Project, Queer Asylum Accompaniment (QAA) Team, and Legal Aid of Sonoma County.

The Board has provided financial support in varying amounts and from varying sources to the Collaborative over the past seven years. Since 2017, with the goal of providing legal assistance and services to our local immigrant community, SFC has received \$901,000 of funding from the Board of Supervisors. On June 16, 2017, the Board authorized 3 years of funding from Graton Mitigation Fund in the amount of \$100,000 annually through FY 2019-20 for a total of \$300,000. During the Budget Hearings in FY 2020-21 and FY 2022-23, \$100,000 and \$200,000 was allocated General Funds for an additional total of \$300,000; and more recently during FY 2024-25 Budget Hearings the Board approved one-time funds of \$300,000. The Board of Supervisors District 5 also provided \$1,000 to SFC as part of their Community Grant Allocation in May of 2022. Attached is SFC's last report to the Board in which they reported providing pro bono support to over 2,100 Sonoma County residents (individuals and families) seeking legal services for affirmative and removal defense cases. Additionally, they reported assisting 58 clients (individuals and families), by helping them enroll for benefits and services including healthcare, food, housing, transportation, education, and financial assistance.

The recommended \$500,000 would allow SFC to expand their work to increase education countywide on individuals' legal rights. The Collaborative and partners have been implementing this approach, as evidenced by the six legal clinics rolled out countywide in recent months.

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Option 2:

In this option, 10% or more of the \$500,000 would need to be allocated for County staff, consistent with the County's funding award process, to issue, receive, and evaluate NOFA proposals, in addition to negotiating agreements and administering payments for various organizations. To keep the administration of the NOFA reasonable, staff recommend that each NOFA funding award be in the amount of \$50,000 or more. Staff will prioritize awarding funding to proposals that include multiple agencies to encourage collaboration and collective impact. The timeline for awarding funding for this option would be longer than the SFC option due to County requirements and administrative processes. Based on other recent County NOFA processes, staff estimate that it would take between 3-6 months for agreements to be in place and services to begin. This timeline includes the following steps:

- BOS adopts budget adjustment resolution and provides direction on the funding allocation approach and intended community benefits outcome
- Staff determine NOFA criteria and application processes
- NOFA outreach & technical assistance session(s)
- Proposal deadline
- Proposal review, awardee selection, and grant agreements

In this option, the County would administer an online platform such as a website, which would include grantee reports along with additional resources for the public related to immigrant rights.

Anticipated State Efforts:

At the time of writing this Board item, the Governor and legislative leaders are pursuing a proposal that would appropriate \$50 million to defend California and immigrants facing deportation in court against the incoming Trump Administration. The current proposal includes \$25 million for California's Department of Justice litigation against the federal government, and \$25 million for grants to nonprofit legal organizations that support immigrants who are at risk of deportation, detention, and wage theft. Legislative leaders are reported to be on track to approve this proposal by the end of January 2025.

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Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

Was this item identified as an opportunity to apply the Racial Equity Toolkit?

No

Prior Board Actions:

1/10/25: [2024 Federal Policy Changes <https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7087194&GUID=630532E8-1F20-41A1-9DF5-331527EAB540&Options=&Search=>](https://sonoma-county.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=7087194&GUID=630532E8-1F20-41A1-9DF5-331527EAB540&Options=&Search=>)

2/7/17: Board approved Minute Order and Resolution on Immigrant Services and Protections. [<https://sonoma-county.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=683&meta_id=212475>](https://sonoma-county.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=683&meta_id=212475)

9/12/17: Board Adopted Resolution to Protect and Support Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program (DACA) Participants.

[<https://sonoma-county.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=&clip_id=729&meta_id=227175>](https://sonoma-county.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=&clip_id=729&meta_id=227175)

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY24-25 Adopted	FY25-26 Projected	FY26-27 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested	\$500,000	0	0
Total Expenditures	\$500,000	0	0
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies	\$500,000	0	0
Total Sources	\$500,000	0	0

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

If adopted, the resolution will program \$500,000 from General Fund Contingencies. Staff are bringing this funding request to the Board in advance of the upcoming budget hearings due to the extenuating circumstances that require more immediate actions in response to anticipated changes in Federal Policy related to immigrant communities.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

If the Board directs staff to proceed with entering an agreement with SFC, CAO staff would administer this agreement. This work would be completed by existing staff, requiring an adjustment or redistribution of current workload. While no additional FTEs are requested with this item, if the Board chooses to have County

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staff administer the NOFA, this may require hiring extra-help staff.

Attachments:

Attachment A: Resolution

Attachment B: Secure Families Collaborative Report

Attachment C: Spanish Summary Report

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

None