



COUNTY OF SONOMA

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

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 9/12/2023

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Paul Dunaway (707) 565-5900, Gary Fontenot (707) 565-5931

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Add 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent Adult and Aging Social Worker Position Supporting the Information & Assistance Program

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Personnel Resolution effective September 12, 2023, to add 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent Adult and Aging Social Worker, salary range \$7,391.88-\$8,983.31 per month, in the Human Services Department to support the Information and Assistance Program.

Executive Summary:

The Adult and Aging Division of the Human Services Department provides safety net services to older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers. Older Americans Act funding is allocated for community planning and social services, research and development projects, and personnel training. Older Americans Act funding also includes provisions that aim to remove barriers to accessing the aging network of services, including the Information and Assistance program.

Increased baseline funding from the Older Americans Act will be utilized to add 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent Adult and Aging Social Worker in the Adult and Aging Division within the Information & Assistance program. The Information & Assistance program is staffed by 4.0 Full-Time Equivalent social workers who answer calls and on-line requests from older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers in Sonoma County. The average volume of calls received by the Information & Assistance team each quarter has tripled in the last two years, receiving more than 7,300 calls in Fiscal Year 2022-2023. If approved, this request would add a fifth social worker to the Information & Assistance unit to meet the community's increasing demand for information and referrals to services.

Discussion:

Every four years the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is required to develop an Area Plan to establish the annual goals and objectives that serve to improve the lives of older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers. As part of that effort, the AAA's 2023 Needs Assessment Survey found that 49% of respondents don't know what services are available to them. In response to the need for older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers to have streamlined access to services and resources, the Human Services Department's (HSD) Adult and Aging (AA) Division developed the Information & Assistance (I&A) program in 2018.

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Funding utilized to support the additional social worker position will come from the increased baseline funding from California Department of Aging (CDA) to the AAA, the entity responsible for administering Older Americans Act (OAA) federal funding. This funding assists adults and people with disabilities to remain in their homes and in the community as long as possible. This allocation of the increased baseline funding will directly support the integration of the system of care in Sonoma County and reduce gaps in services.

The I&A program is the main phone line (707-565-INFO) for the Sonoma County Aging & Disability Resource Hub. CDA approved Sonoma County's designation as an Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) on January 1, 2023. This designation relies on collaboration and partnership between the Sonoma County AAA and the Sonoma County Disability and Legal Services Center (DSLCL) as well as a myriad of extended partners throughout Sonoma County.

In Sonoma County, the ADRC is called the Aging & Disability Resource Hub (ADRH). The ADRH is part of a state and federal effort to increase access to programs and services for older adults and people with disabilities through a "No Wrong Door" approach. The ADRH continues to expand its network by formalizing collaboration and communication among agencies serving older adults and people with disabilities. As the ADRH expands, the services and programs that are available for direct referral by the I&A team will also increase.

The enhanced I&A model that the program follows includes thorough assessment and follow-up to support increased connections to resources and services. The AA Social Worker (SW) is responsible for building rapport with the caller, conducting an informal needs assessment, and assisting the caller to identify which services and resources can help them meet their needs. When needed, the AA SW will provide a home visit, allowing for a more extensive assessment and discussion. This provides additional support needed for consumers to explore the options available in order to make informed choices. I&A is not a mandated service but is a service that is in high demand and operates a "No Wrong Door" philosophy that is integral to assisting older adults to remain safely at home in the community.

In addition to providing information and resources, the AA SW also provides direct referrals to a variety of programs and services within multiple organizations throughout the county. The AA SW is responsible for conducting follow up with the individual to ensure they received the services they were connected to and to offer further support as needed.

The average volume of calls received by the I&A team each quarter has tripled in the last two years - the I&A program received over 7,300 calls in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023. The additional AA SW position will provide much needed increased capacity to the I&A program to support the steadily increasing volume of calls coming into the I&A line.

Strategic Plan:

N/A

Racial Equity:

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

No

Prior Board Actions:

- 07.18.2023 Accepted AAA Funding from CDA
- 04.26.2023 Approved the Four-Year Area Plan 2020-2024 Year 4 FY 2023-2024 Update
- 07.19.2022 ADRC Designation and Accepted ADRC Funding from CDA
- 07.13.2021 ADRC Designation and Accepted Funding from CDA

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 23-24 Adopted	FY 24-25 Projected	FY 25-26 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	182,700	191,000	198,700
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$182,700	\$191,000	\$198,700
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal	182,700	191,000	198,700
Fees/Other			
-Use of Fund Balance			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$182,700	\$191,000	\$198,700

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

The cost for 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) AA SW in FY 2023-24 is \$182,700 at the I-Step.

The cost for 1.0 FTE AA SW in subsequent years is \$191,000 and \$198,700 in FYs 2024-25 and 2025-26, respectively. The increased cost for FYs 2024-25 and 2025-26 includes a 4.5% and 4% Cost of Living Adjustment.

The total cost for 1.0 FTE AA SW will be fully paid for by re-directing the already budgeted increased OAA Federal funding allocation from services and supplies to pay for the position costs and meet the business needs. The OAA allocation to AAA is ongoing funding, which has increased incrementally each fiscal year for the past three years. There is no impact to the County General Fund.

Staffing Impacts:			
Position Title (Payroll Classification)	Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)	Additions (Number)	Deletions (Number)
Adult and Aging Social Worker	\$7,391.88 - \$8,983.31	1.0	

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

This AA SW position will enable HSD to meet the increasing demand for I&A services. This position will

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decrease the volume of calls per day each I&A SW needs to respond to. This will increase the number of people that are provided support and assistance with accessing programs and services which will support older adults and people with disabilities to remain safely at home in the community.

Attachments:

Personnel Resolution

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

None