



SUMMARY REPORT

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**Agenda Date:** 3/26/2024

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**Department or Agency Name(s):** Human Services

**Staff Name and Phone Number:** Donna Broadbent 565-4349, Regina de Melo 565-4346

**Vote Requirement:** Majority

**Supervisorial District(s):** Countywide

**Title:**

Child Care and Child Abuse Prevention Services for Families Involved in Child Welfare Services

**Recommended Action:**

- A) Adopt a resolution authorizing the Director of the Human Services Department to:
  - a. Execute an agreement with the California Department of Social Services to receive \$1,321,646 for the local administration of subsidized child care services through the Alternative Payment Program for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025.
  - b. Execute future amendments to the contract with the California Department of Social Services for changes to revenue that do not significantly alter program requirements.
- B) Accept the findings from the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Alternative Payment Program Review.
- C) Authorize the Director of the Human Services Department to execute a contract amendment to an existing agreement with Seneca Family of Agencies, increasing the contract by \$249,060, resulting in a new not-to-exceed contract amount of \$559,060.

**Executive Summary:**

The Human Services Department Family, Youth and Children's Services Division administers an Alternative Payment Program exclusively for families involved in the child welfare system, by which families receive resources and subsidy payments for child care. The program is funded through California Department of Social Services Alternative Payment Program contract funding, which provides families with up to 24 months of child care subsidy. Regulatory requirements stipulate that the Board of Supervisors must authorize the Human Services Director to execute the forthcoming contract for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 and review the results of the annual program monitoring and child care program goals as part of program administration and oversight.

Additionally, the Human Services Department is also requesting Board approval to amend an existing contract with Seneca Family of Agencies to expand wraparound mental health services available to families initially involved with child welfare services.

**Discussion:**

The Human Services Department (HSD) Family, Youth and Children's Services Division (FYC) Alternative Payment Program (APP) offers 24 months of child care subsidies to all eligible families involved with Child Protective Services. These subsidies are funded through a contract for Alternative Payment Child Care. Funding for the APP contract has been received annually from the California Department of Education since 1974. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022, state administration of the APP shifted to the California Department of Social

Services (CDSS). FYC utilizes this funding to provide support to child welfare clients. The APP contract funds up to 24 months of child care subsidies for child welfare clients with an active family maintenance or family reunification case who need child care in order to meet the requirements of their case plan goals. For the last several years, CDSS has increased available funding significantly. In FY 2023-2024, FYC served all eligible families and expended approximately 30% or \$325,000 of the APP contract revenue. CDSS has allocated \$1,321,646 for this program for FY 2024-2025. CDSS requires a resolution from the Board indicating that the Director of HSD has the authority to sign the contract, which will be received later in 2024.

Beyond providing financial assistance for child care, the program has a goal of increasing parental understanding of, and involvement in, a child's child care experience by providing resources about child care and childhood development to parents and resource families. HSD has partnered with the Community Child Care Council (4Cs) to provide individualized education and assistance to help parents and caregivers find quality child care that meets their specific family needs around location, hours and program type. Another goal of the APP is to build effective community partnerships to help families transition to long-term subsidized child care. Program staff work collaboratively with other child care agencies to raise awareness of the needs of families involved with child welfare. Staff add families to the Centralized Eligibility List, a waiting list for all state and federally funded child care programs in Sonoma County, and provide information and referrals to help families access long-term affordable child care. When other child care agencies enroll families involved with child welfare from the Centralized Eligibility List, families transition to longer term subsidy programs that help them maintain stability in their child care arrangements for as long as they need the child care.

#### **Summary of FY 2022-2023 Alternative Payment Child Care Program Review**

In order to comply with contractual requirements with CDSS, the Board must be made aware of formal program reviews, results and corrective actions taken. In December of 2022, CDSS completed a full program review and error rate study of compliance measures related to client eligibility, attendance and payment. There were no errors and 100% compliance in all performance measures. There were no recommendations to adjust program policies or practices. This satisfied the CDSS requirement for FY 2022-2023, and a review of FY 2023-2024 will be completed in March 2024 as required.

Another key component of the self-evaluation is a parent survey. The survey was provided in English and Spanish and mailed to all 34 parents/caregivers who received child care services between March 2021 and February 2022. Only one survey was returned, and that respondent indicated satisfaction with the program and with the quality of the child care, and reported that the child care is helping their child grow and thrive. Assessing client satisfaction with services is a requirement of the self-evaluation process; FYC will examine other ways to improve the response rate or assess client input as part of future self-evaluations.

#### **Wraparound Services as part of Child Abuse Prevention Efforts**

Another important service area that HSD FYC provides is Child Abuse Prevention Services (CAPS) - services for families that have been reported to child welfare services and undergone an investigation. For these families, the social worker assessment after the investigation is that the family is able to remain safely together and would benefit from additional family support. FYC contracts with several community-based organizations to offer parent education, mental health, and resource assistance services. These CAPS are offered as FYC social workers conclude the investigation and step out of a family's life.

Issues related to youth mental health have been identified by FYC services social workers as a growing barrier

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to families staying safely together. Therefore, wraparound services to support older youth with significant behavioral or mental health needs and their families was added to this service array in FY 2022-2023. Wraparound services include mental health counseling, resource connection and support for families to develop a natural network of support. This contracted service is provided through Seneca Family of Agencies and the program has maintained full enrollment with a waiting list since inception.

Because of underspending in other areas of the CAPS program, there is available funding specifically dedicated to child abuse prevention in the FY 2023-2024 budget. Therefore, HSD will increase the capacity of this vital wraparound services program as quickly as possible. This increase will allow the program to nearly double in size and serve approximately 10 additional youth and families in the current fiscal year and 20 additional youth and families next fiscal year. Already available wraparound reinvestment funding will be used to maintain this program capacity through June 2025 and will be included in the proposed FY 2024-2025 budget. The current contract for wraparound services runs from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2025. The changes in capacity will increase the contract by \$94,060 this fiscal year, with a total increase of \$249,060, for a new total of \$559,060 over the life of the two-year contract.

**Strategic Plan:**

N/A

**Racial Equity:**

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

No

**Prior Board Actions:**

01-24-2023: Approved a resolution authorizing the Director of the Human Services Department to execute contracts and subsequent amendments for the Alternative Payment Program.

11-08-2022: Accepted the FY 2021-2022 Annual Self-Evaluation for the Child Welfare Services Alternative Payment Contract.

11-02-2021: Approved the contract to accept revenue through the Alternative Payment Program for FY 2021-2022, and received the FY 2020-2021 Child Care Support Program Self-Evaluation.

09-01-2020: Approved the contract to accept revenue through the Alternative Payment Program for FY 2020-2021, and received the FY 2019-2020 Child Care Support Program Self-Evaluation.

08-06-2019: Approved the contract to accept revenue through the Alternative Payment Program for FY 2019-2020, and received the FY 2018-2019 Child Care Support Program Self-Evaluation.

02-05-2019: Approved a Budget Resolution and contract amendment to accept additional revenue and expanded use of child care subsidies through the Alternative Payment Program for FY 2018-2019.

**FISCAL SUMMARY**

| <b>Expenditures</b>                | <b>FY23-24<br/>Adopted</b> | <b>FY24-25<br/>Projected</b> | <b>FY25-26<br/>Projected</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Budgeted Expenses                  | \$249,060                  | \$1,110,000                  |                              |
| Additional Appropriation Requested |                            |                              |                              |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b>          |                            |                              |                              |
| <b>Funding Sources</b>             | <b>\$249,060</b>           | <b>\$1,110,000</b>           | <b>\$0</b>                   |

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|                            |                  |                    |            |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------|
| General Fund/WA GF         |                  |                    |            |
| State/Federal              | \$249,060        | \$1,110,000        |            |
| Fees/Other                 |                  |                    |            |
| Use of Fund Balance        |                  |                    |            |
| General Fund Contingencies |                  |                    |            |
| <b>Total Sources</b>       | <b>\$249,060</b> | <b>\$1,100,000</b> | <b>\$0</b> |

**Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:**

The current CAPS Wraparound Program contract runs from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025 for a total of \$310,000 - \$155,000 for 2023-2024 and \$155,000 for 2024-2025. An increase of \$249,060 will be added to the contract, will increase the resulting in a new contract total of \$559,060. The \$249,060 increase will be distributed between the two fiscal years - \$94,060 will be added to FY 2023-2024 and \$155,000 to FY 2024-2025 (\$94,060+\$155,000=\$249,060). The new contract total of **\$559,060** will be as follows. **\$249,060** for FY 2023-2024 (\$155,000+94,060) and **\$310,000** for FY 2024-2025 (\$155,000+\$155,000). The new contract totals are all currently budgeted.

\$800,000 of the \$1,321,646 Alternative Payment Contract is budgeted as part of the FY 24-25 budget. This estimate is based on prior year utilization and projected usage in FY24-25. HSD is not requesting to increase appropriations and no general fund is requested.

| <b>Staffing Impacts: None</b>                  |  |                           |                           |
|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Position Title (Payroll Classification)</b> | <b>Monthly Salary Range (A-I Step)</b> | <b>Additions (Number)</b> | <b>Deletions (Number)</b> |
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|  |  |                           |                           |

**Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):**

N/A

**Attachments:**

- 1) Resolution for the Alternative Payment Program
- 2) Contract with Seneca Family of Agencies for the CAPS Wraparound Program
- 3) Contract Amendment with Seneca Family of Agencies for the CAPS Wraparound Program

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

None