



COUNTY OF SONOMA

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

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 2/27/2024

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Office of Equity, Human Services, Emergency Management, County Administrator

Staff Name and Phone Number: Alegría De La Cruz, 707-565-8709; Angela Struckmann, 565-5800; Jeff Duvall, 565-1152; Jennifer Solito, 565-4592

Vote Requirement: 4/5th

Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Title:

Professional Services Agreements for the Distribution of Disaster Emergency Financial Assistance

Recommended Action:

Delegate authority to the Director of the Human Services Department to execute Professional Services Agreements with Community Organizations Active in Disasters (COAD) and the Child Parent Institute (CPI) for distribution of Disaster Emergency Financial Assistance for an initial not-to-exceed amount of \$550,000 each, through December 31, 2027, and to amend the Agreements, in a form approved by counsel, to increase the not-to-exceed amounts to a total maximum of \$2 million upon the allocation of additional emergency funding or upon award of state or federal funding for this purpose.

Executive Summary:

During the FY 2022-23 Budget Hearings, the Board dedicated \$2 million to a Sonoma County Disaster Immediate Needs Fund and \$1 million toward Low Wage Disaster Pay initiatives. Discussion related to the scope of the services to be provided with these funds also took place as part of the Board's consideration of an Agriculture Access Identification Card program at a Board of Supervisors Policy Workshop in July 2022 and again in August 2023.

At the October 3, 2023 Board meeting, the Board directed staff to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) for community partner organizations to distribute Disaster Emergency Financial Assistance (EFA) during future potential disaster events.

This item focuses on the Disaster Immediate Needs Fund and provides information on the RFP process and recommendations for two Professional Service Agreements. The Agreements will allow contracts to be in place with community partner organizations that can immediately disburse cash assistance to impacted low-wage households in the event of a disaster or emergency.

Discussion:

Staff from the Office of Equity (OOE), Department of Emergency Management (DEM), Human Services Department (HSD), and the County Administrator's Office (CAO) met in the fall of 2023 to discuss eligibility criteria and worked to develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for organizations that can effectively and

efficiently distribute disaster financial assistance during and following a disaster event. This RFP articulated a distribution process and eligibility criteria for financial assistance, informed by the learnings from the January 2023 storm event and subsequent community engagement.

The RFP was shared on the County's Supplier Portal on December 29, 2023 and a link to the portal was shared and advertised in Communities Organizations Active in Disaster's (COAD) and OOE's newsletters. An announcement was also made at COAD general membership meeting on November 30, 2023.

Three proposals were received and were evaluated by a group of five reviewers made up of four county staff (one staff each from OOE, DEM, HSD, and Community Development Commission (CDC)) and one external reviewer. The review committee determined that the most qualified proposals were presented by the Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) and the Child Parent Institute (CPI).

After the January 2023 winter storms, feedback from community-based organizations (CBOs) and staff who worked the Recovery Support Centers (RSCs) indicated staff burnout and understaffing to handle the volume of clients waiting for intake assessments. The evaluation committee determined that contracts with two qualified organizations would better meet the potential large-scale needs of a community disaster. It would also allow RSCs to be established in different geographic locations throughout the County.

The two chosen organizations have experience with distribution of disaster financial assistance. CPI activated targeted disaster recovery and COVID pandemic support services and distributed over \$12 million in COVID relief and mitigation funds. CPI subcontracted under On The Move for emergency financial aid under the Covid Urgent Response and Aid (CURA) program to assist low-income COVID affected families and disbursed over \$5 million in that effort. CPI serves families in English, Spanish, French and Mixteco. They also have contracted with an interpretation service who can provide simultaneous, real-time translation from a native speaking professional translator in other languages. They serve all of Sonoma County with a heavy concentration in the high needs zip codes of 95407, 95407, and 94928 and can process disbursements on a daily basis, if needed.

COAD, partnering with CAP Sonoma and Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, has experience supporting community members through disasters with bilingual, culturally sensitive information, resources, and services. COAD has established connections to organizations in all areas of the County. COAD worked with the County of Sonoma in the January 2023 winter storms to distribute the disaster emergency financial assistance authorized by the County during that event. COAD is able to distribute funds daily as needed and can deliver services in both English and Spanish. A phone interpreter service will be used if other languages are required, and existing partners cannot be identified to deliver services in those languages. COAD reached out to a geographically representative sample of their members to secure their commitment to partner, as needed, in a future Disaster EFA operation. They have letters of support from The Living Room Center, Bodega Bay CERT, Waves of Compassion Foundation, Mendonoma Health Alliance, La Luz Center, and La Familia Sana.

These Agreements will allow COAD and CPI to distribute Disaster Immediate Needs Funds and ensure quick and efficient distribution to spur recovery efforts by facilitating access to resources. Under these agreements, the contractors will begin intake/eligibility assessment using the Universal Disaster Intake Process (UDIP) within 72 hours after being notified by the County at the start of a disaster. All clients will be entered utilizing the UDIP so organizations will know if a client has already been assessed and given cash assistance. Using the UDIP will also allow for long-term disaster recovery coordination. COAD and CPI will track all clients who were assessed, who got aid, where clients were assessed, how

much aid per client was dispersed, and client demographics (collected in the UDIP intake). Within 30 days after disbursement of all funds, or the end of the disaster event, COAD and CPI will generate an “After-Action Report” and send to the County with the database of clients served. The After-Action Report will highlight the a) timeline of activities, b) community engagement conducted to distribute aid, c) highlights of what worked well in the process, and d) highlights of challenges and any recommendations for areas of improvement to the process. OOE staff will analyze the data entered into UDIP and combine the After-Action Reports for subsequent reporting to the Board and leadership as appropriate to evaluate the success of this program. See Attachment B Emergency Financial Assistance Policies and Procedures and Client Eligibility Criteria.

Staff recommends authorizing agreements with COAD in an initial amount not to exceed \$550,000, and with CPI in an initial amount not to exceed \$550,000, through a term of December 31, 2027. In alignment with Board direction to facilitate possible future distributions if funds are available, the item recommends that the Director of Human Services have the authority to amend the Agreements, in a form approved by counsel, to increase the not-to-exceed amounts to a total maximum of \$2 million upon the allocation of additional emergency funding or upon award of state or federal funding for this purpose. In that way, your Board’s approval here of this award and initial amount along with the delegated authority would ensure that we have a system in place or order to facilitate the distribution of future funds. Should these contracts be approved, a total of \$87,147 would remain in the Disaster Immediate Needs Fund for future unforeseen program or staffing needs.

Strategic Plan:

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

Pillar: Racial Equity and Social Justice

Goal: Goal 4: Engage community members and stakeholder groups to develop priorities and to advance racial equity.

Objective: Objective 2: Collaborate with community members and stakeholder groups to develop racial equity strategies for County emergency response, economic recovery and resiliency planning efforts.

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.

Racial Equity:

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

No

The ARPA Culturally Responsive Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Project and the Emergency Financial Assistance criteria have the OOE staff in a leadership role, and, as such are grounded in equity principles and practice. The work done through engagement with CBOs as well as with community members disproportionately impacted and underserved during disasters, will help to inform and identifies gaps and

areas of need in these populations.

Prior Board Actions:

10/3/2023 - Board directed the OOE and DEM staff to return to the Board with the results of the RFP process to award contacts to distribute Disaster Emergency Financial Assistance if needed in future events.

1/31/23 - Board ratified County Administrator usage of funds for the January 2023 Storm Event, and allocated additional funds for this event.

FY 2022/2023 Budget Hearings - Board utilized the Disaster Response Fund to create a \$2 million Sonoma County Community Disaster Immediate Needs Fund, and allocated \$1 million for a Low Wage Worker Disaster Pay Program. The OOE and DEM staff were directed to return to the Board with updates and future uses for these funds.

FY 2021/2022 Budget Hearings - Board approved the creation of a one-time Disaster Response Fund in the amount of \$3 million.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY23-24 Adopted	FY24-25 Projected	FY25-26 Projected
Budgeted Expenses	\$1,100,000		
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	\$1,100,000		
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance	\$1,100,000		
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources	\$1,100,000		

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

Funding for disaster emergency financial assistance was previously approved by the Board and no additional funding is required to execute these agreements. Appropriations are available in the Disaster Immediate Needs Fund.

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

Agenda Date: 2/27/2024

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Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

N/A

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

- A. Disaster EFA Sample Standard Professional Services Agreement
- B. Disaster EFA Policies and Procedures and Eligibility Criteria
- C. Disaster EFA Board presentation

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

None