



COUNTY OF SONOMA

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

SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 9/16/2025

To: County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Department of Health Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Nolan Sullivan, 707-565-4774; Mike Nielsen, 707-565-4787

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Title:

Resolution Authorizing Access to State and Local Summary Criminal History Information for Employment

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the Sonoma County Department of Health Services to access state and federal level summary criminal history information for employment within the County of Sonoma Department of Health Services.

Executive Summary:

The Sonoma County Department of Health Services (hereinafter, "DHS" or "the Department") has submitted an application to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) to obtain authorization to access state and federal level summary criminal history information for employment within the County of Sonoma Department of Health Services.

Per California Department of Justice requirements, the Department's governing body, in this case the Board of Supervisors, must approve a resolution validating the need for this information pursuant to California Penal Code section 11105(b)(11).

Discussion:

Currently, the Human Services Department, Probation Department, Sheriff's Office, along with other Sonoma County Departments, have the authority to access state and federal level summary criminal history information pursuant to California Penal Code section 11105(b)(11). Background criminal history is particularly important when clients at specific locations are youth or the work at the particular site involves youth. Each Department with this level of access is assigned an Originating Agency Identifier number (ORI). Only the specific Department with an ORI can access background data. DHS does not have its own ORI and has been relying on other County departments to conduct background checks for hiring for DHS. This can cause delays in the ability to hire staff and volunteers to support programs.

This Board item seeks to authorize the DHS to access state and federal level summary criminal history, including potential employees and volunteers, who are being considered for positions involving work with youth under the same authority, thereby allowing DHS its own approved ORI and more direct access to data, improving departmental efficiency. The Department is asking for its own ORI now in preparation for anticipated staff that are working out of specific locations not necessarily managed by DHS, where some services are provided by DHS staff and where the site program involves youth.

The DOJ maintains the statewide criminal record repository and provides background checks to assist in the evaluation of applicants for employment, licensure, or certification. The implementation of these screenings is critical to ensuring the safety and integrity of the workplace, particularly for employees and volunteers who work with vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, and dependent adults.

To access additional levels of a background information when necessary, fingerprints can be submitted to DOJ and checked against state and federal databases to determine if the applicant has any criminal history. The results are then sent to the requesting agency for evaluation in accordance with statutory guidelines.

Agencies Authorized for Background Checks: The DOJ authorizes over 45,000 agencies to perform background checks including agencies such as:

- Law enforcement agencies (sheriff's offices, police departments, probation departments, district attorney offices, and courts).
- Government agencies involved in employment, licensing, or certification.
- Educational institutions (schools, universities, and childcare providers).
- Healthcare and social service organizations.
- Nonprofit organizations working with vulnerable populations.

Each agency requesting this authority must apply for authorization and meet specific statutory requirements to receive criminal background check information, which is the sole intent of this resolution.

On November 19, 2024, the Department submitted a preliminary application to the California DOJ requesting authorization to access to state and federal level summary criminal history information for employees and volunteers. After the DOJ initiated the application, they then approved the exact resolution language to be used in this item and then authorized the Department to move forward and obtain governing authority from your Board. Once this item is approved, DHS will submit approval back to the DOJ to finalize the application process. The timeline for approval is dependent on the DOJ's review process. After the DOJ account is established, DHS will move on to next steps which includes seeking a contract with a third-party vendor to provide any required fingerprinting services. DHS will not be performing the fingerprinting and screening. Rather, DHS will direct access to criminal background screening results.

Strategic Plan:

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

Pillar: Organizational Excellence

Goal: Goal 1: Strengthen operational effectiveness, fiscal reliability, and accountability

Objective: Objective 2: Establish a master list of technology needs that support operational/service improvements by mid-2022, identify enterprise solutions, and develop fiscal strategies to fund and implement improvements.

Racial Equity:

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

No

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Prior Board Actions:

None

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY25-26 Adopted	FY26-27 Projected	FY27-28 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures			
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			
General Fund Contingencies			
Total Sources			

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

There are no costs associated with this Board item. Any costs associated to administrative work discussed in this item are covered by normally budgeted DHS operating costs.

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

None

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Resolution

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

None