



SUMMARY REPORT

Agenda Date: 1/14/2020

To: Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services
Staff Name and Phone Number: Felisa Pinson, 707-565-2198
Vote Requirement: Majority
Supervisorial District(s): Countywide

Recommended Action:

Adopt a Gold Resolution designating January 2020 as Eligibility Worker, Employment and Training Specialist and Eligibility Specialist Recognition Month.

Executive Summary:

Nearly 250 Eligibility Workers (EW), Employment and Training Specialists (ETS), and Eligibility Specialists (ES), including their leads and supervisors, are employed by Sonoma County.

In 2019, Eligibility Workers, Employment and Training Specialists, and Eligibility Specialists from the Human Services Department provided benefits to over 103,000 individuals throughout Sonoma County in the course of their duties. Eligibility Worker, Employment and Training Specialist and Eligibility Specialist Recognition Month honors these employees for their commitment and dedication to their work and their community.

Discussion:

CalWORKs, CalFresh, Medi-Cal, County Medical Services Program, subsidized Covered California health insurance, and General Assistance provide a crucial safety net and sense of hope for families facing the challenges of difficult health and financial situations. Whether it's a family trying to maintain health insurance coverage, a college student who needs help with food expenses, a homebound senior struggling to afford food and medication, or a parent or grandparent caring for children or grandchildren in need of financial and employment assistance, these programs offer vital services to meet the basic needs of vulnerable community members. Eligibility Workers, Employment and Training Specialists, and Eligibility Specialists are knowledgeable in a wide range of programs and resources and are trained to assist each client obtain the most beneficial program in addition to answering questions of the general public. They are the connection between those in need and programs available through the County and community.

In 2019, Sonoma County experienced record flooding and a disastrous fire that resulted in replacement benefits for thousands of CalFresh clients. During this time, Eligibility Specialists, Employment and Training Specialists, and Eligibility Workers worked tirelessly to address client needs and also responded to new applicants in need of services. Between January 2019 and November 2019, Eligibility Specialists, Employment and Training Specialists, and Eligibility Workers had face to face interactions with over 71,000 individuals from the community needing services at our various locations.

Employment and Training Specialists, in the Employment and Training Division, support families participating in the SonomaWORKs program, including those impacted by job and housing losses, by delivering services

designed to help lift individuals and families out of poverty by obtaining or improving skills for employment. Employment and Training Specialists are on the front line of keeping families sheltered. They help get SonomaWORKs families who are homeless, into emergency shelters including paying for motels, and they assist them with finding housing. Employment and Training Specialists also helped to link families to housing subsidies to permanently house 76 families in 2018-2019.

Eligibility Workers assigned to the Family, Youth and Children's Division determine Foster Care payment benefits and Medi-Cal for over 1,200 children in the Foster Care and Adoption systems and ensure that former foster care youth continue to receive Medi-Cal until they are 26 years old.

In our Economic Assistance Division, Eligibility Specialists provide Medi-Cal, CalFresh, County Medical Services Program and General Assistance benefits. During the annual open enrollment period and throughout the year; as a result of life changing events, these Specialists assist families with applications for subsidized insurance and selection of health insurance coverage available from Covered California. Between January 2019 and November 2019, Eligibility Specialists answered almost 46,000 calls from existing clients at the Economic Assistance Service Center. Currently there are over 103,000 Medi-Cal clients that are serviced by the Eligibility Specialists which equates to 1 in 4 people in Sonoma County receiving Medi-Cal through Human Services Eligibility Workers, Employment and Training Specialists, or Eligibility Specialists.

Eligibility Specialists work closely with the Adult and Aging Division's In-Home Supportive Services Social Workers to coordinate Medi-Cal benefits for over 3,000 seniors and residents with disabilities at risk for out-of-home placement.

Additionally, Eligibility Specialists in the Special Investigations Unit safeguard the integrity of the programs and services offered by the Human Services Department by providing quality assurance and opportunities for case work accuracy improvement.

Prior Board Actions:

Every January, the Board honors Eligibility Workers, Employment and Training Specialists, and Eligibility Specialists by designating the month of January as Eligibility Worker, Employment and Training and Eligibility Specialist Recognition Month.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 19-20 Adopted	FY20-21 Projected	FY 21-22 Projected
Budgeted Expenses			
Additional Appropriation Requested			
Total Expenditures	0	0	0
Funding Sources			
General Fund/WA GF			
State/Federal			
Fees/Other			
Use of Fund Balance			

Agenda Date: 1/14/2020

Contingencies			
Total Sources	0	0	0

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

N/A

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

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impacts (If Required):

N/A

Attachments:

Resolution

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

None