



Legislation Text

File #: 2022-0913, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

Department or Agency Name(s): Human Services

Staff Name and Phone Number: Paul Dunaway 565-3673, CB Wohl 565-5930

Vote Requirement: Majority

Supervisory District(s): Countywide

Recommended Action:

Adopt a resolution proclaiming September 18-24, 2022 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week in Sonoma County.

Executive Summary:

This Gold Resolution for Falls Prevention Awareness Week recognizes the serious concern of falls for older adults and brings awareness to fall prevention education.

Discussion:

National Falls Prevention Awareness Day this year is September 22. This day is observed annually on the first day of fall in an effort to promote and increase public awareness about how to prevent and reduce falls among older adults. To recognize the importance of this critical issue, the State of California established the first week of fall as Falls Prevention Awareness Week beginning in 2008. By proclaiming September 18-24, 2022 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week in Sonoma County, the Sonoma County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) will continue the national and statewide effort of increasing education and awareness about the importance of preventing older adults from falling, coupled with access to programs and services to reduce fall risk.

Each year, millions of older adults fall. More than one out of four older adults fall each year, but less than half tell their doctor. Falling once doubles one's chances of falling again.

Over 20% of falls cause a serious injury such as broken bones or a head injury. Three million older adults are treated annually in emergency departments for fall injuries and over 300,000 are hospitalized for hip fractures. Falls are the leading cause of injury-related death among older adults, with the age-adjusted death rate increasing 30% in the decade between 2009 and 2018. Approximately \$50 billion is spent on medical costs related to non-fatal fall injuries and the financial toll for older adult falls is expected to soar as the population ages. Medicare and Medicaid shoulders 75% of these costs.

40% of nursing home admissions are due to injuries related to falls, and 40% of those admitted never return to independent living. Even falls without injury can cause fear of falling again, leading to physical decline, depression, and social isolation. Research suggests that older adults underreport falls due to embarrassment, fear, or avoidance, and the word *fall* may carry its own stigma because falling implies weakness and frailty.

Many falls are absolutely preventable. Increased risk of injury or death and decreased independence may be mitigated by screening for fall risk and intervening to address risk factors such as poor strength and balance, limited physical activity due to fear of falling, use of medicines that may increase falls, and environmental

conditions such as clutter or poor lighting. In response to this need, the Sonoma County AAA provides “A Matter of Balance,” an evidence-based falls prevention program for older adults to improve their balance, strength, and flexibility, while also challenging fears of falling and developing assertiveness skills. In addition, the Sonoma County AAA launched its virtual “Fall Prevention and Better Balance” series in 2021 to allow older adults to have access to this vital information from the convenience of their own home. The Sonoma County AAA has also been granted additional funding to continue its participation in California’s “Dignity at Home Fall Prevention Program” that helps older adults and individuals with disabilities of all ages increase their awareness around fall risks, gain access to fall prevention goods and services, and empower them to live more fully and without fear.

Prior Board Actions:

September 17, 2019: Board approved Resolution #19-0381 proclaiming the week of September 23-29, 2019 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week.

September 11, 2018: Board approved Resolution #18-0368 proclaiming the week of September 22-28, 2018 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week.

September 19, 2017: Board approved Resolution #17-0348 proclaiming the week of September 22-28, 2017 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week.

September 13, 2016: Board approved Resolution #16-0345 proclaiming the week of September 22-28, 2016 as Falls Prevention Awareness Week.

September 15, 2015: Board approved Resolution #15-0360 proclaiming the week of September 21-27, 2015 as Fall Prevention Awareness Week.

September 16, 2014: Board approved Resolution #14-0360 proclaiming the week of September 23, 2014 as Fall Prevention Awareness Week.

September 10, 2013: Board approved Resolution # 13-0333 proclaiming the week of September 22, 2013 as Fall Prevention Awareness Week.

September 18, 2012: Board approved Resolution # 12-0441 proclaiming the week of September 22, 2012 as Fall Prevention Awareness Week.

September 20, 2011: Board approved Resolution # 11-0494 proclaiming the week of September 18, 2011 as Fall Prevention Awareness Week.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Expenditures	FY 22-23 Adopted	FY 23-24 Projected	FY 24-25 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			
Contingencies			
Total Sources	0	0	0

Narrative Explanation of Fiscal Impacts:

None

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:

Resolution

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

None