



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

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AGENDA ITEM

DATE: July 18, 2023

02

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT

AUTHORIZE REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS (RFSQ) AND AWARD CONTRACTS FROM THE RFSQ FOR TWO PROGRAMS: TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROGRAM PLUS FOR NON-MINOR DEPENDENTS AND FOSTER FAMILY AGENCIES (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

The County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Child and Family Well-Being Department (CFWB) strives to improve outcomes for youth entering adulthood from the foster care system through many initiatives including the Transitional Housing Program (THP) and Foster Family Agency (FFA) placements. THP is comprised of both the THP-Plus and the THP-Plus for Non-Minor Dependents (THPP-NMD). In 2008, through contracts with nonprofit entities, Child Welfare Services, now known as CFWB, implemented the THP-Plus program and expanded services in 2014 to include THPP-NMD to improve outcomes for youth entering adulthood from the foster care system and avoid homelessness. THPP-NMD services include providing safe homes, assistance in developing the skills needed for transitioning to independent living, and supportive services based on the NMD's needs and services plan as developed by the provider. The current contract for THPP-NMD housing is set to expire on December 31, 2023.

Additionally, CFWB partners with FFAs to recruit, approve, and train resource parents in addition to providing support, services, and oversight for foster care placements in their resource family homes. On November 9, 2010 (8) the San Diego County Board of Supervisors approved the Director of the Department of Purchasing and Contracting to issue Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ) for FFA providers and to award contracts as needed. Over the last decade, that authority has provided for the continued partnership with eight FFAs providing foster care services throughout San Diego County for dependent and probation youth. FFAs provide services to the youth and resource parents under the supervision of their agency to include extra social worker visits and supports as well as connections to services and resources. The current contracts with the eight FFA providers are set to expire on December 31, 2023.

Today's actions authorize RFSQs for the THPP-NMD and FFA programs and authorize awarding contracts from the RFSQs. Today's items support the County's vision of a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all, specifically for those communities and populations in San Diego County that have been historically disadvantaged and demonstrates an ongoing commitment to the

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regional *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities. This will be accomplished by enhancing the coordination of upstream prevention strategies and services between community resources and the child welfare system to ensure youth receive services and supports to secure and maintain a safe environment. In addition, this item supports the Framework for Ending Homelessness's strategic domain of Root Cause and Upstream Prevention by increasing equitable access to safe and affordable housing for current and former foster youth while maximizing racially equitable community outcomes and preventing youth homelessness.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

1. In accordance with Section 401, Article XXIII of County Administrative Code, authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting, to issue a Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ) for the Transitional Housing Program Plus – Non-Minor Dependent within San Diego County and re-release the RFSQ as needed, and upon successful negotiations and determination of fair and reasonable price, consistent with State Foster Care Rates Bureau requirements, award contracts as needed for a term of one year with four option years and up to an additional six months if needed, and to amend the contracts as needed to reflect changes in services and funding, subject to approval of the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency.
2. In accordance with Section 401, Article XXIII of County Administrative Code, authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing to issue a Request for Statement of Qualifications (RFSQ) for Foster Family Agencies within San Diego County and re-release the RFSQ as needed, and upon successful negotiations and determination of fair and reasonable price, consistent with State Foster Care Rates Bureau requirements, award contracts as needed for a term of one year with four option years and up to an additional six months if needed, and to amend the contracts as needed to reflect changes in services and funding, subject to approval of the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency, Child and Family Well-Being Department (CFWB) Transitional Housing Program (THP), inclusive of THP-Plus and THP-Plus Non-Minor Dependents (THPP-NMD), provides up to 36 cumulative months of subsidized housing for current and former foster youth ages 18-25 years (up to age 24 in prior fiscal years). The goal of THP is for participants and subgroups within, to include Black, Indigenous, People of Color, native Spanish speakers, and LGBTQ+ youth, to secure safe and stable housing by program graduation and make progress towards life goals, including educational attainment or employment achievement, physical and mental well-being, and connections to community. The ethnicity breakdown for youth served under the THPP-NMD in Fiscal Year 2021-22 includes:

- 30.9% African American
- 1.5% Asian

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- 21% Caucasian
- 36.8% Hispanic
- .7% Native American
- 4.4% Other Ethnicities/Unknown
- 4.8% Bi or Multi-Racial

To maximize racially equitable community outcomes, CFWB partners with nonprofit entities to provide housing opportunities and services in the six County service regions to ensure youth in underserved communities, communities of color, and communities with increased barriers to housing have greater opportunities and access to safe and affordable housing. CFWB relies on the community offering their homes to foster youth when relatives or non-related extended family members are not available. As of May 2023, there were 2,607 children and youth with an open case with CFWB, Office of Child Safety, of whom 1,852 reside in out-of-home placements. Among children in out-of-home placements, 162 children and youth reside in Foster Family Agency (FFA) homes. CFWB continues to engage with programs, FFA's, resource parents, youth, and providers to collect data and evaluate service outcomes to ensure the array of THP and foster care services and resources promote positive outcomes for youth transitioning to adulthood as well as help children and youth of all ages maintain safe and stable housing.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The proposed action to renew contracts to serve youth in foster care and former foster youth will further the County of San Diego's Sustainability Goal #2 of providing just and equitable access by expanding the availability of safe and stable housing for foster youth of all ages. Investments in concrete supports, such as resource homes and housing, reduces trauma and hardships on children and youth and contributes to efforts to support foster youth until they can safely and stably transition to permanency and/or independence. The Transitional Housing Program Plus – Non-Minor Dependents action will provide the supports needed for transitional age youth to build resilience, independence, and long-term skills which will lead to a reduction in youth homelessness and recurrence of generational maltreatment, and associated costs. When youth have assistance in meeting their basic needs, they can focus on self-healing and growth towards goals that support themselves and improve and sustain the health and well-being of youth (formerly) in foster care. The Foster Family Agency action will promote stability and permanency for children and youth. When children and youth have a safe and stable home to be placed in that can meet their needs for care and supervision, as well as any treatment needs, they can be successful in school, in development, and can transition into permanency, reducing the need for reliance on the foster care system.

FISCAL IMPACT

Recommendation #1: Authorization to Issue a Request for Statement of Qualifications for the Transitional Housing Program Plus - Non-Minor Dependents

Funds for this request are included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-25 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency. If approved, this request will result in estimated costs and revenue of \$6,310,000 in FY 2023-24 and estimated costs and revenue of \$6,310,000 in FY 2024-25. The

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funding source is Social Services Administrative Revenue and Realignment. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

Recommendation #2: Authorization to Issue a Request for Statement of Qualifications for Foster Family Agencies

Funds for this request are included in the FY 2023-25 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency. If approved, this request will result in estimated costs and revenue of \$8,000,000 in FY 2023-24 and estimated costs and revenue of \$8,000,000 in FY 2024-25. The funding source is Social Services Administrative Revenue and Realignment. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

The Child and Family Strengthening Advisory Board will be informed of this item on July 28, 2023.

BACKGROUND

The County of San Diego (County) Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA), Child and Family Well-Being Department (CFWB) strives to improve outcomes for youth in foster care and those entering adulthood from the foster care system through many initiatives including the Transitional Housing Program (THP) and Foster Family Agency (FFA) placements.

Recommendation #1: Authorization to Issue a Request for Statement of Qualifications for the Transitional Housing Program Plus - Non-Minor Dependents

California Assembly Bill (AB) 427 was signed into law in 2001 and established the Transitional Housing Program Plus (THP-Plus) to end homelessness for emancipated foster and probation youth. The program provided affordable housing and supportive services to former foster youth and out-of-home probation youth, ages 18 to 24 years for up to 24 months as they transition out of care.

Then, on September 30, 2010, AB 12 was signed into law and took effect on January 1, 2012. AB 12 created California's Extended Foster Care (EFC) Program, which allows eligible youth in the child welfare and probation systems to remain in foster care until age 21. Youth may leave EFC and later choose to re-enter the program up to age 21. AB 12 also created the Transitional Housing Program Plus Non-Minor Dependents (THPP-NMD) to provide additional foster care placement options for NMDs ages 18 to 21 years participating in EFC.

More recently, California Senate Bill 154 and the Budget Acts of 2021 (AB 153 and AB 164), changed the THP-Plus upper age limit from 18 to 24 years to 18 to 25 years and maximum program duration from 24 months to 36 months to allow youth access to the program for an additional year. Additionally, the acts created and funded the THP-Plus Housing Supplement Allocation which

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increased the housing assistance rate allowing CFWB to provide an additional \$900 of housing assistance per month per youth in the program (January 24, 2023 (5)).

On October 13, 2015 (6), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) authorized the procurement for Request for Statements of Qualification (RFSQ) for THP-Plus and THPP-NMD. Since 2008, through contracts with nonprofits, Child Welfare Services, now known as CFWB, provides various THP for current and former foster youth ages 18-25 years. THPP-NMD participants receive services and supports including subsidized housing, intensive case management and employment and education assistance. Housing navigator activities such as assistance with identifying realistic, safe, and stable housing options, and obtaining financial resources necessary to apply for and move-in to housing are also provided and help strengthen THP for youth. The current contracts are set to expire on December 31, 2023.

In Fiscal Year 2021-22, of those youth served in THPP-NMD, 91% of youth successfully exited the program into safe and sustainable housing, 92% successfully completed an education or vocational training program, and 94% of youth established a permanent relationship with a safe and supportive adult by program exit. The goals for participating youth are to maintain a safe environment and advance their goal of self-sufficiency.

Recommendation #2: Authorization to Issue a Request for Statement of Qualifications for Foster Family Agencies

The approximately 2,500 San Diego County children ages 0-21 who are currently in protective custody are served in a variety of placements. While many reside with relatives or in community resource family homes approved by the County, nearly 160 County dependents reside in FFA homes. On November 9, 2010 (8) the Board approved the Director of the Department of Purchasing and Contracting to issue a RFSQ for FFA providers and to award contracts as needed. At the present time, CFWB has contracts with eight FFA programs located within San Diego County. These agencies recruit, screen, train, and approve resource parents who provide safe homes for County youth. The agencies also offer professional services including educational support, assistance with family visitation, behavioral health treatment, crisis intervention, and respite care. The current contracts with the eight FFA providers are set to expire on December 31, 2023. FFAs are a vital partner with CFWB to providing extra support and resources to caregivers and youth who have needs that may go beyond the provision of services and supports provided in community resource family homes. Through participating in the RFSQ process FFAs will be able to participate in the Children's Crisis Continuum Pilot Program, which will also be presented to the Board on July 18, 2023.

Today's actions authorize RFSQs for the THPP-NMD and FFA programs and authorize awarding contracts from the RFSQ. This item supports the Framework for Ending Homelessness's strategic domain of Root Cause and Upstream Prevention by increasing equitable access to safe and affordable housing for current and former foster youth while maximizing racially equitable community outcomes and preventing youth homelessness.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's proposed actions support the Sustainability (Economy and Resiliency), Equity (Housing and Economic Opportunity), and Community (Engagement, Quality of Life, Communications, and Partnership) initiatives in the County of San Diego's 2023-2028 Strategic Plan by providing equitable opportunities for all ages of youth to receive services and supports to secure and maintain a safe environment while working to achieve permanency.

Respectfully submitted,



HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER
Interim Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

N/A