



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 8/30/2022

File #: 22-1045

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Social Services

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding for the California Department of Social Services Work Number Express Service Agreement

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the attached Memorandum of Understanding with the California Department of Social Services regarding participation in the Work Number Express (TALX Corporation) Service Agreement;
2. Grant a waiver of the Nuclear Free Ordinance;
3. Authorize the Board Chair to execute four originals of the Memorandum of Understanding, and;
4. Direct the Clerk of the Board to return three fully executed original copies of the attached Memorandum of Understanding with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to the DHHS-Contract Unit for forwarding to DHHS-Social Services.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Social Services Fund 1160

DISCUSSION:

The Work Number (WN) Express Service by the Equifax subsidiary TALX is an online employment and income verification system based on Social Security Numbers (SSN) which became available to all 58 California counties in a pilot program starting Jan. 1, 2015. The Board of Supervisors approved participation in the pilot program on Sept. 9, 2014 (item C-7), renewed the program on Feb. 23, 2016 (item C-13), and authorized an amendment to the MOU on Oct. 10, 2017 (item C-5). Social Services has been successfully utilizing the services since the initial agreement was approved. WN remains the largest source for past and/or current employment and wage verification in the country. CDSS has entered into a Universal Membership Agreement with TALX to continue to provide WN services statewide. CDSS is providing access to each county that chooses to participate and submits the signed amendment to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) until terminated by either party.

The program has been providing quick access to an industry standard verification system that allows

designated Social Services staff to log into a secure website and retrieve information instantly. The WN service then provides critical employment verification data such as employee earnings and hours worked in accordance with the California Work Verification Plan approved by the federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on Oct. 8, 2008. Without access to the WN data, Social Services has no other method of verification for employment or income other than the information provided by the client.

This program has proven to be a benefit to clients who have difficulty obtaining employment verification. An increasing number of businesses utilize WN for employment verification and do not provide this information any other way. The inability to otherwise verify employment or income data leaves open the possibility that benefits are being paid out incorrectly. The WN will continue to have limited availability; only staff that have been given access and who have computers that have been encrypted are able to access the service.

The attached MOU is provided by CDSS as part of its Universal Membership Agreement with TALX and cannot be altered or amended. Therefore, Social Services is requesting that the Board approve a waiver to exclude the Nuclear Free Humboldt Ordinance language.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding for participation in the California Department of Social Services Work Number Express Service Agreement will not increase or decrease the approved county budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23. There are no associated costs to the county.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by protecting vulnerable populations.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California Department of Social Services

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to approve the MOU or allow the Chair to sign the MOU, however this alternative is not recommended as it will cause Social Services to lose its access to independently verify employment and income information in compliance with the state's Work Verification Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Memorandum of Understanding (four originals)
2. All County Welfare Directors Letter dated July 6, 2022
3. MSA Number 5-22-70-29
4. Attachment 4: Vermont Fair Credit Reporting Contract Certification

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-7; C-13; C-5
Meeting of: 9/9/14; 2/23/16; 10/10/17
File No.: 14-0766; 16-0237; 17-2452

