



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/14/2023

File #: 22-1750

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Behavioral Health

Agenda Section: Consent

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Hospital and Skilled Nursing Facility COVID-19 Worker Retention Payments Application for Department of Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Sempervirens Employees

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to apply for and receive Hospital and Skilled Nursing Facility COVID-19 Worker Retention Payment (WRP) funds from the Department of Health Care Services; and,
2. Authorize DHHS to receive funds if awarded; and,
3. Authorize DHHS and Humboldt County Payroll to work together to ensure payments are issued to all eligible staff if the application for WRP funds is successful.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Behavioral Health Fund - 1170424

DISCUSSION:

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is making one-time worker retention payment funding available to qualifying entities to issue payments to eligible individuals. Workers and physicians in qualifying facilities will be eligible to receive a retention payment if they:

Were employed at least part-time during the qualifying work period of July 30, 2022 through Oct. 28, 2022; and,

Are employed by Covered Entities (CEs) or Covered Services Employers (CSEs) or who is a physician who continues to provide onsite services as of the date of record, Nov. 28, 2022.

The Psychiatric Health Facility run by DHHS, Sempervirens, qualifies as a CE because it is classified as an acute psychiatric hospital as defined by Health and Safety Code section 1250(b).

For staff to be considered an eligible part-time employee, they must work onsite at a qualifying facility for a single CE and be paid for working at the facility between 100 and 399 hours, or at least 400 hours

to be considered an eligible full-time employee during the qualifying work period listed above. Staff may be eligible to receive the following retention payments:

For an eligible full-time employee, the state payment amount will be up to \$1,000.

For an eligible part-time employee, the state payment amount will be up to \$750.

The proposed payments above may be reduced by DHCS based on the number of applications it receives. DHCS anticipates informing successful applicants in February and disbursing funds after that.

DHHS-BH has reviewed payroll records and determined that approximately 21 DHHS-BH staff would be potentially eligible to these incentive payments. Maintaining a qualified workforce at Sempervirens through the pandemic and health worker shortage has been challenging and this opportunity is a concrete way for DHHS-BH to express appreciation to staff who have worked at Sempervirens.

Accordingly, DHHS recommends that the Board of Supervisors authorize DHHS to request and distribute Hospital and Skilled Nursing Facility COVID-19 Worker Retention Payment (“WRP”) funds from the Department of Health Care Services and distribute the funds to eligible staff.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Narrative Explanation of Financial Impact:

California Department of Healthcare Services will determine final distribution of funds on the basis of validated number of applicants. DHHS-Behavioral Health estimates Worker Retention Payments to be distributed to qualified workforce to total \$19,750, not to exceed revenues received. Approved FY 2022-23 DHHS-Behavioral Health Administration budget unit 1170424 has sufficient appropriation in Salary and Wages expenditure category to accommodate the WRP payments to eligible staff.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Narrative Explanation of Staffing Impact:

Staff from Auditor-Controller’s Office - Payroll Division and DHHS will need to work together to identify the employees who may be entitled to the payments detailed in this agenda item.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board’s Strategic Framework by investing in county employees.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California Department of Health Care Services

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to authorize DHHS to apply for and accept Hospital and Skilled Nursing Facility COVID-19 Worker Retention Payment (WRP) funds, however this alternative is not recommended as it will prevent approximately 21 staff from receiving compensation to which they would otherwise be eligible.

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ATTACHMENTS:

None

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A