



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 1/14/2020

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File #: 19-1748

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** DHHS: Administration

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**SUBJECT:**

Allocation of 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent Program Manager II, 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent Limited Duration Program Manager II and 1.0 Full-Time Equivalent Limited Duration Deputy Branch Director for Department of Health and Human Services Child Welfare Services

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve and authorize for Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to recruit and hire regular and limited duration positions as follows:
  - a. Two (2.0) full-time equivalent (FTE), one (1.0) regular and one (1.0) limited duration Merit System Services (MSS) Program Manager II (class 0750, salary range 515, M/C unit 08) in budget unit (BU) 508; and
  - b. One (1.0) FTE, limited duration Deputy Branch Director (class 0931, salary range 539, M/C unit 08) in BU 508

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

Social Services Fund

**DISCUSSION:**

In 2015 the California Office of the Attorney General (AG) began an investigation into the Department of Health and Human Services - Child Welfare Services (DHHS-CWS) that identified numerous systemic issues. In 2017, DHHS entered into a settlement agreement with the Attorney General stipulating numerous system improvements. Post settlement, DHHS-CWS has been subject to high expectations, tight deadlines and rigorous monitoring.

Settlement requirements include developing, publicizing and administering a complaint program; implementing and maintaining a tracking tool and cross-reporting system; staffing the abuse reporting hotline 24-hours a day, seven days a week; revising numerous policies and procedures and training programs; completing the backlog of outstanding investigations, improving collaboration with Humboldt County Tribes, improving outcomes for Tribal children in Humboldt County; and using data management strategies to identify and analyze problems to implement, monitor and evaluate informed

improvements to increase child safety and wellbeing outcomes. Additionally, DHHS-CWS is required to contract with the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) for consultation services and technical assistance to provide staff training and development; assistance to design and implement a workload study; design and implement Continuous Quality Improvement programing; and integrate Tribal needs into system improvements.

In an initial response to increasing caseloads, the Attorney General Settlement and new statewide mandates and reforms affecting all CWS program areas, DHHS - CWS added additional positions in 2018. This consisted of four (4.0) FTE Social Worker Supervisor II, thirteen (13.0) Social Worker IV-A/B/C/D and twelve (12.0) Social Worker I/II/III. It is anticipated the pending workload study will, upon completion, require further staffing increases.

DHHS-CWS has identified organizational gaps that resulted in the major system failures highlighted through the AG investigation. To ensure compliance as well as sustainability of required AG related system improvements, DHHS-CWS is implementing three new major programs: Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) services, Workforce Development and Training, and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). When fully developed and staffed, each of these programs will directly address the AG settlement requirements and ensure the sustained implementation of system improvements.

ICWA program: ICWA is a landmark piece of legislation designed to protect vulnerable Native American children and their families and was a sincere effort to reverse the impacts of historical and systematic discrimination, inequity and trauma experienced by Tribal communities through governmental intervention. Compliance with ICWA's provisions has been inconsistent both nationally and in Humboldt County, and this has been highlighted in the AG investigative findings. DHHS-CWS has a highly disproportionate number of Native American children and families in open cases. Thirty-six percent (36%) of the 729 cases open today involve Native American children. Currently these cases are spread across numerous units, programs, staff, supervisors and managers. This lack of programmatic focus makes communication and systematic improvement implementation, monitoring, evaluation and accountability measures inconsistent and difficult to manage. The implementation of an ICWA program has been requested by most Tribal Child Welfare Directors in Humboldt County. This implementation will improve communication and collaboration by streamlining services and providing consistent training, oversight, evaluation, outcomes and accountability for ICWA compliance and Tribal collaboration.

Work Force Development and Training program

DHHS-CWS anticipates hiring three (3) cohorts of 15-20 new employees per year. The AG investigation as well as feedback from staff, community and Tribal stakeholders regularly identifies staff training and retention as critical to ensuring child safety, staff morale and effective and efficient agency functioning. Through enhanced partnership with the University of California, Davis training academy, National Indian Child Welfare Association, Chabot-Las Positas Title IV-E CWS training project, Humboldt State University, local Tribal and community experts and others, DHHS-CWS is committed to building a high quality onboarding, as well as on-going Workforce Development and Training program. This program will be directly linked to CQI and will meet the needs of a growing workforce including specific training resources and evaluation strategies to support the development

and ongoing functioning of and ICWA program.

CQI program

CQI is a developing body of work across California that is supported and encouraged by the California Department of Social Services. CQI is the complete process of identifying, describing, and analyzing strengths and problems and then testing, implementing, learning from, and revising solutions. CQI is firmly grounded in the overall mission, vision, and values of the DHHS and the County of Humboldt. It utilizes rigorous analytical research methods and relies on an organizational and/or system culture that is proactive and supports continuous learning. CQI will provide the mechanism through which problems in CWS are identified and effective solutions are implemented and sustained over time.

DHHS-CWS will monitor the limited duration positions for continued need on a regular basis.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The costs associated with the addition of 3.0 FTEs, starting in March 2020, is estimated to be \$129,077 for the remaining nine pay periods of the 2019-20 Fiscal Year. These positions will be funded by Social Services revenues Federal Title IV-E, Title XIX, Realignment and already approved Fiscal Year 2019-20 county General Fund. These positions will be allocated to Fund 1160, Budget Unit 508. There is sufficient appropriation in Social Services Child Welfare Services Budget Unit 1160-508 due to funded vacant positions for these additional positions. There will be no impact to the county General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by providing for and maintaining infrastructure and providing community-appropriate levels of service and protecting vulnerable populations.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Merit Systems Services  
Human Resources

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to approve the requested position allocations. However, this alternative is not recommended since it will not allow DHHS-CWS to comply with terms of the Attorney General agreement.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Classification Review Request - HR
2. Classification Review Request Program Manager- MSS
3. Classification Review Request Deputy Director- MSS

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A  
Meeting of: N/A  
File No.: N/A

