



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Legislation Text

File #: 19-905, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Social Services

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Agreement with 2-1-1 Humboldt Information and Resource Center to Assist with CalFresh Outreach and Support Activities

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Chair of the Board to execute, the attached agreement with 2-1-1 Humboldt Information and Resource Center to assist the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to increase utilization of CalFresh benefits by eligible households in an amount not to exceed \$65,000.00; and
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to route the fully executed agreement to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)-Contract Unit for forwarding to DHHS-Social Services Administration.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Social Services Fund 1160

DISCUSSION:

2-1-1 Humboldt Information and Resource Center's (2-1-1) mission is to empower communities by helping members identify, navigate and connect with vital resources that improve their lives. One way 2-1-1 does this is by connecting families and individuals to CalFresh; this allows them greater access to nutritional food options which are essential to physical and mental stability. 2-1-1 has partnered with DHHS on CalFresh Outreach over the past 4 years by integrating CalFresh Outreach into every 2-1-1 client contact as part of Humboldt Community Access and Resource Centers (HCAR). 2-1-1 is now operating as their own separate 501(c)(3) in a separate location. This site now allows for in-person contact and referrals to be made, in addition to their primary phone services. Community members who call 2-1-1 are screened for potential CalFresh eligibility and then directed to an assistor in their own community to assist them in obtaining CalFresh benefits. Last year 2-1-1 received over 10,000 calls in which CalFresh was discussed and referrals were made.

2-1-1 operates as a 24-hour a day, 7-day a week information and referral center which allows them to assist those callers who are not able to reach out for information from 8:00am to 5:00pm, as well as those in the more rural areas of the County. 2-1-1 provides resources for all basic human needs including food, shelter and security to families and individuals in crisis caused by loss of employment or housing, medical conditions or other factors that provide barriers to meeting their basic needs. By making a single call to 2-1-1, community members and service providers can get connected to a wide variety of resources that can assist them. 2-1-1 will be expanding their outreach efforts this year through continuing to operate an emergency food pantry for weekends and evenings to assist in food security for persons in immediate need when Social Services and food pantry locations are closed. Additionally they will be including Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP) recipients in their population of CalFresh referrals, which will help the county successfully implement the policy change occurring on June 1, 2019, which allows for SSI/SSP recipients to apply for this important food assistance for the first time since 1974.

With the execution of this agreement, Humboldt Community Access and Resource Centers will assist DHHS in increasing CalFresh utilization by eligible households and thereby promote a safe, healthy, economically vibrant community. Outreach and enrollment raises awareness of the nutrition benefits of the CalFresh program, promotes healthy food choices, reduces hunger in seniors and children, and helps to dispel program myths and misperceptions.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) administers all United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funds. Focusing on the important role SNAP plays in access to nutrition and the relation of nutrition to overall wellness, CDSS renamed and re-branded food stamps as CalFresh in California. Beyond the name and image changes, CDSS also made significant program changes to increase CalFresh use by reducing enrollment and retention barriers. Many low-income individuals and families are not aware of and do not apply for CalFresh benefits, and many others are not aware of the program changes that could make it easier for them to receive and continue CalFresh benefits.

USDA and CDSS continue to encourage counties to work with community partners to help reach and inform community members who might be eligible for CalFresh benefits. Partnering with community based organizations is not only consistent with DHHS's general approach and strategic plan; it is key to DHHS's goal of providing integrated, place-based and holistic services.

Therefore, DHHS recommends that the Board approves and authorizes the Chair to execute this agreement, and directs the Clerk of the Board to return two executed originals of the agreement to the DHHS-Social Services Administration.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The costs associated with this agreement have been budgeted in the approved fiscal year 2019-20 budget in fund 1160, budget unit 511 in the amount of \$48,750, and the remainder of \$16,250 will be included in the fiscal year 2020-21 county budget. CalFresh and SNAP programs are federally funded and there will be no impact to the county General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved safety and health and protecting vulnerable populations.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board can choose not to approve the agreement for CalFresh Outreach and Support activities with 2-1-1 Humboldt Information and Resource Center. This is not recommended as the Department of Health and Human Services asserts this funding is important to the goal of increasing CalFresh participation and thereby improving the health and economic stability of children, families and other individuals in Humboldt County.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Agreement with 2-1-1 Humboldt Information and Resource Center to Assist with CalFresh Outreach and Support Activities

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-14; C-10

Meeting of: 10/17/17; 9/25/18

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