



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Legislation Text

File #: 18-1200, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Social Services

SUBJECT:

Agreement with the Humboldt County Office of Education to Assist with CalFresh Outreach and Support Activities

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors approve the agreement with the Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE) to assist the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) increase utilization of CalFresh benefits by eligible households in an amount not to exceed \$331,150.00; authorize the Chair to execute three (3) originals of the agreement (Attachment 1); and direct the Clerk of the Board to route two (2) fully executed originals of the agreement to the DHHS-Contract Unit for forwarding to DHHS-Social Services Administration.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Social Services Fund 1160

DISCUSSION:

The Humboldt County Office of Education (HCOE) provides collaboration, management, and support to 32 school districts serving approximately 18,000 students. HCOE maintains fiscal oversight over all of the school districts and offers close to 90% of all the staff development and training. Additionally, HCOE provides direct services in the areas of nursing, psychological and behavior health services, nutrition education and school food service as well as a variety of other mandated services that smaller more rural school districts are unable to access within their district or community. Of the approximate 18,000 students enrolled in Humboldt County schools, nearly 54% qualify for free or reduced price meals.

HCOE has an ongoing partnership with DHHS for the development and maintenance of a direct certification data system. This confidential data system allows districts to directly certify children at the free meal category who come from families receiving CalFresh benefits. The creation of this data system utilizes the expertise of both parties, helps streamline the free and reduced price meal process, eliminates the need for qualifying families to complete a school meal application, and creates efficiencies overall. With this Agreement, the relationship will be expanded to link promotion of CalFresh enrollment with promotion of free and reduced school meals. Increasing the number of students receiving CalFresh benefits provides an added benefit to our community by positioning local schools to participate in the USDA Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program. CEP is a new federal program that enables schools with high direct certification percentages to serve breakfast and lunch to all students at no charge regardless of their family income level. Nine schools have been approved in Humboldt County to operate the CEP program for 2018-19, including six schools in the Eureka City School District.

HCOE also conducts CalFresh outreach to parents with children in after-school programs and through an innovative Family Meal Markets program. HCOE also continues to do outreach to preschools and in other parent education settings.

Through the CalFresh outreach partnership HCOE will continue to focus on improving infrastructure and capacity-building of school food service for increasing access to healthy meals by maintaining the networking opportunities, offering additional trainings, and providing technical assistance and resources.

With the execution of this agreement, HCOE 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 have encouraged 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 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 copies of the agreement to DHHS-Social Services Administration.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The costs associated with this agreement have been budgeted in the approved fiscal year 2018-19 budget in fund 1160, Budget Unit 511 in the amount of \$248,362.50 and the remainder of \$82,787.50 will be included in the 2019-2020 fiscal year county budget. There will be no impact to the County General Fund.

Approving this agreement supports the Board's Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved health and safety, 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 HCOE. This is not recommended as the DHHS 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 Humboldt County Office of Education

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-25; C-8; C-7

Meeting of: 6/25/13; 10/13/15; 9/6/16