



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

Legislation Text

File #: 19-1083, **Version:** 1

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Social Services

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Agreement with The Betty Kwan Chinn Homeless Foundation to Assist with CalFresh Outreach and Support Activities

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve the agreement with The Betty Kwan Chinn Homeless Foundation 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 \$99,854;
2. Authorize the Chair to execute three originals of the agreement (Attachment 1); and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to route two 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 - CalFresh Funding

DISCUSSION:

The Betty Kwan Chinn Homeless Foundation (BKCHF) provides emergency day shelter for homeless adults and children, transitional housing for adult residents who obtain work experience assisting with Day Center operations, and comprehensive support services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Services BKCHF administer include case management, housing search assistance, employment readiness training, life skills coaching, benefit enrollment assistance, after-school and summer youth program to support safety and academic achievement, phones and computers for client use, and mail services. BKCHF has partnered with DHHS on CalFresh Outreach over the past 7 years by integrating CalFresh Outreach and application assistance into all BKCHF programs and client contacts. The mission of BKCHF is to honor all of humanity by providing direct responses to immediate needs and helping the destitute achieve the dignity needed to return to society as contributing members.

Individuals who are homeless face some of the most significant barriers to accessing and using public

benefits. BKCHF focuses primarily on reaching individuals who are homeless or at great risk of homelessness and helping overcome barriers in understanding and obtaining benefits. According to our most recent data (February 2019) the estimated participation rate of CalFresh households is 65.20% in Humboldt County which is higher than the statewide average of 58.32%. This shows the success of our local community partners, like BKCHF, in their CalFresh Outreach activities.

With the execution of this agreement, The Betty Kwan Chinn Homeless Foundation 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 DHHSs general approach and strategic plan; it is key to DHHSs goal of providing integrated, place-based, and holistic services.

Program changes have increased the number of Humboldt County residents now eligible for nutrition assistance. These factors, internal changes, and outreach partnerships with community-based organizations have led to a significant increase in CalFresh enrollment within the county and throughout the state and nation. Approving this Agreement supports the Board's Strategic Framework by creating opportunities for improved health and safety, and protecting vulnerable populations.

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 \$74,890.50 and the remainder of \$24,963.50 will be included in the 2020-2021 fiscal year county budget. Funding for this contract is provided by CalFresh, which is funded through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program U.S. Department of Agriculture. 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 The Betty Kwan Chinn Homeless Foundation. 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:

Attachment 1: Agreement with The Betty Kwan Chinn Homeless Foundation

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-12; C-15

Meeting of: 10/17/17; 10/16/18

File No.: N/A