

ALAMEDA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Monday, January 27, 2025
2:30 p.m.

Supervisor Nate Miley, Chair
Supervisor Lena Tam

Location: Susan M. Muranishi County
Administration Building
1221 Oak Street
Oakland, CA 94612

Summary/Action Minutes

I. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Refugee Assistance & Supportive Services Resettlement Agencies' Funding Request Update

[Attachment](#)

Presenters

Andrea Ford, Director, Social Services Agency; Shane Rogge, Program Services Coordinator, Department of Workforce and Benefits Administration; and Rahman Zamani, Department of Workforce and Benefits Administration

Summary

SSA provided an update on the funding request submitted by Alameda County's three refugee resettlement agencies for unmet housing, transportation, and case management needs related to newly arrived refugees. The resettlement agencies requested \$4,068,670 to support projected arrivals through September 30, 2025, with services intended to cover 4–6 months of basic needs support for 1,320 scheduled arrivals.

Projected arrivals and associated funding requests include:

- 850 arrivals supported by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) – Oakland, requesting \$2,358,075
- 370 arrivals supported by Jewish Family & Community Services (JFCS) – East Bay, requesting \$1,007,850
- 100 arrivals supported by Jewish Family Services (JFS) – Silicon Valley, requesting \$702,745

This \$4 million request is revised from the initial request of \$2,186,404 in February 2024, which covered housing, transportation, employment services, and case management for up to 3 months. The revised request reflects:

- A shift to a 4–6 month support window, due to ongoing housing instability and high rental costs
- Inclusion of case management tied to stabilization and retention activities
- Continued need for transportation support to connect arrivals to schooling, health services, and employment

The updated combined funding request for scheduled arrivals only remains \$4,068,670 for housing, transportation, and case management for up to 4–6 months. A reduced scenario for up to 3 months of needs support would total \$3,012,147.

Purpose:

- Report progress**
- Advocacy or Education**
- Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

Speakers

Mitch Margolis, Director, International Rescue Committee in Oakland; Robin Mentor, CEO, Jewish Family and Community Services; and Tara Winter, Executive Director, International Rescue Committee provided more insight on Refugee Assistance & Supportive Services Resettlement Agencies' Funding Request Update.

Committee Feedback

Supervisor Miley recognized the update on refugee assistance and supportive services as a crisis that should be actioned.

Action

The Social Services Committee recommended that the Social Services Agency request the Board of Supervisors, at the February 4, 2025, Board of Supervisors Meeting, to direct the county administrator to work with county agencies to come up with \$800,000 to provide crisis support over the next 90 days.

II. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Department of Children and Family Services, Alameda County's System Improvement Plan (SIP)

Attachment

Presenters

Michelle Love, Assistant Agency Director, Department of Children and Family Services and Budd Seeley, Management Analyst, Department of Children and Family Services

Summary

To provide background, a System Improvement Plan (SIP) is part of the California Child and Family Services Review (C-CCSR) process. A C-CCSR starts with a County Self-Assessment and Peer Review (CSA) in which the Social Services Agency, Department of Children and Family Services conducts a comprehensive assessment of the local child welfare system to produce qualitative and quantitative data. A five-year SIP is created from the results of the CSA. Finally, annual reports on the status of the implementation of the SIP is provided to the state.

Key findings from latest CSA:

- Children and youth who experience maltreatment are more likely to be under 5-years-old and Black or Latino
- General neglect is the most common form of maltreatment
- Reentry into services is usually due to parent conflict, parent-teen conflict, and housing insecurity
- Parent advocates are highlighted as a big help for parents in the system to help them make use of services provided.
- There is a strong pool of resource parents, but many are outside of the county, so there is a strong need for more local resource parents.
- There is a shortage in staff and high caseloads, causing a lot of stress within the system.

Priorities for the System Improvement Plan from these findings include:

- Increasing the knowledge of permanency options and planning among staff, families, and youth
- Improving permanent connections for youth in foster care with relatives/fictive kin
- Increasing the percentage of youth who exit from foster care to legal permanency
- Enhancing timeliness of investigations of abuse and neglect referrals, reducing delays in both immediate and 10-day response windows.
- Strengthening Family Finding and Engagement (FFE) through community provider partnerships and training
- Developing clear policies and guides to support permanency decisions and improve front-end screening protocols

Purpose

- Report progress**
 Advocacy or Education
 Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
 Other:

Speakers

There were no speakers on this item.

Committee Feedback

There was no Committee feedback on this item.

Action

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

III. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Findings and Recommendations for the Alameda County Assessment Center by the California Department of Social Services

[Attachment](#)

Presenters

Andrea Ford, Director, Social Services Agency and Michelle Love, Assistant Agency Director, Department of Children and Family Services

Summary

On October 23, 2023, then Alameda County Board of Supervisors' Present Nate Miley requested a review of the Alameda County Assessment Center (AC) by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). President Miley wanted an assessment of practices and suggested improvements to better serve children and youth, especially those with complex needs.

The assessment by CDSS included a site visit on January 18, 2024, one-on-one interviews with staff, focus group interviews with line staff, supervisors, and leadership, and a review of electronic records for twenty-six youth placed at The Assessment Center from September 1 to November 30, 2023, that had overstays and more than one stay during that period.

The findings demonstrate:

- Effort to move youth out of the AC within three days with the goal of reducing overstays and frequent stays
- Determination to place siblings together
- Child Family Team (CFT) meetings occurred for 78% of youth within the review period
- Transition planning led to 61% of youth having an identified home-based caregiver
- Higher-than-state average number of youth having their first placement with a relative
- Lack of immediate placements for complex needs youth
- Youth with complex needs have a higher rate of placement disruption
- 40% vacancy rate in staffing

Purpose

- Report progress**
 Advocacy or Education
 Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
 Other:

Speakers

Dion Eriner commented on this item.

Committee Feedback

Supervisor Miley suggested that the Health and Social Services have a joint committee meeting to get an update from all county agencies that are stakeholders in the Assessment Center and stressed the

importance that the functioning of the Assessment Center is a collective responsibility, not just Social Services Agency's responsibility. Supervisor Tam suggested that instead of the joint committee meeting that they could add this to a Board Work Session instead.

Action

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

IV. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: Net Growth Movement Guaranteed Income Pilot Update

Attachment

Presenters

Michelle Love, Assistant Agency Director, Department of Children and Family Services

Summary

The Net Growth Movement Guaranteed Income Pilot program was developed by former foster youth to create support networks for former foster youth to address obstacles after being a fostered youth. The program addresses issues of and to debt, self-doubt, self-discovery, housing, education, and employment skills that are specific to former foster youth. The program is implemented by Bay Area Community Services (BACS).

The pilot of this program served a cohort of 67 former non-minor dependents who exited the system in 2022 or would have exited in 2022. Participants received stipends from January 2023 to December 2024.

Additionally, there was a budget modification from SSA that allowed participants to receive a savings match up to \$5,000 or if participants paid any money towards credit debt then SSA matched the amount they paid up to \$5,000.

- 54 of 67 participants received some form of the match with the average dollar amount being \$1,748.92.
 - 10 of 54 that received some form of the match received the full \$5,000 match.
- Participants were encouraged to use savings as a "rainy day" fund after the conclusion of the program.
- For clients who could not save, they were provided with a \$100 stipend to participate in financial literacy workshops and a financial literacy mentorship series.

Additional funding for the program came from philanthropic efforts organized by BACS. Notable donations:

- \$100,000 from Hellman Foundation
- \$100,000 from Waler & Elise Foundation
- \$40,000 from Wells Fargo Foundation
- \$5,000 from Citibank

Participant Demographic:

- 54% African American
- 28% Caucasian
- 11% Other
- 6% Asian American
- 1% Native American
- 60% Male
- 39% Female

- 1% Non-Binary

Post-Program Review

- The program was created with the assumption that former foster youth were lacking in support and that former foster youth would voluntarily maintain regular contact and want to participate in support groups.
 - After nine months of the program pilot, the program design had to change to require monthly contact to receive checks.
 - There was limited interest in support dinners and groups.
- A formal evaluation is being conducted by the University of Chicago, Chapin Hall. The evaluation plan will include surveys and interviews.

Purpose

- Report progress**
- Advocacy or Education
- Request Social Services Committee Recommendation or Position
- Other:

Speakers

There were no speakers on this item.

Committee Feedback

Supervisor Miley is interested in receiving the formal evaluation results.

Action

This item was informational only and required no Committee action.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

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