



Board Agenda Item 86

DATE: June 20, 2023
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBMITTED BY: Sanja Bugay, Director, Department of Social Services
SUBJECT: Amendments to Homeless Services Agreements

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute Amendment No. 2 to Agreement with WestCare California, Inc., for homeless diversion services, extending the term by seven months from December 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 and increasing the maximum by \$257,950 to a total of \$2,261,950; and,**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute Amendment No. 1 to Agreement with RH Community Builders for landlord engagement and risk mitigation fund services, exercising the 12-month optional extension from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 and increasing the maximum by \$122,401 to a total of \$1,215,736.**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. Approval of the recommended actions will enable the Department of Social Services to add Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) funding to extend homeless diversion services (diversion) and landlord engagement and risk mitigation fund services (landlord engagement and risk mitigation) in Fresno and Madera counties. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Should your Board elect not to approve the recommended actions, the diversion agreement will expire November 30, 2023 and the landlord engagement and risk mitigation agreement will expire June 30, 2023, leaving Fresno and Madera counties' homeless population without access to services designed to be part of the path from homelessness to permanent housing stability. Additionally, the County will be out of compliance with the HHAP joint service plan developed in coordination with the regional HHAP recipient jurisdictions and submitted to the State as part of the HHAP applications.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The maximum amount of the agreement with WestCare California, Inc. (WestCare) for diversion (\$2,261,950) will be fully offset with Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP), California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH), and HHAP funding. The maximum amount of the agreement with RH Community Builders for landlord engagement and risk mitigation (\$1,215,736) will be fully offset with California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Housing Support Program (HSP), CESH, and HHAP funding. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues will be included in the Department's Org 5610 FY 2023-24 Recommended Budget.

DISCUSSION:

On June 4, 2019, your Board approved Agreement No. 19-259 with WestCare for diversion services. On December 10, 2019, your Board approved Agreement No. 19-743 with RH Community Builders for landlord engagement and risk mitigation services. These services were part of the joint City of Fresno, County and Fresno Madera Continuum of Care (FMCoC) HEAP and CESH plans.

On November 16, 2021, your Board approved Amendment 1 with WestCare to extend diversion services through November 30, 2023, in alignment with the joint HHAP service plan. On June 21, 2022, your Board approved the local homelessness action plan, including the use of HHAP-3 funds to address homelessness in the FMCoC service area.

On June 24, 2023, your Board approved and authorized the Chairman to execute an Agreement with the California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency (BCSH) on behalf of the County of Fresno and the FMCoC to receive HHAP-3 funding.

WestCare diversion services engage households at the front door of triage emergency shelters and across the entire homeless response system to immediately address the needs of newly homeless individuals or those at risk of homelessness. Individuals are diverted from entering emergency shelter or sleeping in places not meant for human habitation and are connected to permanent housing solutions through the identification of immediate, alternate housing arrangements and financial assistance. From program implementation on June 4, 2019, to April 30, 2023, WestCare has provided diversion to 1,197 participants; connected 1,102 participants to appropriate permanent housing (93%); provided direct financial assistance to 792 participants (66%); assisted 827 (70%) diversion participants successfully exit from the program within 30 days; and provided five diversion trainings to FMCoC member agencies. If your Board approves the second recommended action, WestCare diversion services will be extended through June 30, 2024.

RH Community Builders provides two separate services for landlord recruitment and retention. The primary service is Landlord Engagement, a strategy which involves providing outreach, support, and information to landlords in the community and encourages them to rent to homeless individuals and families. Secondary is the Risk Mitigation Fund, which provides financial reimbursement to landlords who have rented to FMCoC clients and experienced monetary losses beyond what is covered by the security deposit. Together, these services are intended to increase the pool of landlords willing to lease to homeless households and help to move them from homelessness to permanent housing more quickly. From program implementation on December 10, 2019, through March 31, 2023, RH Community Builders has made available 361 affordable housing units to FMCoC programs and households; recruited 31 landlords that have not rented to FMCoC clients or agencies within the past twelve months; and recruited and maintained 104 landlords to rent to FMCoC households on an ongoing basis. If your Board approves the second recommended action, the existing agreement with RH Community Builders will be extended through June 30, 2024, and additional funding will be added in the budget to assist landlords with the costs of repairs and improvements to units which will in turn, be made available to homeless households.

As the majority of the service agreements funded for HHAP were originally awarded through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process in 2019, a new RFP will be released in the fall of this year to select vendors for services effective July 1, 2024. These agreements will be brought before your Board for approval at a future date, as appropriate.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

- BAI #44, January 24, 2023
- BAI #79, June 21, 2022
- BAI #10, June 21, 2022
- BAI #59, November 16, 2021
- BAI #64, December 10, 2019

BAI #17, June 4, 2019

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Amendment to Agreement with WestCare (Diversion)

On file with Clerk - Amendment to Agreement with RH Community Builders

CAO ANALYST:

Ronald Alexander