



# Board Agenda Item 52

DATE: December 12, 2023

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Sanja Bugay, Director, Department of Social Services

SUBJECT: Waiver of Extra-Help Weekly and Annual Maximum Hours Limitation for Calendar Years 2024

## RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

**Authorize a waiver of the 28 hours per week and 960 hours per year maximum limitations for Extra-Help positions in the Department of Social Services as listed on Attachment A for calendar year 2024, pursuant to the provisions set forth in the Salary Resolution, section 1100 and Personnel Rules 2040 and 4240.**

There is no additional Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. Approval will provide the Department of Social Services additional capacity to process accumulated work and streamline hiring practices for positions experiencing regular turnover. The recommended action applies to waivers for 1 Business Systems Analyst, 17 Eligibility Worker, 5 Job Specialist, 10 Office Assistant, 1 Social Services Appeals Specialist, 3 Social Services Program Supervisor, 10 Social Worker, 3 Social Work Practitioner, 5 Staff Analyst, 1 Supervisor Office Assistant, 1 Deputy Director, and 1 Senior Staff Analyst positions, as noted on Attachment A. This item is countywide.

## ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board may opt not to approve the recommended action; however, increasing workloads for staff may result in the Department being unable to meet program mandates to provide for the safety and security of at-risk adults and families. Unmet mandates may result in monetary penalties due to failure to comply with state and federal regulations.

## FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. The proposed extra-help positions will be funded with state and federal social service revenue with the required, budgeted county match. Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues are included in the Department's Org 5610 FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget and will be included in the FY 2024-25 budget request.

## DISCUSSION:

The Department provides services regulated and funded by the state and federal government to protect and assist vulnerable children and adults. The Department provides support to many residents in the County and partners with internal and external agencies to ensure that individuals and families are safe, self-sufficient, and healthy.

On January 13, 2015 and June 7, 2016, the Board reiterated County policy that the use of Extra-Help

employees should:

- be of limited duration;
- not be used as a first response to staffing requirements;
- not supplant work regularly performed by permanent employees; and
- only be used to meet the critical, seasonal, or temporary work needs of departments on a limited basis.

The Department is working to fill temporary short-term vacancies for public assistance and Child Welfare Services (CWS) programs to alleviate workloads. These positions are classified as Extra-Help, defined as appointments made to non-regular, non-permanent positions established on a temporary basis to meet peak loads, unusual work situations, seasonal and recurrent work, intermittent assignments, or emergencies. Benefits are not included with these positions.

The waived Extra-Help Eligibility Worker, Social Worker, Social Work Practitioner, Office Assistant, Staff Analyst and Senior Staff Analyst positions will be used to meet workload needs for public assistance and CWS. These Extra-Help positions will rapidly assist with case processing. Hiring from a pool of Extra-Help staff, which the Department anticipates would include experienced individuals, will reduce training time for newly hired permanent employees.

The Extra-Help Deputy Director position will be used to:

- advise the Department's Director on departmental operations,
- oversee CWS' continuous quality improvement and Program Specialist staff,
- complete in-depth case reviews of high-need youth child welfare cases,
- identify policy and practice issues that lead to issues and low outcomes for families,
- develop case review processes for the Department, and
- develop the infrastructure to incorporate these functions into day-to-day activities to maintain success.

The Department has two retired County employees functioning in an Extra-Help capacity. Only the 28-hour per week portion of the waiver is being requested for these two positions, as they cannot waive the 960 hours per year maximum due to their retired status. When filling additional positions with retired employees, the Department will inform and request concurrence from the Human Resources Department and the County Administrative Office.

With continued post-COVID updates to state and federal social service program regulations, the Department anticipates a continued need to respond to changing requirements and mandates. The Extra-Help positions will assist with the completion of increased workloads identified by the Department while ensuring flexibility when responding to the needs of the community.

The Department continues to fill temporary short-term vacancies for public assistance programs to alleviate workloads and also address time demands on permanent staff for CalSAWS training and documentation preparation. The CalSAWS implementation effort will decrease the availability of staff trainers. The utilization of experienced staff would not require training to support ongoing consumer needs; therefore, the Department may fill some of these positions with retired employees. The request to waive the 960 hours would not apply to retirees.

These Extra-Help positions will rapidly assist with case processing during the time staff are attending CalSAWS implementation meetings trainings and data review and clean up. The Extra-Help positions will assist with the increased and ongoing workloads identified by the Department and ensure flexibility while responding to the needs of the community.

#### REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI #37 - June 7, 2016

BAI #19 - January 13, 2015

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Attachment A

CAO ANALYST:

Ron Alexander