



Board Agenda Item 63

DATE: December 11, 2018

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Delfino E. Neira, Social Services

SUBJECT: Waiver of Extra-Help Maximum Hours Limitation

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Authorize a waiver of the 28 hours per week and/or 960 hours per calendar year 2019 maximum hours limitation for Extra-Help positions listed on Attachment A in the Department of Social Services, 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 these actions. Approval of the recommended actions provides for sufficient training timeframes for Department staff while temporarily covering workload with Extra-Help staff. Eleven (11) positions in the Social Worker and Staff Analyst classifications are recommended for waiver.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board could opt not to approve the recommended actions; however, this will result in insufficiently trained staff to meet the current workload demands of the programs mandated to provide for the safety and security of at-risk adults and families, and may result in monetary penalties due to failure to comply with State and Federal legislation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. Sufficient appropriations for the positions and any additional costs, which could be assessed under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), are included in the FY 2018-19 Department of Social Services Org 5610 Adopted Budget. Appropriations for FY 2019-20 will be included in the 2019-20 Recommended Budget.

DISCUSSION:

The Department of Social Services is a mandated government agency tied to a multitude of Federal and State regulations whose purpose is to protect and assist vulnerable children and adults. The Department provides support to one out of every two residents in Fresno County and partners with other County Departments and outside agencies to ensure that individuals and families are safe, self-sufficient and healthy.

On January 13, 2015, and June 7, 2016, your 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.

On June 5, 2018, your Board approved Salary Resolution Amendments that provided departments with the requested flexibility, while limiting the use of most Extra-Help employees.

As provided in the Salary Resolution Amendments, the Department is recommending a waiver of the 28 hours a week and/or 960 hours per calendar year limitation for Extra-Help Staff Analyst and Social Worker positions as listed on Attachment A.

Social Worker positions are critical to the provision of protective and counseling services to vulnerable populations in Fresno County. The Adult Protective Services (APS) program is required by the Welfare and Institutions Code to maintain a structure that is able to provide services 24 hours a day. To meet this requirement, skilled APS workers receive and respond to referrals for elderly and vulnerable adults at risk of abuse through multiple channels.

To ensure that elderly and dependent adults can receive protective services against neglect, abuse, or exploitation, the Department maintains a 24 hour a day APS hotline. The hotline is staffed with Social Workers who are regularly asked to work shifts outside normal Departmental hours. These Extra-Help Social Workers will assist with the APS hotline by handling standby shifts when a social worker is unable to complete their assigned shift or requires additional support. Extra-Help Social Workers will also assist newly hired permanent Social Workers as they train and continue to develop skills essential to the position.

Staff Analyst positions provide administrative support for the continued operation of social services programs within both Federal and State regulations. Administrative support is essential for the provision of facility services, program development, and contracting services through research and analysis of Departmental programs and changing legislation. Due to recent legislative reforms in the previous three years, the Department requires additional Extra-Help Staff Analyst positions to analyze challenges created by new legislative mandates and assist with the development of new contracting standards, new resource and program development, and increased monitoring of contracted services.

Currently, the average workload per Staff Analyst is at 1.5 full-time equivalents (FTE). Extra-Help positions will be used to support current operations and assist with the completion of outstanding projects while newly hired Staff Analysts continue to develop skills. Once the backlogged work is completed and the workload per worker is reduced, identified workloads will revert to the Department's permanent Staff Analysts.

Federal and State legislatures are still changing these programs and the Department will continue to respond to updated requirements and mandates. The Department has developed strategies to address infrastructure needs and meet new federal contract monitoring expectations, and is currently working towards ensuring APS meets all current standards mandated by the Welfare and Institutions code. The Extra-Help positions will assist with both regular work completed by the Department and ensure flexibility while responding to the needs created by reforms and requirements.

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

BAI#59, December 5, 2017

BAI#37, June 7, 2016

BAI#19, January 13, 2015

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Attachment A

CAO ANALYST:

Ronald Alexander