



County of Fresno

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Legislation Text

File #: 18-0934, **Version:** 1

DATE: September 11, 2018

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Delfino E. Neira, Director, Department of Social Services

SUBJECT: Agreements with WestCare California, Inc. for Housing and Disability Advocacy Program Services and Emergency Solutions Grant Rapid Rehousing Services

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute an Agreement with WestCare California, Inc. for Housing and Disability Advocacy Program Services, effective upon execution through June 30, 2020, total not to exceed \$957,800.**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute an Agreement with WestCare California, Inc. for Rapid Rehousing Services, effective upon execution, not to exceed approximately three consecutive years, which includes a nine-month base contract and two optional one-year extensions, total not to exceed \$173,259.**

Approval of the recommended actions will allow the Department to provide rapid rehousing and disability advocacy services to the homeless in Fresno County. There is no Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

There is no viable alternative action. Should your Board not approve the recommended actions, the Department would be out of compliance in its plan to the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (HDAP), as well as to U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The maximum cost of the HDAP Agreement is \$957,800 and will be entirely offset with ESG and HDAP funds. The maximum cost of the ESG Rapid Rehousing Agreement is \$173,259 and is entirely offset by ESG funds. ESG and HDAP each require a dollar-for-dollar match. The match for ESG will be provided by CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP) funding. The match for HDAP will be provided by the Department's General Relief program through staff time dedicated to assessing clients for HDAP eligibility and completing program referrals. Sufficient appropriations are included in the FY 2018-19 Recommended Budget for the Department of Social Services Org 5610.

DISCUSSION:

HDAP is a new homeless program established by the California State Legislature by Assembly Bill 1603 (Chapter 25, Statutes of 2016) and administered by counties, with oversight from CDSS. HDAP is a pilot program designed to simultaneously provide housing assistance along with disability benefits advocacy and

case management for individuals who are both homeless and disabled. The program is intended to resolve homelessness by providing disability benefits as a long-term source of income for housing. In late 2017, CDSS released allocations via funding application for counties' HDAP plans. The Department developed a plan, submitted on October 31, 2017, and was allocated \$755,864, available through June 30, 2020.

Homeless and chronically homeless individuals with disabilities are an especially vulnerable population for whom few resources and mainstream programs are available. In Fresno County, many are long-term recipients of County General Relief temporary assistance, and are receiving aid due to a self-reported incapacity. While the General Relief program is designed to serve as a short-term "safety net" to provide assistance while clients apply for long-term disability benefits, many in the program are unable to successfully complete the permanent disability application, and remain on the General Relief program for extended periods, in some cases for several years. The Department has identified this population of long-term homeless General Relief clients to be targeted for HDAP services. Veterans and the chronically homeless will also be targeted for HDAP services.

In addition to one-time HDAP funding, the Department receives and administers an annual allocation of federal ESG funding on behalf of the County for homeless services. ESG funding may be used for eligible activities to address homelessness, including: Rapid Rehousing, Emergency Shelter/Street Outreach, Homeless Prevention, Homeless Management Information System, and Administration. The Department plans to integrate ESG Rapid Rehousing funding to provide a portion of the housing services required for HDAP.

Due to the specialized nature of housing assistance and disability advocacy services, the Department issued two separate Requests for Proposals (RFP) for the two components of the program. On February 26, 2018, an RFP was released for Disability Advocacy Services, and 19 agencies were notified. On March 5, 2018, an RFP for Housing Services to Homeless in Fresno County was released, and 15 agencies were notified.

Three agencies submitted bids for Disability Advocacy services. The review panel consisted of representatives from the Department of Social Services, the Department of Behavioral Health, the Department of Public Health, and the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care (FMCoC, a local consortium of homeless service providers). WestCare, California, Inc. (WestCare) was unanimously selected due to demonstrated experience with the services requested and target populations, particularly veterans. WestCare also demonstrated a focus on linking clients to employment and training, as well as other benefit programs to increase client income. Most significantly, WestCare's proposal included the most clear and complete program design that was in line with all Department requirements and preferences.

HDAP and ESG housing services were reviewed by a panel consisting of two representatives from the Department of Social Services, and two representatives from the FMCoC. WestCare was the only bidder to submit a bid for HDAP housing services, and review panel members concurred that the bid was complete and demonstrated the ability to provide services as requested. HDAP housing services were awarded to WestCare.

The Housing to the Homeless RFP also requested ESG homeless services, with bidders allowed the flexibility to select any ESG-eligible activities. Two bidders submitted proposals for ESG services. WestCare was selected to provide ESG services due to their demonstrated experience in providing similar services through City of Fresno funded ESG projects, as well as extensive experience in working with the target population. WestCare's proposal requested funding for Rapid Rehousing assistance for eligible homeless individuals, including rental application fees, security deposits, utility deposits, rental assistance, and utility payments.

All three services requested (HDAP disability advocacy, HDAP housing, and ESG services) were ultimately awarded to one vendor, WestCare. Due to diverging requirements and service models, HDAP services were consolidated into one Agreement, while ESG services were separated into another Agreement. Therefore, the recommended actions will execute two separate Agreements with WestCare for HDAP and ESG homeless

services.

Section Ten of the Agreements contain insurance coverage and language that were not approved by Risk Management. This is because the RFPs for services were issued before the most recent modifications were made to the County's insurance requirements (May 15, 2018). County Counsel has approved both Agreements' legal form. Therefore, it is recommended your Board approve the recommended Agreement in their current form.

OTHER REVIEWING AGENCIES:

As required by HUD ESG regulation, the Fresno Madera Continuum of Care was consulted and is in agreement with the recommended actions.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - Agreement for HDAP services
On file with Clerk - Agreement for ESG services

CAO ANALYST:

Ronald Alexander