



Board Agenda Item 77

DATE: June 24, 2025

TO: Board of Supervisors

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

SUBJECT: Purchase of Resource Family Approval (RFA) Software-as-a-Service platform to support streamlined RFA, Family Finding and Engagement, and Placement processes from Binti, Inc and Thomson Reuters.

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

- 1. Under Administrative Policy No. 34 for competitive bids or requests for proposals (AP 34), determine that an exception to the competitive bidding requirement under AP 34 is satisfied and a suspension of competition is warranted due to unusual or extraordinary circumstances, and that the best interests of the County would be served by entering into an agreement with Binti, Inc. and Thomson Reuters as it is a specialized provider offering an established, web-based Software-as-a-Service platform already implemented in multiple California counties;**
- 2. Approve and authorize the Chairman to execute an Agreement with Binti, Inc. and Thomson Reuters for the purchase of Resource Family Approval (RFA) Software-as-a-Service platform to support streamlined RFA, Family Finding and Engagement, and Placement Processes, and data access through the CLEAR Investigative platform, effective upon execution, not to exceed five consecutive years, which includes a two-year base contract and three optional one-year extensions, total not to exceed \$4,375,543; and**
- 3. Authorize the Director of the Department of Social Services, or designee, to sign the associated documents and forms for Terms and Conditions and the billing information for use of the CLEAR Investigative platform Application Programming Interface (API) with Thomson Reuters.**

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. Approval of these actions will allow the Department to implement Binti, Inc. (Binti) Software-as-a-Service platform to support Family Finding, Placement, and Engagement efforts. The platform will assist staff in identifying, contacting, and engaging relatives and kin for children in the child welfare system, as well as facilitate appropriate placement searches and family matching. Approval of the recommended action will delegate authority to the Director of the Department of Social Services, or designee, to sign any documents from Thomson Reuters regarding Terms and Conditions from data access and usage. The cost of the purchase will be offset primarily by existing State and Federal allocated funds. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Should your Board choose not to approve the recommended action, the Department's Child Welfare Services will continue using the CARES RFA system, which lacks key functionality offered by Binti's software, including the Caregiver and Client Staff Portals. These portals allow RFA applicants to complete

forms online, auto-populate fields, upload required documents, electronically sign, track training hours, and access orientation materials. In contrast, the CARES-based process relies on email or hard copy submissions and does not provide automated tracking of applicant progress.

SUSPENSION OF COMPETITION/SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT:

It is requested that the County find under Administrative Policy No. 34 that an exception to the competitive bidding requirement is satisfied, and that a suspension of competition is warranted due to unusual or extraordinary circumstances as Binti is a specialized provider offering an established, web-based Software-as-a-Service platform already implemented in multiple California counties. Its integration with Thomson Reuters CLEAR investigative search functionality, along with its alignment with the operational needs of Child Welfare Services, further supports the justification for a non-competitive procurement. The General Services Department - Purchasing concurs with the Department's assessment that this satisfies the exception of the competitive bidding process required by AP 34.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended actions. The maximum cost of the recommended agreement (\$4,375,543) will be fully offset with State and Federal Social Services Funds (\$4,053,503), and 2011 Realignment (\$322,040) in lieu of State General Funds for Foster Care Eligibility that was realigned to counties through Assembly Bill 118 (Chapter 40, Statutes of 2011). Sufficient appropriations and estimated revenues are included in the Department's Org 5610 FY 2025-26 Recommended Budget and will be included in subsequent budget requests throughout the term of the agreement.

DISCUSSION:

Approval of the recommended actions will enable the Department's RFA, Placement, and Family Finding and Engagement units to implement Binti's Software-as-a-Service platform, which digitizes the full RFA workflow from application intake to final approval and renewals. The platform streamlines pre- and post-approval processes, facilitates searching for placement, and provides real-time progress tracking, automated reminders, centralized documentation, and direct communication between applicants, families, and staff. It also supports emergency response and dependency investigations through early engagement of relatives, enhances Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) compliance, assists in kin assessment for placement, and contributes to permanency planning. Implementation will improve operational efficiency, reduce administrative burden, and strengthen the Department's ability to ensure timely, stable, and family-centered placements for children and youth in out-of-home care.

Binti's Software-as-a-Service platform integrates with Thomson Reuters' CLEAR Investigative data tracking and search capabilities allowing for kin relationship mapping, and cross-functional collaboration tools. Thomas Reuters' CLEAR platform aggregates public and proprietary data to support identity verification, background checks, and investigative searches.

The recommended agreement was drafted by Binti and varies from the standard County boilerplate. The agreement may be terminated by the vendor, the Department Director, or their designee upon thirty (30) days' advance written notice prior to the end of the then-current term, indicating the intent to terminate.

Risk Management has reviewed the agreement and notes that Section 8: Limitations on Liability contains language that limits each party's total liability under the agreement to the fees payable to Binti during the term of the agreement and does not limit either party's liability for infringement of the other party's intellectual property rights. Risk Management states that such provisions are common in software agreements and defers to the Department's decision.

The Department believes proceeding with the agreement with Binti without changes to Section 8:

Limitations on Liability language is in the County's best interest, as the benefits of Binti's Software-as-a-Service platform outweigh the potential risks. The Department recommends moving forward based on the low risk and operational need for Binti's platform.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

Suspension of Competition Acquisition Request Form
On file with Clerk - Agreement with Binti, Inc.

CAO ANALYST:

Ronald Alexander