



County of Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors

Agenda Item Submittal

From: Human Services Department

Subject: Accept California Department of Social Services Housing Support Program Funding and Approve Related Agreements

Meeting Date: March 11, 2025

Formal Title: Approve amendments to agreements with Housing Matters, increasing the amount by \$160,650, and Families in Transition Santa Cruz County Inc., increasing the amount by \$889,096, for California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) housing programs, approve agreement with Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County, Inc., in the amount of \$600,000, for housing-related services, and take related actions

Recommended Actions

1. Adopt resolution accepting unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$1,649,746 from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), as detailed in the attached AUD 60;
2. Approve first amendment to agreement 25W3973 with Housing Matters, increasing the amount by \$160,650, for a not-to-exceed total of \$1,232,493, to expand California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Emergency Housing Program (CEHP) services;
3. Approve first amendment to agreement 25W3972 with Families in Transition Santa Cruz County Inc. (FIT), increasing the amount by \$889,096, for a not-to-exceed total of \$2,969,370, to expand CalWORKs Housing and Move-in Program (CHAMP) services;
4. Approve agreement 25W4315 with Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County, Inc. (CAB), in the amount of \$600,000, for flexible rehousing and prevention assistance fund management; and
5. Authorize the Director of Human Services to execute the amendments and agreement.

Executive Summary

The Human Services Department (HSD) recommends the Board adopt a resolution accepting unanticipated revenue in the amount of \$1,649,746 from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to expand available supports to Housing Support Program (HSP) participants and approve related agreements.

Discussion

In 2014, CDSS established the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Housing Support Program to reduce the number of CalWORKs families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. In September 2024, Santa Cruz County was awarded \$2,325,848 additional HSP funds to be spent by June 2025. Out of the \$2,325,848, \$676,102 were used to fund existing HSP agreements and HSD is proposing to use the remaining \$1,649,746 in expanding the support for eligible families

to attain or maintain permanent housing including through rent, security deposits, household furnishings, shelter services, temporary hotel/motel stays and access to credit restoration services.

Housing Matters CalWORKs Emergency Housing Program (CEHP)

Housing Matters provides the CalWORKs Emergency Housing Program participants with shelter while they seek permanent housing opportunities. This program is largely successful but is rarely able to shelter all eligible participants for the full fiscal year; it is anticipated that current contracted funds will be expended by May 2025. The amendment will provide 1,785 additional shelter nights for eligible CalWORKs families.

Family In Transition CalWORKs Housing and Move-in Program (CHAMP)

Families in Transition (FIT) provides case management and financial assistance to support CHAMP participants to attain and maintain permanent housing. To date, CHAMP has assisted more than 455 families with direct participant assistance, and 71% of families have graduated from the program into permanent housing.

Even with the increase of shelter nights through the CEHP, it is anticipated that additional CHAMP participants will be unable to access a safe, sheltered place to stay while seeking permanent housing. Utilizing available HSP funds to provide CHAMP participants with temporary hotel/motel stays will help families meet their immediate shelter needs and allow families more time to focus on tasks that will support them in attaining permanent housing including engaging in case management services, increasing income, searching for units, and attending unit viewings.

Low credit scores impacted by high amounts of debt are a barrier to housing attainment. By providing funds to pay off debt and restore credit, families increase their chances of passing background checks required by many landlords during their housing application screening process. Furthermore, reducing debt burden frees up additional income that families can allocate towards rent and other essential needs, increasing their housing stability.

CAB Housing Support Program (HSP)

CAB has extensive experience managing flexible funding programs to address housing-related needs on behalf of the County. While creating a centralized flexible pool of funding to provide housing related financial assistance to help households resolve housing stability issues, the new contract will also allow Housing for Health to ensure appropriate separation of these services in support of grant compliance requirements.

The CAB HSP contract will help local CalWORKs enrolled households avoid eviction and to obtain or maintain housing. The performance of CAB's Housing Support Program agreement will be measured by the timeliness of payment assistance services disbursement, along with data collection on the number of individuals that move from homelessness into housing or that maintain housing through homelessness prevention assistance.

Financial Impact

The proposed Board actions do not require any additional General Fund contributions. Approval of the amendments to Housing Matters and FIT agreements, and agreement

with CAB will require approval of a resolution accepting unanticipated revenues of \$1,649,746 from CDSS, as detailed in the attached AUD60.

Contract No.25W3972 Families in Transition, Amendment One

- 391200-75291-WCEC3-W895456

Contract No.25W3973 Housing Matters, Amendment One

- (1/3) 391200-75291- WCEC3-W895456
- (2) 392110-75291-WCEC3-06330032

Contract No.25W4315 Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County, Inc.

- 391200-75291-WCEC3-W895456

Strategic Initiatives

Operational Plan - Attainable Housing

Submitted By:

Randy Morris, Director of Human Services

Recommended By:

Carlos J. Palacios, County Administrative Officer

Artificial Intelligence Acknowledgment:

Artificial Intelligence (AI) did not significantly contribute to the development of this agenda item.