



Agenda Date: 10/18/2005
Agenda Placement: 6A

NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Natasha Merkuloff Nichols - Director
Child Support Services
REPORT BY: Natasha Merkuloff Nichols, Director of Child Support Services, 253-4250
SUBJECT: Approval of Agreement C-05-3-0303 with State of California for Loan of County Employee and amendment of the Departmental Allocation List.

RECOMMENDATION

Director of Child Support Services and Acting Human Resources Director request the following:

1. Approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign an agreement with the State of California for a maximum of \$99,177 for the term September 1, 2005 through August 31, 2006 to provide the services of one (1) County Child Support Specialist to the State; and
2. Adoption of a resolution amending the Departmental Allocation List for Child Support Services with regards to adding one (1) Child Support Specialist I Limited Term (LT) position through October 31, 2006, effective October 18, 2005.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This action requests Board approval for the Child Support Services Department to contract with the State of California to loan one fulltime Child Support Specialist (CSS) to the State. The CSS will serve as a subject matter expert as the State develops and implements the California Child Support Automated System (CCSAS). Secondly, the Department is requesting the addition of a limited term CSS I position to backfill the loaned position so that the Department can meet the compliance requirements of the State Child Support Program while the County employee is on loan.

FISCAL IMPACT

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	Yes
Where is it budgeted?	Child Support Services is a non general fund department, so there is no

impact to the General Fund. While the employee is on loan to the State, the department intends to backfill the position with a limited term (LT) position. The funding provided by the State to the department will cover the cost of the LT position. The LT position will be for twelve (12) months, as the agreement is for twelve (12) months. If the contract is amended to extend the term for an additional year, the position will be extended for an additional year. There is no negative funding impact expected by the department as a result of this State contract

Is it Mandatory or Discretionary? Discretionary

Discretionary Justification: There are many advantages to the County and to the State of the employee loan program. When the employee is assigned to State duties, the State obtains the services of a subject matter expert in the field of child support, specifically a person who has worked directly with customers and a caseload, and understands on a practical level how the functionality of the automated system will affect the local agencies. For the County, that employee returns with detailed knowledge of the Statewide automated system, and will serve as a resource and trainer to assist the department with operational issues in the new automated system. The State reimburses the county for all costs and the department is able backfill behind the loaned employee. This offsets somewhat the decrease in productivity in the department as a result of the loan of an experienced caseworker.

Is the general fund affected? No

Future fiscal impact: At this point, the contract is set to expire in August of 2006. It is very possible the State will extend the contract for an additional year, since CCSAS implementation will continue through 2007.

Consequences if not approved: The State will lose the services of a very experienced child support case worker and that will hinder the development of CCSAS as a user friendly tool. In the long run, the department will not have any in house experts in CCSAS.

Additional Information: None

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The proposed action is not a project as defined by 14 California Code of Regulations 15378 (State CEQA Guidelines) and therefore CEQA is not applicable.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

1. The State of California is in the process of developing and implementing the California Child Support Automated System (CCSAS), which will connect all counties in the State on one child support system as required by Federal law. Implementation of this system is a priority for many reasons, not the least of which is the elimination of the Federal penalties imposed on the State for not having a single Statewide system in place by 1998. In order to obtain the technical and subject matter expertise required for implementation and transition, the State has approached counties about "borrowing" staff members to assist. Napa County has one Child Support Specialist (CSS), Anita Sosa, who is on loan to the State as of September 1, 2005 for the next 12 months, and possibly longer.

The benefits of this "employee loan" program are several. For the State, they get an experienced child support services worker who knows the program at the local level. The employee not only can test and validate data, but can provide direct input regarding how program functionality would affect the local agencies and their staff. The goal is to make this system user friendly and toward that end, local employees must be available to provide constant input and feedback. For the Department, the benefit is three fold. First, during the development stages, we have direct input to the State testing. The employee calls this agency, poses a situation and within an hour or two, we provide feedback and request certain functionality which would address the issue. Second, during implementation, we have a contact at the State to provide us with insight, guidance and information. And finally, post implementation when we are trying to work the bugs out, we will have an employee who has first hand knowledge of the system, and will be able to assist and train our staff.

Ms. Sosa would continue to retain her incumbency in the permanent position of Child Support Specialist, as well as all other benefits of County employment. During this Agreement, the employee will receive all credits that would accrue absent this agreement for the purposes of determining seniority, promotional status, retirement date and other employment benefits. The State will reimburse the County for Ms. Sosa's salary and benefits costs. The State will also reimburse the County for Ms. Sosa's mileage costs to travel to Rancho Cordova at the current IRS mileage rate.

The request to the Board is to approve this agreement retroactively. The employee commenced her duties on September 1st; however, it has taken the State more time than they anticipated to provide the agreement to the County.

2. The Agreement specifically allows the County to use the reimbursed funds to employ limited term help to assume the duties of the staff member on loan. The second part of this agenda item is a request for the Board to adopt a resolution creating a limited term CSS I position for 12 calendar months. The time frame of the agreement does not exactly match time time period of the LT position because the actual hiring of the LT staff member will occur after the commencement of the agreement. If the agreement is extended, the Department will return to the Board with a request to extend the limited term position.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

A . Resolution

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Helene Franchi