



Agenda Date: 12/19/2006  
Agenda Placement: 6F

## NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors  
**FROM:** Shelli Brobst for Randy Snowden - Director  
Health & Human Services  
**REPORT BY:** Shelli Brobst, Contracts Analyst, 253-4720  
**SUBJECT:** CalWORKs Plan Addendum

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Director of Health and Human Services requests authorization to submit the CalWORKs Plan Addendum to the State Department of Social Services for Fiscal Year 2006-2007.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Approval of the requested action will enable HHSA to submit the County's CalWORKs Plan Addendum to the State Department of Social Services. The Addendum describes new strategies and policies that the County will implement to increase the percentage of employed CalWORKs participants and meet the goals of the new Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) requirements under AB 1808.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?                      No

### **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**

The federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) program was re-authorized by Congress in the Deficit

Reduction Act of 2005. California enacted the new TANF requirements through AB 1808. AB 1808 requires each county to perform a comprehensive review of its CalWORKS plan, and to prepare and submit to the State Department of Social Services an addendum to the county's existing plan. The addendum should detail how the county will meet goals related to the improvement of public social services. These goals are:

1. Reduce child poverty in the State;
2. Reduce the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; reduce out-of-wedlock births; and encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families; and
3. Meet the requirements of federal law while avoiding unanticipated outcomes that negatively affect child well-being, the demand for county general assistance, or the number of families affected by domestic violence.

In accordance with the mandate, HHSA plans to submit Napa County's CalWORKS Plan Addendum upon being authorized to do so by the Board. The Addendum describes how the County will meet the goals of reducing child poverty, thereby reducing the dependence of needy parents on government benefits. The Plan Addendum's stated strategies are intended to meet the mandate's requirements while avoiding unanticipated outcomes which may negatively affect child well being. The Addendum also describes how the County will improve its participants' engagement in a variety of activities leading to increased overall work participation rates.

Napa County will pursue the above-stated goals as follows:

1. Reduce child poverty in the State: Napa County will address the goal of reducing child poverty by providing services that will enable parents/caretakers to earn a self-sufficient wage and provide for the needs of their families. A major component of the Plan Addendum involves imparting in participants the importance of work as a method for improving their financial status by addressing the circumstances which prevent participants from becoming employed. Strategies will include:

- | Increasing participant awareness and buy-in of the benefits of employment.
- | Training to enhance staff's case management skills to include identifying/addressing barriers and identifying individual motivators.
- | Developing career ladder employment through early engagement, consistent employment message, job fair events at the One-Stop, and skills up-grade training through partnering with the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program.
- | Retention/income improvement planning via training for CalWORKs staff in the area of job retention.
- | Providing financial management classes/workshops to participants.
- | Outreaching to and engaging non-custodial parents in WIA employment services to enable them to increase their ability to make financial contributions to the family through child support.

2. Reduce dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; reduce out-of-wedlock births; and encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families: This goal will be met as a result of implementing the strategies to reduce child poverty in Napa County. The early and consistent message of employment folded into the up-front engagement activities and the other activities outlined in the Plan's detail are designed to equip participants with the job skills and support needed to eliminate their need for cash assistance. To gain the participants' acceptance and cooperation with the Welfare to Work (WTW) activities, services will be provided in a manner that works for families with children and more effectively considers the barriers, conditions, and circumstances that impact their ability to be engaged in these activities. Napa County is additionally collaborating with other Bay Area counties to design programming geared toward strengthening families through participation in activities which improve the relationship building skills of family members. The Bay Area Family Strengthening Initiative (FSI) supports the development of strong, nurturing families by creating, implementing, and evaluating an integrated service delivery system. FSI links family relationship building

programs to support key services (e.g. employment, substance abuse counseling and treatment, educational advancement, etc.) leading to families gaining greater self-sufficiency and decreasing their reliance on public assistance.

3. Meet the requirements of federal law while avoiding unanticipated outcomes that negatively affect child well-being, the demand for county general assistance, or the number of families affected by domestic violence:

Understanding the family dynamics and the participants' concerns around leaving the home to participate in Welfare to Work (WTW) activities is a critical part of helping participants see beyond their "barriers" to their future. As is true for most people, there is a degree of comfort and safety in the known versus the unknown. Uncovering the fears and providing information and services to assuage the concerns will help participants to establish a new comfort level which will allow them to participate in their WTW activities. In this way, non-compliance and sanctions will be avoided and the family income will not be decreased, lessening the negative monetary impact to the participants in providing for their children. The goal of keeping families together, healthy and self-sufficient can involve an array of service providers. Attention to the physical and mental health needs of all family members and providing access to support services is addressed. Use of the CalWORKs Behavioral Health Social Worker to assist in identifying participant's needs will be central in developing the appropriate WTW plan and activities. Inclusion of all family members and their needs in decision-making and planning will continue to be encouraged, as applicable. Home visits will be used extensively, having been found to be an effective way to involve the children and second parent in supporting the participant's involvement.

The Plan Addendum must be submitted to the State Department of Social Services by January 5, 2007 with certification by the County Welfare Director that the Board of Supervisors has been briefed on the Plan. HHSA is anticipating the State will subsequently be requesting a re-write of the County's CalWORKs Plan. HHSA will return to the Board at a future date with a presentation on the full re-write, which will depend on when the State releases its template for the re-write.

The CalWORKs Plan Addendum discussed in this report is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

None

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Lorenzo Zialcita