



A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 3/20/2018

Agenda Placement: 6A

## NAPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Letter

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Mary Butler - Chief Probation Officer  
Probation

**REPORT BY:** Ferlyn Buenafe, Staff Services Manager - 707.253.4126

**SUBJECT:** Agreement with Seneca Family of Agencies

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

Chief Probation Officer and Director of Health and Human Services request approval of and authorization for the Chair to sign an agreement with Seneca Family of Agencies for an annual maximum of \$5,000 for the term March 20, 2018 through June 30, 2020 in order to conduct Family Finding searches and provide information regarding clients for whom family members are being sought.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Seneca Family of Agencies provides Family Finding Search Services with over 10 years experience conducting thousands of relative/personal searches on behalf of youth. This agreement will assist in meeting the Continuum of Care initiative of AB 403 effective January 1, 2017, designed to improve probation and child welfare outcomes by reducing the use of group homes, increasing the use of home-based settings (including foster care) and decreasing the amount of time it takes to return youth to a permanent home.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?	Yes
Is it currently budgeted?	Yes
Where is it budgeted?	Probation Health & Human Services Child Welfare Services
Is it Mandatory or Discretionary?	Discretionary

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Discretionary Justification:	This Agreement is discretionary in that there is no mandate to contract for these services.
Is the general fund affected?	No
Future fiscal impact:	The Agreement has an automatic renewal and will be budgeted accordingly in subsequent fiscal years with the term ending on June 30, 2020. Payment for services can be billed to the State for reimbursement under the Continuum of Care (AB 403) initiative. Probation expects to spend no more than \$1,500 and HHSa no more than \$3,500 each fiscal year.
Consequences if not approved:	If the Agreement is not approved, the departments would need to be trained to search for family members and, subsequently, will spend more hours searching for family members, a process that would not be cost effective nor efficient. An Agreement with this vendor provides an experienced search agent that is able to instantly access multiple premium databases to provide a customized search report at a non-profit price.
Additional Information:	

### **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**

Pursuant to AB 938 (2009), it is the policy of Probation to notify relatives whenever a ward will be placed in foster care or a residential treatment facility. If the Court orders foster care or residential treatment, Probation has 30 days to identify, locate and notify, in writing, all grandparents, adult siblings and other adult relatives, including those suggested by the parents and youth. The purpose of this bill is to engage relatives and encourage their support for the youth placed out of home, and, in the event the youth cannot return home, the relatives may be able to provide a home pursuant to AB 1695 (2001). Probation currently uses Lexis Nexis to locate families, however, services provided by Seneca will yield enhanced and more comprehensive family finding results.

Seneca Family Finding Search services will be used to identify, locate and engage family and friends who can be natural supports to youth and families who are at-risk of out of home placement. Engagement of friends and family as natural supports can prevent removal from the home, and, if removal is necessary, provide placement options with family or friends instead of congregate care or traditional foster homes. Youth who are placed with family or friends are more likely to have successful outcomes than youth placed in group congregate care or with unknown foster parents.

The search service accesses multiple premium search databases to provide a customized search report with the most comprehensive information available. Search requests are submitted on the Seneca website and results will be sent to the requestor by email, typically within four hours, during "normal" business hours. The Family Finding Report includes:

- | Up to 30-year address history for the person with listed phone numbers, aliases and deceased notices, if any
- | Up to 30 possible relatives with address history and listed phone numbers

- | Up to 20 possible family acquaintances, with address history and listed phone numbers
- | Neighbors with listed phone numbers at the subject's most recently reported address

Seneca also offers an optional *Social Network Search* which adds information from some of the most popular social network sites, such as Facebook, Linked In and others, for up to two of the relatives found on the standard report (additional fee will apply).

With regard to privacy of information, Seneca Family of Agencies and its employees shall at all times comply with the Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information published by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). In addition, due to AB 938 and AB 1695, information received related to relative findings will be maintained by Probation and HHS as required by law.

This Agreement will allow for an expert search agent completing multiple data base searches freeing up more time for staff to begin contacting and engaging relatives. Pricing is as follows:

- | Family Finding Report - \$25 each
- | Family Finding Report with *Social Network Search* - \$30 each

#### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

None

CEO Recommendation: Approve

Reviewed By: Leigh Sharp