



Health & Human Services Agency

COUNTY OF TULARE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

LARRY MICARI
District One

PETE VANDER POEL
District Two

AMY SHUKLIAN
District Three

EDDIE VALERO
District Four

DENNIS TOWNSEND
District Five

AGENDA DATE: July 30, 2024

Public Hearing Required	N/A
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	N/A
Published Notice Required	N/A
Advertised Published Notice	N/A
Meet & Confer Required	N/A
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	N/A
Personnel Resolution attached	N/A
Agreement(s) attached	Yes

CONTACT PERSON: Francena Martinez PHONE: 559-624-8000

SUBJECT: Approve an agreement with the Tulare County Superintendent of Schools

REQUEST(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve an agreement with the Tulare County Superintendent of Schools for the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children, in an amount not to exceed \$856,831, retroactive from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. This agreement is retroactive due to delays in receiving the Governor's revised state budget; making it impracticable for the Board to take action prior to July 1, 2024.
2. Find that the Board had the authority to enter into the amendment as of July 1, 2024, and that it was in the County's best interest to enter into the amendment on that date.
3. Authorize the Chair of the Board to sign the agreement.

SUMMARY:

In 2017, Senate Bill 89 Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children and All County Letter No. 19-18 provide guidance and funding for counties opting to participate in the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children (Bridge Program). This program aims to increase the number of foster children successfully placed in home-based family care settings, increase the capacity of childcare programs to meet the needs of foster children in their care, and maximize funding to support the childcare needs of eligible families. One of the primary barriers for potential families seeking to take in a foster child is the lack of access to childcare immediately following the removal of the child. With the passage of Senate Bill 89, resource families and families that have a child placed with them in an emergency, licensed foster family homes or certified family homes, approved homes of relatives or nonrelative extended family

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members, and parents under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court are eligible to receive time-limited monthly payments for childcare and the assistance of a childcare navigator.

The Bridge Program's funding for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 is from Title IV-E of the Social Security Act through the Federal Government and the State General Fund. The funds will be received as reimbursement for services performed and are claimed quarterly on the County Expense Claim. This program is not an entitlement program and has capped funding.

The Bridge program serves eligible families by providing three (3) separate, yet complementary program components. These activities include: (1) emergency childcare payment, (2) childcare navigator, and (3) trauma-informed care training and coaching. The Tulare County Superintendent of Schools is responsible for operating for operating for operating all three program components of the Bridge Program.

Under the Bridge Program's first component (childcare payments), eligible participants can receive childcare payments. To be qualified to receive childcare payments, care providers and non-minor dependent parents must be working or attending school. These childcare payments will help compensate for childcare costs for foster children from birth through age twelve (12), children with exceptional needs, and severely disabled children up to age 21. Payments may be provided for up to six (6) months until the child is successfully enrolled in long-term, subsidized childcare. Eligibility may be extended an additional six (6) months, then twelve (12) months per County discretion. All payments must be in accordance with the Regional Market Rate (RMR) ceilings for subsidized childcare payment rates. It is anticipated that these childcare payments will serve 80 foster children a year.

The Tulare County Superintendent of Schools will provide the second (childcare navigator) component of the Bridge Program through this proposed agreement. The childcare navigator works with eligible families, Child Welfare Services' social workers, and the child and family teams to assess childcare opportunities and provide consumer education to the family based on the child's age and needs. The navigator will be responsible for assisting with finding a childcare provider, securing a subsidized childcare placement if eligible, completing childcare program applications, and developing a plan for long-term childcare. Eligibility for the navigator services is not contingent on a child receiving a childcare payment. It is projected that 100 foster families will receive the services of a childcare navigator.

The third (trauma-informed care training and coaching) component of the Bridge Program will be provided by the Tulare County Superintendent of Schools through this proposed agreement. Trauma-informed care training and coaching will be provided through the Bridge Program to childcare programs and providers serving eligible children. Trauma-informed training includes but is not limited to, infant and toddler development and research-based, trauma-informed best care practices. Childcare providers will also receive access to individual coaching to assist them to apply training curriculum and learn strategies for working with children in foster care. It is anticipated that 200 childcare providers will receive Trauma-informed training annually.

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This agreement did not include a Request for Proposal process since all funding sources require that Counties partner and contract with their local Resource and Referral provider to operate the Bridge Program. Tulare County Superintendent of Schools is the Resource and Referral provider in Tulare County.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

The budgeted costs associated with this agreement are included in the Health and Human Services Agency 001-142 budget, line 4020-7043, for \$337,331 and Health and Human Services Agency 001-142 budget, line 4034-7501 for \$519,500 for a total amount not to exceed \$856,831. The Bridge Child Care Program is an opt-in program with capped funding and is funded entirely through the State General Fund and the Federal Government. There is no net County cost to the General Fund.

LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:

The County's five-year strategic plan includes the Quality of Life initiative that encourages innovative provisions of quality supportive services to at-risk youth and children in state and federally-mandated programs. This agreement increases the ability to fulfill the obligation by providing childcare support to resource parents and parenting non-minor dependents. This support will reduce barriers for potential families seeking to take in a foster child due to the lack of access to childcare immediately following the removal of the child.

ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:

/s/Francena Martinez
Francena Martinez
Director of Human Services

Cc: County Administrative Office

Attachments: Agreement