



Health & Human Services Agency

COUNTY OF TULARE AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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District One

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District Two

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District Three

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District Four

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District Five

AGENDA DATE: April 1, 2025

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	N/A

CONTACT PERSON: Natalie Bolin, DSW, LCSW PHONE: 559-624-8000

SUBJECT: Approve a standard template agreement for the out-of-county Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program

REQUEST(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve a standard template agreement for out-of-county Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Program placements for Tulare County children and youth.
2. Authorize the Health and Human Services Agency Behavioral Health Branch Director, or designee, to sign these agreements for out-of-county placements.
3. Authorize the Behavioral Health Branch Director, or designee, to negotiate, sign, and execute county-to-county agreements to accept out-of-county youth being placed within Tulare County contracted Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs subject to County Counsel review and approval.

SUMMARY:

Assembly Bill (AB) 1299, effective July 1, 2017, added Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) section 14717.1, which established presumptive transfer, requiring that when a child or youth in foster care is placed outside of their county of original jurisdiction, the responsibility to provide or arrange and pay for that child or youth's specialty mental health services (SMHS) transfers from the Mental Health Plan (MHP) in the county of original jurisdiction to the MHP in the county where the child or youth resides (also referred to as the "county of residence").

AB 1051 modifies the requirements for presumptive transfer when a foster child or youth is placed in certain out-of-county residential settings. The bill adds W&I Code sections 14717.2, 14717.26, and 14717.25, stating that since some residential placements are

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meant to be short-term, the responsibility for providing and arranging SMHS will remain with the county of original jurisdiction. Additionally, out-of-county placements should not disrupt continuity of care or cause delays in payments to providers. Starting July 1, 2024, when a child or youth is placed in a short-term residential therapeutic program (STRTP), community treatment facility, group home, or children's crisis residential program outside of their county of original jurisdiction, the county of original jurisdiction's MHP will continue to be responsible for providing and funding SMHS, unless specific circumstances apply.

These changes significantly impact the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) Behavioral Health Branch, Child Welfare Services Division, and the Probation Department Juvenile Division, all of which require timely access to services and placements for youth with complex behavioral health needs. AB 1051 requires the Behavioral Health Branch to establish agreements with each placement facility, creating substantial administrative burdens and potential delays in accessing services due to the time required to negotiate, review, and finalize these agreements.

Additionally, AB 1051 considerably impacts STRTPs statewide, as these facilities serve youth from multiple counties. The bill requires STRTPs contract directly with each county placing children and youth at their facility. Tulare County contracts with two STRTPs within the county and serves as the Medi-Cal certifying entity for the provision of SMHS at these facilities. AB 1051 would require these STRTPs to establish contracts with each county, placing youth at their facilities, further adding to the administrative workload. In Fiscal Year 2023/2024, over 30 out-of-county children or youth were placed at one of these two facilities.

To expedite the placement of foster children or youth in treatment and decrease administrative burden, the Behavioral Health Branch and many other counties throughout the state have developed single-case, county-to-county agreements to support the implementation of AB 1051. These agreements coordinate service provision and payments for services between the county of residence and the county of original jurisdiction.

HHSA is requesting that the Tulare County Board of Supervisors approve a standard agreement for out-of-county STRTP placements for Tulare County children and youth and authorize the HHSA Behavioral Health Branch Director, or designee, to sign these agreements for out-of-county placements. This action will reduce administrative burdens and ensure timely access to SMHS Tulare County foster care children and youth.

HHSA also requests the Board of Supervisors authorize the Behavioral Health Branch Director, or designee, to negotiate, sign, and execute county-to-county agreements to accept out-of-county youth being placed within Tulare County contracted STRTPs subject to County Counsel review and approval. This action will reduce administrative burdens for the two Tulare County contracted STRTPs and ensure they can continue to operate within the community, serving foster youth and children statewide who require access to these services.

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The Behavioral Health Branch will provide the Board of Supervisors with copies of executed county-to-county agreements on a quarterly basis.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:

Authorizing the HHSA Behavioral Health Branch Director, or designee, to negotiate, sign, and execute temporary single-use agreements does not present a fiscal impact to the County. The annual cost for Specialty Mental Health Services provided to foster youth placed in short-term residential therapeutic program or admitted to a children's crisis residential programs are included in the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 adopted budget. There is no additional 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 the innovative provision of quality supportive services for at-risk adults, youth, and children in state and federally-mandated programs. This amendment increases the ability to fulfill that obligation by providing intensive mental health services to Tulare County adolescent males and non-minor dependents.

ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:

/s/Casie Ennis OBO

Natalie Bolin, DSW, LCSW
Director of Behavioral Health

Cc: County Administrative Office

Attachments: Letter of Agreement