



COUNTY of VENTURA

MELISSA LIVINGSTON
Director

September 10, 2024

Board of Supervisors
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue
Ventura, CA 93009

HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

855 Partridge Drive
Ventura, CA 93003
805-477-5100

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Community Access & Engagement

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Subject: Approval of, and Authorization for the Human Services Agency Director to Sign, a No-Cost Agreement with the California Department of Social Services for the State to Provide Legal Services to the County in Administrative Appeals Associated with the Resource Family Approval Program; and Adoption of a State-Required Resolution.

Recommendations:

1. Approve, and authorize the Human Services Agency (HSA) Director, or designee, to sign, a no-cost Agreement with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for the State to provide the County with legal advice and representation in administrative appeals associated with the Resource Family Approval (RFA) program, effective July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027 (Exhibit 1), and authorize the HSA Director or designee to sign subsequent amendments or new Agreements with CDSS that are similar in nature and do not incur County cost, upon the review and approval of the County Executive Office and County Counsel.
2. Adopt a Resolution as required by CDSS that documents your Board's action (Exhibit 2).

Fiscal/Mandates Impact:

There are no fiscal mandates associated with this action.

Strategic Plan Priority:

The Resource Family Approval program contributes to the Board of Supervisors' 2024-2027 Strategic Plan priority to 'Address Homelessness and Lift Up the Most Vulnerable', Goal (2) Meet/sustain basic needs and be a reliable safety net for our vulnerable populations.

Discussion:

In 2017, CDSS, in consultation with county child welfare agencies, foster parent associations, and other interested community parties, revised the traditional foster care approval process by creating the RFA program to:

- a) provide a unified, family-friendly, and child-centered process to replace the multiple processes for licensing foster homes, approving relatives and nonrelative extended family members as foster care providers, and approving adoptive families;
- b) establish a single set of standards for approvals which allow for the safety, permanence, and well-being needs of the children who have been victims of child abuse and neglect;
- c) reduce the use of congregate care placement settings; and
- d) decrease the length of time for each child to obtain permanency.

Through the RFA process, an applicant seeks to meet the home environment assessment and permanency assessment standards of the State of California, as set forth by CDSS, with final approvals and denials provided by the County.

Pursuant to Government Code section 30029.7, subdivision (a)(3), a county and CDSS may enter into an agreement for CDSS to provide services or activities related to RFA. Your Board approved an agreement in 2017 for CDSS to provide legal services to the County in RFA matters, which CDSS has done for the past eight years. Before your Board today is a new agreement for CDSS to provide legal services to the County in RFA matters from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027.

When needed, the CDSS Legal Division will act as the sole legal representative of the County on appeals of a denial or rescission of Resource Family approval, a denial or rescission of a criminal record exemption, or exclusion of an individual. The legal services to be provided by CDSS through this agreement will expedite the delivery of services to children and nonminor dependents who reside or may soon reside in a Resource Family home. CDSS will provide these legal services at no cost to the County.

We ask your Board to approve, and authorize the HSA Director or designee to sign, the Agreement with CDSS and subsequent amendments or new Agreements with CDSS that are similar in nature and do not incur County cost, upon review and approval of the County Executive Office and County Counsel. In addition, we ask your Board to adopt a State-required resolution documenting your Board's actions.

This item has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, the Auditor-Controller's Office and County Counsel. If you have any questions, please contact me at 805-477-5301, or Leticia Morales, Interim Deputy Director, Children & Family Services, at 805-477-5311.



Melissa Livingston
Director

Attachments:

- Exhibit 1 – CDSS Agreement
- Exhibit 2 – Resolution