

September 10, 2024

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

**Subject:**

Approval of, and Authorization for the Health Care Agency (HCA) Director or Designee to Sign, an Acknowledgement of Grant Terms and Conditions Provided by the State of California, on behalf of the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) Under the Local Immigrant Integration and Inclusion Grant Effective 10/1/2024; Adoption of the Attached Resolution to Add 1 New Regular Full-Time Equivalent Position in the Ventura County Health Care Agency Effective September 10, 2024; and Authorization for the Auditor-Controller to Process the Necessary Budgetary Transactions. (Recommendation #3 Requires 4/5 Vote)

**Recommendations:**

1. That your Board approve and authorize the Health Care Agency (HCA) director or designee to sign, an acknowledgement of grant terms and conditions provided by the GO-Biz under the **Local Immigrant Integration and Inclusion Grant (LIIG)**, Effective October 1, 2024 (Exhibit 1).
2. That your Board adopt the attached Resolution (Exhibit 2) to add one (1) new regular, full-time equivalent position in the HCA Ventura County Medical System, effective September 10, 2024 as follows:

<b><u>Job Code</u></b>	<b><u>Classification Title</u></b>	<b><u>FTE</u></b>	<b><u>Range (monthly)</u></b>	<b><u>Annual Salary</u></b>
01710	Staff Services Manager II	1	\$7,645.10- \$10,704.19	\$91,741.22- \$128,450.30

3. That your Board authorize the Auditor-Controller to process the necessary accounting transactions to revise appropriations and revenues as follows (Requires 4/5ths Vote).

<u>HCA - Fund E500 Ventura County Medical System, Division 3300</u>		
INCREASE 3300-3301	Salaries and Benefits	\$319,483
INCREASE 3300-3301	Intergovernmental Revenues	\$319,483

**Fiscal Impact:**

Mandatory:	No
Source of Funding:	State of California
Funding Match Required:	No
Impact on Other Departments:	N/A

**Summary of Annual Revenues and Costs Under this Agreement for Ventura County Health Care Agency:**

	<u>FY 2024-25</u>	<u>FY 2025-26</u>
REVENUE	\$212,989	\$106,494
DIRECT COST*:	\$ 85,633	\$128,449
INDIRECT COST	\$127,356	\$ 63,678
Net Revenue (Cost)	\$0	\$ (41,723)

\* Represents the added FTE only

**Current Fiscal Year Budget Projections:**

<b>Current FY 2024-25 Budget Projections for Ventura County Medical System #3300</b>				
	<b>Adopted Budget</b>	<b>Adjusted Budget</b>	<b>Projected Actual</b>	<b>Estimated Savings/(Deficit)</b>
Expenditures	\$720,985,484	\$720,985,484	\$720,985,484	\$0
Revenue	\$721,404,225	\$721,404,225	\$721,404,225	\$0
Operational Income/(Loss)	\$418,741	\$418,741	\$418,741	\$0

The operational income includes "Operating Transfers In" that are primarily attributed to County contribution.

**Background:**

The Healthcare Equity Advisory Council (HEAC), formed in 2021 to confront health care disparities, is composed of seven health care leaders and subject matter experts from the Ventura County Health Care Agency (VCHCA) and eight community representatives from throughout Ventura County. This council, which reflects a diverse spectrum of

communities including LGBTQ+, Hispanic, Latino and Latinx, Asian-American and Pacific Islander, BIPOC, and more, was established in alignment with the World Health Organization's principles of health equity. HEAC's comprehensive review highlighted the need for Spanish, Tagalog, Mixteco, and other indigenous language interpreters, underscoring the importance of diverse interpreter services and multilingual written materials to ensure equitable health care for all community members.

In response to community feedback, in December of 2023, the Ventura County Medical System hired a consultant to conduct a Language Access Needs Assessment. The goal of this program is to address the priorities underscored by our community stakeholders.

Some key findings are noted below:

- More than 50% of the patients who access the Ventura County Medical System speak a language other than English in their home.
- Immigrant communities often seek medical services from VCMC and Santa Paula Hospital. VCMC and Santa Paula have strived to provide the highest level of care with the language-access resources available to them. Nevertheless, their efforts are constrained by the absence of a dedicated department that can guide them and more effectively carry the responsibility of closing the gap in the quality of professional interpreting, not just for indigenous languages, but also languages that are more diffused like Spanish.
- Legal mandates to provide linguistic access for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals trace back to the passing of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the nearly 60 years since then, extensive case law and additional regulations have outlined the necessary steps for all agencies receiving federal funds to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

Implementing a Language Access Program at VCMC and Santa Paula Hospital is a necessary move towards providing superior health care delivery that extends beyond simply meeting legal standards. It involves establishing a gold standard in language assistance, specifically honing the capability to support prevalent languages like Spanish along with indigenous languages like Mixteco, among others from the Oaxaca region of Mexico, to serve Ventura County's most vulnerable patient populations.

**Strategic Plan Priority:**

These funds and services contribute to the Board of Supervisors' 2024-2027 Strategic Plan priority to provide 'Healthy, Safe, and Resilient Communities', goal (1) Provide equitable and timely access to quality healthcare, mental health, and public health services.

**Discussion:**

In order to implement a Language Access Program, HCA requests the addition of one (1) new regular FTE, Staff Services Manager (SSM) who will serve as the Language Access and Inclusive Community Service manager.

In order to help offset the cost of the Language Access Program including the new SSM FTE, HCA submitted a proposal for LIIG on March 28, 2024 that integrated capacity building to address health disparities among immigrant populations across two departments within the Health Care Agency (Hospitals and Ambulatory Care). GO-Biz notified HCA of its intent to award the \$319,483 as requested. The award does not require a matching contribution from HCA, however HCA will expend the funds and submit claims for reimbursement on a quarterly basis.

The project will expand and develop Inclusive Community Supports and Language Access for the immigrant community of Ventura County as they interface with our Ventura County Medical System. The goal is to collaborate with public health and behavioral health to coordinate efforts to improve language access throughout the agency.

LIIG Populations of Focus: Patients from immigrant communities who have been historically marginalized with a particular focus on recent Indigenous immigrant communities from Southern Mexico who speak their Indigenous languages.

Programs will include the creation of a Language Access and Inclusive Community Service department that can develop a system-wide approach to addressing linguistic and cultural barriers including ongoing needs assessment, recruitment and training of qualified interpreters, and cultural humility training for clinicians and staff. The requested new SSM FTE will oversee two existing Community Health Workers (CHWs). The grant will provide full funding for the SSM for the first year and offset 50% of the cost of two CHW Indigenous interpreters who will also serve as community service workers to provide navigation and patient education. The other 50% of the CHWs are funded by PATH IGT. The added SSM will be included in the Ventura County Medical System budget in future years.

HCA leadership and the Health Care Foundation of Ventura County (HCFVC) are committed to the success of the new Language Access and Inclusive Community Service department and are actively working with members of the community who want to provide financial assistance beyond the State's LIIG grant. Driscoll's, Inc. has verbally committed to fund \$200,000 per year for a minimum of three years, beginning October 1, 2024. Driscoll's, Inc.'s generous funding will be made to the HCFVC, and then the HCFVC will donate the funds to HCA. HCA will return to your Board to accept the donation once the details are finalized. HCA and HCFVC anticipate additional alternative sources of funding through aligned donors and grant opportunities to offset some direct costs for at least the next three years.

This letter has been reviewed by the County Executive Office, County Counsel, and Auditor-Controller's Office. If you have any questions regarding this item, please call Minako Watabe, MD, Chief Medical Officer at (805) 652-6062.

  
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John Fankhauser, M.D.  
Chief Executive Officer, County Hospitals  
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Theresa Cho, MD  
Director, Health Care Agency

**Exhibit 1:** LIIG Fiscal year 2023-24 RFP-July Revision  
**Exhibit 2:** Resolution to add 1 FTE  
**Exhibit 3:** Project Budget