



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 18-1176, **Version:** 1

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Health and Human Services Agency recommending the Board:

- 1) Approve and authorize the Chair to sign Agreement for Services 2518 with Continuing Development Inc., doing business as Choices for Children, for the provision of Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children Services, effective upon execution through June 30, 2021, with a maximum of \$266,424;
- 2) Find that in accordance with Ordinance section 3.13.030, it is more economical and feasible to engage an independent contractor; and
- 3) Authorize the Purchasing Agent, or designee, to execute further documents relating to Agreement for Services 2518, including amendments which do not increase the maximum dollar amount or term of the Agreement, and contingent upon approval by County Counsel and Risk Management.

**FUNDING:** State General Fund, leveraged on an annually adjusted basis by Federal funds at a percentage established based on prior fiscal year caseload.

**DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND:**

On June 27, 2017, Senate Bill (SB) 89 was approved by the Governor; included in SB 89 is a requirement that effective January 1, 2018, the "Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children" (Bridge) be established by the State. The purpose of the Bridge program is to provide a mechanism for County Welfare Departments to ensure availability of child care for foster families during the first six (6) to twelve (12) months of foster care, whereupon the child care subsidy will commence and the Bridge Program payments for child care services will be discontinued for that client.

Pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section (WIC) 11461.6, the Emergency Child Care Bridge Program for Foster Children shall be administered by county welfare departments that choose to participate in the program. On November 24, 2017 (17-1181, Item 45), the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) received approval from the Board to submit a plan to the California Department of Social Services to opt-in and participate in the Bridge Program. Following Board approval, HHSA submitted the opt-in application to the State in November 2017. This Agreement is a result of the Board's approval to opt-in to the Emergency Child Care Bridge.

There are three components of the Bridge program: (1) The provision of child care payments (2) a child care navigator to assist families with finding care, and (3) trauma-informed care training for care providers who will also receive coaching to assist them in applying training curriculum and learn strategies for working with children in foster care.

The Bridge Program requires counties to enter into an agreement with the local resource and referral (R&R) agency for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> service components offered through the program. Choices for Children is the organization designated by the State of California Department of Education to serve as the R&R for El Dorado County. Contracting with this vendor ensures HHSA is in compliance with the requirements. Choices for Children also operates as the Alternative Payment Program for El Dorado County, and while the County is not required to contract for the child care payment portion of

the Bridge Program, the vendor is uniquely qualified and can more economically and feasibly perform the child care payment service.

The Bridge Program aims to increase the number of foster children successfully placed in home-based family care settings, increase capacity of child care programs to meet the needs of foster children in their care, and maximize funding to support the child care needs of eligible families by leveraging State General Fund with federal funds based on the percentage of annual caseloads.

Families meeting the eligibility requirements set forth by the funding source may receive payments for child care that are commensurate with the regional market rates for up to six months, as described in Section 8357 of the Education Code. Each child receiving a monthly child care payment or voucher shall be provided with a child care navigator, pursuant to paragraph (5) of Subdivision (a) of Section 8212 of the Education Code, who shall work directly with the child's family, social worker, and the child and family team to assist in accessing child care at the time of placement as well as long-term, subsidized child care for the child, as necessary. The Bridge Program is not intended to create an entitlement but rather is a voluntary program requiring counties to opt-in for participation.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board could decline to approve the recommended Agreement, whereupon the allocated funding would go unspent.

**OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

County Counsel, Human Resources, and Risk Management.

**CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Board approve this item.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no Net County Cost associated with this Agenda item. Sufficient appropriations were included in the fiscal year 2018-19 budget, and will be included in future budgets for the term of the Agreement assuming funds are appropriated in the State budget.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

- 1) Clerk of the Board to obtain signature of Chair on two (2) original Agreements for Services #2518.
- 2) Clerk of the Board to return one (1) fully executed Agreement to the HHS Contract Unit at 3057 Briw Road, Placerville, CA.

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT:**

County Strategic Goal 1 - Healthy Communities, Objective 1: "Protect against adverse outcomes among children and youth, adults and seniors."

**CONTACT**

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