



Legislation Text

File #: 21-1183, **Version:** 1

Health and Human Services Agency recommending the Board:

- 1) Make findings in accordance with County Ordinance 3.13.030 (b) that it is appropriate to contract with Interface Children and Family Services for the provision of 2-1-1 Information and Referral services provided under Agreement 5792, as there are specialty skills, qualifications, and equipment not expressly identified in County classifications involved in the performance of the work;
- 2) Approve and authorize the Chair to sign Agreement for Services 5792 with Interface Children and Family Services in the amount of \$216,715.50 for the term of 2 years from September 1, 2021 through August 31, 2023; and
- 3) Authorize the Health and Human Services Agency Director, or designee, to execute further documents relating to Agreement for Services 5792, contingent upon County Counsel and Risk Management approval, including amendments which do not increase the maximum dollar amount or term of the Agreement.

FUNDING: 100% General Fund.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND:

On October 10, 2017, the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) presented an overview of 2-1-1 services to the Board (Item No. 17-1010; Agenda No. 33), after which the Board gave direction to staff to move forward with the 2-1-1 information and referral service. Thereafter, a Request for Proposals was launched to solicit contractors for consideration, and on March 13, 2018, the Board awarded Request for Proposals 18-915-028 to the only successful proposer, Interface Children and Family Services (ICFS), to provide 2-1-1 Information and Referral services and authorized the Purchasing Agent to execute an Agreement for Services with ICFS. ICFS operates 2-1-1 Ventura County, the longest running 2-1-1 service in the State of California. It also provides 2-1-1 services to seventeen other California counties, with services including 2-1-1 telephone and text handling services; they are the largest provider of 2-1-1 services in the State of California. On July 31, 2018, Agreement 2853 was executed by the Purchasing Agent for a term that began July 31, 2018 and continues through August 31, 2021 with a maximum obligation of \$150,000.

As the term of Agreement 2853 was anticipated to sunset, HHSA staff set up meetings with ICFS to begin discussions around a potential renewal for services. The meetings focused on developing an understanding of updates to rates and services that would now become available through a new, updated agreement. Also discussed was the topic of 'level of service,' and should HHSA recommend continuing the program, we would need to understand how ICFS would support improved and enhanced levels of service now that the infrastructure from 2-1-1 has been put into place over the past 3 years. Through these meetings, ICFS informed HHSA that their standard County rate for service has increased. Under the current Agreement, the County pays a reduced and outdated rate, as this lower cost was a starting place for launching 2-1-1 because it was difficult to anticipate what level of service demand there would be initially in the community. The reason for the updated rate, which is the standard rate across all counties, is because call levels and demand have increased and therefore ICFS has increased their staffing and have added additional features specifically due to a combination of the COVID-19 pandemic, Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS), and Fires. The

following reflects an overview of the updated features and staffing associated with the updated rates:

1) 2-Way Texting:

ICFS has historically provided El Dorado County residents with a 2-way text messaging feature to receive information and referral services, as an alternative to residents utilizing the website or calling the phone number. This feature has been significantly upgraded in response to COVID-19, fires, and PSPS events with new features. For example, El Dorado residents will now be able to text "fire" or "PSPS" to 211211 from their mobile device. Once this text is sent, ICFS responds with the most current information available regarding the specific event being referenced in our local area. In regards to fires, information put out by local or State Office of Emergency Services is captured and continually updated in the ICFS system, which is then sent as a response to "fire" texts with that updated information. In regards to PSPS events, ICFS works closely with PG&E, and ICFS continually updates power outage information and estimated recovery times in their system, which is then sent as a response to "PSPS" texts with that updated information.

2) PSPS Household Assistance:

Starting in September 2021, ICFS will be able to help households to proactively prepare for PSPS events, in addition to responding during PSPS events. Households who require access to services unique to them, or who have functional or access needs when power is down, can call '2-1-1' to be supported year-round to prepare for PSPS events. ICFS staff will work with the household to understand what their specific needs are, will make referrals and connections to services and resources that help meet those needs, and thereby assist households to develop their plan for what they will do during PSPS events. This feature will help reduce the number of calls to 2-1-1 during PSPS events by helping households prepare before the event instead of only responding to calls during events. For this service, El Dorado County will receive \$7,710 annually in the form of a bill credit with ICFS, which will pay for the described services. These funds are being paid for by PG&E. Therefore, the annual contract amount will therefore be less \$7,710 in costs, due to the credits. Additionally, should 2-1-1 call volumes increase during PSPS events, calls not specifically PSPS related will be billed to PG&E for all calls above and beyond the terms of El Dorado's contract.

3) Disaster Case Management System:

As California Counties have experienced more regular wildfires, a "Disaster Case Management System" (DCMS) has been developed within ICFS that can be requested during fire events. This system was developed separate from the iCarol system, which is used to track standard 2-1-1 caller data. Through the DCMS, ICFS tracks residents who, for example, went to a Community Resource Center to register for FEMA or for other recovery services. If this DCMS product were requested and made available in El Dorado, when a resident would call 2-1-1 to use that system, ICFS would monitor and track linkage and referrals to community and government organizations as clients go through their long-term recovery process. The DCMS allows ICFS to not only make referrals, it also allows for an organized case management function to see what types of disaster recovery services the caller has received. This feature does not come standard with the updated rate, however upon request this function can be made available through the updated contract for a low cost of license fees and training on how to use the system. Currently, across counties support by ICFS, several thousand California residents are being tracked and supported through this system.

4) Staffing Size:

ICFS operated with 25 staff in 2018 when our first agreement was established. Currently in 2021, ICFS is made up of 100 staff throughout the State who operate their call centers. The updated rate

will allow El Dorado County to utilize the full staffing available through ICFS, which will increase the quality and level of services for 2-1-1 callers. Through increasing staff, ICFS has also developed a dedicated disaster response team that works year-round to ensure staff, systems, and partner relationships are available to respond to natural and public health incidents. During a disaster event, HHSA can facilitate approval of activating the disaster response team. For a fee of up to \$2,500 per event, authorizing this response team would immediately allow this team as well as additional operators to be made available to meet increased call volume and demand for assistance.

5) Statewide contracts and partnerships:

For disaster response associated with PSPS or fires, ICFS has developed partnerships with Airbnb, Lyft, and DoorDash, to provide shelter, transportation, and food delivery support where those services are available. Should local shelter food, shelter, or transportation options not be an option for any reason, these partnerships have expanded the options available to residents. ICFS has also secured several statewide 2-1-1 contracts which will provide support for some of the County's 2-1-1 costs over the next few years. Those statewide services include services during Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) events, Tobacco Cessation assistance, and CDPH COVID-19 funding. While these State contracts will not lower our fees, they are anticipated to help control fee increases.

HHSA is recommending approval of the continuation of services under the new Agreement 5792 for a two-year term to ensure continued 2-1-1 Information and Referral services, while adding enhanced access to staffing and new features that will provide improved support for the community. As PSPS events have become a regular occurrence locally, as COVID-19 has impacted residents and their ongoing need to stay safe and healthy, and now as the Caldor fire is an active event in the County which will transition to a long-term recovery process over the coming weeks and months, the timing of this renewal provides a timely opportunity to improve 2-1-1 capabilities through the enhanced features while continuing these services.

In accordance with Board of Supervisors Procurement Policy C-17, Section 7.11, the contractor selection process for service contracts in excess of \$100,000 must include a review of the scope of services and contractor's professional qualifications by a group of individuals (including at least one representative from outside the department requesting the services) qualified to judge the contractor's ability to perform the services. HHSA has documentation on file that such a review was performed for Agreement 5792.

ALTERNATIVES:

Should the Board decline to approve this recommendation, an agreement for 2-1-1 services with ICFS would not be renewed with the enhanced services. This would lead to discontinuing 2-1-1 services for residents effective September 1, 2021. In this scenario, the Board may choose to discontinue 2-1-1 services all together or may authorize HHSA to procure an alternative Vendor through a bidding process.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION:

1. File ID 17-1010, 10/10/17 HHSA 2-1-1 Presentation
2. File ID 18-0341, 03/13/18 HHSA 2-1-1 Request for Proposal Award

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Approved by County Counsel, Information Technologies, and Risk Management.

The Auditor Controller was notified per Policy B-12.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

Approve as recommended noting the following:

The cost increase totaling \$66,216 is paid with the General Fund and these additional costs were not included in the recommended budget that was approved by the Board in June 2021. While the County will have sufficient year end fund balance to cover these additional costs, due to the timing of this contract the Board is unable to consider these additional costs in the context of other budget requests that will be considered during the adopted budget in September. However, it should be noted this contract allows the County to terminate the agreement without cause upon seven calendar days written notice. In the event the Board identifies other priorities during the adopted budget discussions and chooses not to continue paying for these services, the County can discontinue the services without incurring future, ongoing costs.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The total increase for 211 monthly services over the prior contract is \$66,216 of Net County Cost to be funded with General Fund dollars. The increase is associated with increased services and does not account for the anticipated annual credit of \$7,710 mentioned above.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

- 1) Clerk of the Board to obtain signature of Chair on two (2) original Agreements for Services 5792.
- 2) Clerk of the Board to return one (1) fully executed Agreement to the Health and Human Services Agency, Contracts Division.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT:

County Strategic Plan Goal “Healthy Communities: Improved health, well-being and self-sufficiency of El Dorado County communities, residents and visitors” and “Infrastructure: Provide, operate and maintain infrastructure, public facilities and associated services that protect our community, environment and economic well-being.”

CONTACT

Don Semon, Director, Health and Human Services Agency