



## Legislation Text

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File #: 22-0435, Version: 1

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Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) recommending the Board:

- 1) Accept a one-time non-competitive Bringing Families Home (BFH) funding allocation, administered by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), for the term upon acceptance through June 30, 2024, in the estimated amount of \$279,991;
- 2) Authorize the HHS Director to execute the attached Director's Certification, required to be submitted to the CDSS by March 25, 2022, in order to accept this BFH funding allocation; and
- 3) Authorize the HHS Director, or designee, to execute and administer any subsequent administrative documents relating to said award or amendment(s) that do not increase the total funding allocation beyond \$380,000 or the term of the allocation, contingent upon County Counsel and Risk Management approval, including required fiscal and programmatic reports.

**FUNDING:** 100% State General Fund revenue, authorized pursuant to The Budget Act of 2021 appropriated for the Bringing Families Home program. No matching funds are required.

**DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND:**

On February 11, 2022, the County of El Dorado Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) received a Notice of Funding for the Bringing Families Home (BFH) program, via an All County Welfare Director Letter (ACWDL) addressed to county child welfare agencies and tribes in the state of California. The BFH is administered by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and was established under The Budget Act of 2021 (Senate Bill 129 (Chapter 69, Statutes of 2021)), which appropriated a total of \$92.5 million to California counties in General Funds (GF) for BFH for Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-22. The one-time, non-competitive BFH allocation for the County of El Dorado (County) is estimated to be \$279,991, requires no match funding, for the term upon acceptance through June 30, 2024. The County funding allocation is subject to increase if other counties do not accept the funding already allocated to them by the CDSS for BFH, therefore, to allow for the County to receive this redistributed funding allocation increase, HHS is requesting the Board authorize acceptance of the BFH allocation amount not to exceed \$380,000.

The purposes of the BFH program are for county child welfare divisions to establish, continue, and expand housing and homelessness assistance and prevention services to families receiving child welfare services who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness, thereby increasing family reunification and preventing foster care placement. BFH grantees are allowed to expend funds on evidence-based solutions that address and prevent homelessness among eligible populations, with a specific focus on rehousing homeless individuals and families into safe, permanent housing, with allowable activities outlined in Welfare Institution Code (WIC) Sections 16523-16523. The BFH program must utilize equitable and standardized assessment strategies to determine each family's housing and service needs, match appropriate housing services, and further prioritize program services. Services provided must utilize trauma-informed and client-centered practices, and take into account input from the family, based on the needs of the family, and in coordination with other services being provided by child welfare services, tribes, family resource centers, family courts, and/or other service providers.

Pursuant to WIC Section 16523.1(c), BFH funding must be used to support projects that utilize evidence-based housing interventions consistent with Housing First principles, to assist county child welfare clients with achieving housing stability across the full continuum of housing services to meet the varied needs of families, whether they are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of homelessness. Evidence-based and promising models include housing related financial assistance and wrap-around supportive services including, but not limited to: Rapid Rehousing, Supportive Housing, and Targeted Prevention Services to help individuals and families gain or regain housing stability. This may include rental or utility arrears, late fee payments, first and last month's rent and/or security deposits, ongoing rental assistance, landlord mediation, repairs, connection to housing stabilization services, habitability/accessibility improvements, and housing navigation.

In order to be eligible for the BFH program services, an individual or family, including but not limited to biological parents, guardians, or kinship guardians (e.g. applicable grandparents), must receive child welfare services at the time eligibility is determined, and must also be classified as: a) homeless as defined in WIC Section 16523(d); b) at risk of homelessness; or c) in a situation that cannot accommodate a child or multiple children in the home.

The BFH program will be a new implementation for County's Child Welfare Services (CWS) with the program planned for implementation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-23. Upon Board acceptance of this funding allocation, County CWS will begin the planning phase to determine the program service array, with the preliminary goal to expand child welfare services by providing housing-related supports to participating individuals and families, which shall include, but not be limited to, housing-related case management, housing navigation, housing-related direct financial assistance, and housing stabilization services, to help stabilize families at-risk of homelessness with BFH services intended to help prevent entry into the child welfare system.

The deadline for counties to return a signed Director's Certification to the CDSS to accept this funding is March 25, 2022.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Should the Board decline to accept this non-competitive funding allocation, or decline to authorize the HHSA Director to sign the attached Director's Certification, the County will not receive the estimated \$279,991 in funds to support families receiving child welfare services.

**PRIOR BOARD ACTION:**

N/A

**OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

County Counsel approved the BFH Director's Certification.

**CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve as recommended.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

BFH is funded by State General Fund and does not have a match requirement. There is no impact to County General Fund and there is no impact to the FY 2021-22 Budget. HHSA have included this allocation in the FY 2022-23 Budget request, and will be including BFH in future budgets for the term of the funding allocation.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

N/A

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT:**

County Strategic Goal: "Healthy Communities, Improved Health, Well-being, and Self-sufficiency of El Dorado County communities, residents, and visitors."

**CONTACT**

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