



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 22-1036, **Version:** 1

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

- 1) Make findings that the provision of Family Urgent Response System services provided by contractor are in the public's best interest and that there are specialty skills, qualifications, and equipment not expressly identified in County classifications involved in the performance of the work in accordance with El Dorado County Ordinance Code, Chapter 3.13.030(B), El Dorado County Charter, Section 210(b)(6), and/or Government Code Section 31000;
- 2) Approve and authorize the Chair to sign Agreement for Services 6704 with Sierra Child and Family Services, Inc., with a not-to-exceed amount of \$2,669,976, and for the term upon execution through July 31, 2025; and
- 3) Authorize the HHS Director, or the Assistant Director of Human Services, to execute further documents relating to Agreement 6704, contingent upon approval by County Counsel and Risk Management, including amendments which do not increase the maximum dollar amount or term of the Agreement.

**FUNDING:** 100% State General Fund.

**DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND:**

The State of California (State) established the Family Urgent Response System (FURS) program in 2019 through the enactment of Senate Bill 80 as amended by Assembly Bill 79 (Statutes of 2020). The Budget Act of 2020 enacted by Governor Newsom allocated the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) \$26.1 million in State General Funds for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 for the FURS program to be enacted, with continued allocations planned for future fiscal years. CDSS, in consultation with the County Welfare Directors Association, allocated funding directly to all California county child welfare jurisdictions for the implementation of a countywide established Mobile Response System and Stabilization Team (MRSST).

The FURS program builds upon the Continuum of Care Reform (statutes of 2015), which reformed child welfare services for foster youth by reducing the use of group homes and increasing the use of home-based caregiver placements. The FURS is a coordinated statewide, regional, and county-level system designed to provide collaborative and immediate phone-based response through a CDSS-operated hotline, coupled with county-level telephone response and in-person mobile response stabilization services, during situations of instability for purposes of preserving the relationship of the caregiver and the foster child or youth.

As mandated under the FURS program pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code Section 16526 through 16530, the CDSS in conjunction with California county child welfare jurisdictions must provide immediate trauma-informed support on a twenty four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week basis, to include providing urgent telephone response, and in-person response and stabilization services to foster youth and/or caregivers, to assist them with trauma-informed supports. These supports are intended to have multiple effects, including preventing placement disruptions; preserving the relationship between the child or youth and their caregiver; and preventing the need for a 911 call or law enforcement involvement.

CDSS required the FURS statewide toll-free hotline and county telephone response answering and in-person stabilization services to begin operation on March 1, 2021. The County of El Dorado (County) and County of Alpine Child Welfare programs each received an initial FURS allocation of \$443,508 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 to implement the FURS mandate. The County of Alpine requested that the County of El Dorado's Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) Child Welfare Services (CWS) provide the state-mandated FURS and MRSST services for Alpine County foster youth/caregivers, and as a result, entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (#6300) with the County specifying that El Dorado County would provide these services for both Counties. In this MOU, El Dorado County agreed to initiate a Request for Proposal (RFP) to obtain a single contractor to provide the mandated FURS and MRSST services to both Alpine and El Dorado Counties if needed. Furthermore, Alpine County requested that their FURS allocation be reallocated to the County of El Dorado by the CDSS, thereby, increasing the County's allocation to \$887,016 for FY 2020-21. Future annual FURS allocations are expected to continue for the ongoing operation of the County operated MRSST.

Although county child welfare jurisdictions are the direct recipients of the FURS state allocation, legislation requires that child welfare, probation and behavioral health jurisdictions work together to establish a joint county-based mobile response system, including a stabilization team to provide in-person support as needed. In a joint effort to implement the County-level FURS mobile response system, County CWS, Probation and the Behavioral Health Division (BHD) have been working together to support the foster youth and their caregivers in El Dorado and Alpine Counties since the FURS required implementation on March 1, 2021. Each of these programs have determined that they lack adequate staff to fully implement the FURS MRSST using County personnel and it was determined that a solicitation was needed to procure a subcontractor to provide these mandated services. Accordingly, on March 31, 2022, the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) Procurement and Contracts Division, released RFP 22-918-049 to solicit providers to operate the HHS FURS phone system and MRSST in both El Dorado and Alpine Counties.

A single proposal was received by Sierra Child and Family Services (SCFS), Inc., which met the requirements of the RFP. This proposal was evaluated by a panel of three (3) raters, including members from the HHS CWS, BHD and Alpine County, who are knowledgeable of the FURS program and system response needs. As a result of the RFP evaluative process, HHS requested the Board approve the award of this RFP to the SCFS, to provide the FURS and MRSST service; which the Board approved on June 21, 2022 (File ID: 22-0988).

This Agreement 6704 is HHS's agreement for the FURS and MRSST services with SCFS.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Should the Board decline to approve this recommendation, HHS may likely be unable to meet the mandated FURS and MRSST service requirements as it does not possess the qualified staff. Provided services may result in staff overtime hours and inadequate services.

**PRIOR BOARD ACTION:**

06/21/22, 22-0988, HHS Request to Award Request for Proposal for Family Urgent Response System and Mobile Response System and Stabilization Services

**OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:**

Approved by County Counsel, Procurement and Contracts, and Risk Management. The Auditor Controller has been notified per Board Policy B-12.

**CAO RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve as recommended.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no impact to the General Fund related to the Agreement. Services provided will be funded by the CDSS appropriated funds allocated to the HHS Child Welfare Services for FURS and MRSST. This funding and sufficient appropriations are included in the FY 2022-23 Recommended Budget and will be included in subsequent fiscal year budget requests for the term of the Agreement.

**CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

Clerk of the Board to obtain signature of Chair on one (1) original Agreements for Services 6704.

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT:**

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

**CONTACT**

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