

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES

August 26, 2021 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, August 26, 2021 virtually & telephonically pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 and the Twelfth Supplement to Mayoral Proclamation Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency dated February 25, 2020.

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY (VIA ZOOM)	SCOTT KAHN, President JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President RITA SEMEL DARSHAN SINGH GEORGE YAMASAKI, JR.
OTHERS PRESENT REMOTELY (VIA ZOOM)	Trent Rhorer, Executive Director Elizabeth LaBarre, Executive Assistant to the Executive Director / Secretary – Human Services Commission Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance and Administration Joan Miller, Deputy Director – Family and Children's Services Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy and Planning Other department staff and interested citizens
ROLL CALL	President Kahn called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. noting the presence of all Commissioners.
AGENDA	On motion of Commissioner McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the agenda as posted.
MINUTES	On motion of Commissioner McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the minutes of the June 24, 2021 Regular Meeting as circulated.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT	Executive Director Trent Rhorer furnished an update regarding federal, state and local activities.

**FEDERAL**

The House on Tuesday approved a \$3.5 trillion budget blueprint that would pave the way for a vast expansion of the country's social safety net as part of President Biden's ambitious domestic agenda. The blueprint includes universal preschool, paid family leave, federal support for child care and elder care and an expansion of Medicare. It is at least an initial step. It got through with no Republican support but did bridge support between moderate and progressive Democrats, which is a first step toward an aggressive agenda with many programs that help our clients.

**STATE**

Not much is happening at the state level. The budget was approved. Now Sacramento is tasked with operationalizing the expansion of benefits.

**COVID-19**

While we are no longer standing up and operating hotels to emergency house the homeless, HSA is working with the City and partnering with the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), along with continuing to provide disaster service workers at the existing facilities, to demobilize four facilities. Part of the process includes HSA returning the facilities to their original conditions, before they were leased by the City, so that they can be returned to the hotel owners. FEMA has extended 100% reimbursement for the hotels through the end of the year. This extension is making it possible for HSH to take more, needed time to transition hotel inhabitants to permanent housing. It has proven to be a huge undertaking with many challenges so the additional time really helps and prevents the City's general fund from being exposed to huge, unanticipated costs.

The three major focuses for HSA at the moment are food support, partnering with the Department of Public Health (DPH) to get residents vaccinated and reopening the Agency to the “new normal.”

HSA has partnered with DPH since early June to organize vaccination mobile clinics at our service centers at 1235 Mission, 170 Otis and 1650 Mission. The uptake has not been huge—these efforts resulted in 60 vaccinations. In order to more efficiently increase vaccination rates among HSA clients specifically, we are undertaking a massive, targeted communications effort in partnership with DPH to include texts, emails and postcards. Texts went out to 8,526 unvaccinated adults in their preferred languages on Friday, August 7. All recipients had previously approved this method of communication. Emails went out to 21,032 unvaccinated Economic Support and Self-sufficiency (ESSS) clients not reachable via text on Tuesday, August 10. Emails will go out to 145 community-based organizations (CBOs) on August 30 to update them about the vaccination opportunities and encourage them to share the information with staff, family, friends, and clients. Postcards will be mailed to 22,014 unvaccinated IHSS and ESSS households before month end in our threshold languages. Working together at the COVID Command Center (CCC) during the height of the pandemic solidified a strong relationship with DPH that has been helpful with many collaborations. DPH has a vaccine hotline for any questions. All HSA clients will soon receive a letter listing assistance programs, including information about vaccination sites, rent assistance, legal assistance, JobsNOW! and the Child Tax Credit.

The return to office plan is very fluid. Many City departments including HSA successfully pushed back on the City's planned reopening date of September 13, citing, among other issues, the rise of the Delta variant. The updated reopening date is November 1, 10 weeks after the FDA's approval of the Pfizer vaccine, which triggers the requirement of City employees to be vaccinated. This assures that the workplace is as safe as possible, knowing that all employees are vaccinated. The fluid nature of this and quite frankly all aspects of the pandemic have been challenging for employees so the HSA Communications team is working on an effective communication strategy to engage with employees ahead of the part-time return to office and to assist with keeping at bay fear, misinformation and confusion. City guidance for the return to work plan on November 1 is a 40% on-site system—about 2 days per week for most. This type of schedule does not work for every employee. The most difficult part of determining appropriate schedules is not knowing how

many clients will return to in-person services at our lobbies. It is possible we will serve more clients than previously once benefits expire. Alternatively, perhaps clients will be used to the online and telephone options so lobby traffic will be reduced. We just don't know at this point. While employee safety is paramount, providing services to clients is the most important priority.

Communication products to help with the return to work include email updates to employees, a video produced with HR outlining what staff can expect when returning, along with employee welcome kits distributed to desks. This afternoon, Executive Directors Rhorer and Dearman will host an all-staff virtual town hall specifically to address staff questions and concerns, requested in advance, around returning to the office.

All employees were required to report their vaccination status earlier this month: 97% have reported their vaccination status and 80% of HSA employees have been vaccinated. We really need to get that last 20% over the hump so we are working with DPH on an action plan.

### **ADMIN**

The biggest lift is on our IT and Facilities staff. IT is preparing the client lobbies and interview booths with new computers. They are also backfilling office cubicles and offices with external monitors that were taken during the early pandemic days. Executive Director Rhorer took a moment to give Natalie Toledo, the Director of IT and her team a "shout out" for their exceptional and hard work on site.

### **ESSS**

#### **WDD**

There has been significant Agency investment in clients affected by COVID, either due to illness or job loss. The various programs include the strengthening of the JobsNOW! program to increase engagement and support to job seekers and small businesses recovering from the economic hardships brought on by COVID-19; adjusted wage subsidy tiers to assist employers retain employees by increasing subsidy amounts to 100% wage reimbursement during first 3 months; and expanding the JobsNOW! jobseeker population to include those households earning less than 300% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), which is an almost 2.5 times higher threshold than the clientele typically applicable. In the last two months, we have placed 96 individuals in wage subsidy jobs. We expect the placements to be upward of 3,000 as more people are vaccinated and the Delta variant declines.

We are co-locating with the Employment Development Department (EDD) with a lease at 801 Turk. We will have staff on site so that we can help bridge individuals who are timing out of unemployment insurance benefits to JobsNOW! and other benefits.

HSA has \$1M in funding for the digital divide to equip clients with laptops or tablets, paired with digital literacy training and technical support to assist clients attend online interviews and prepare them for a digital world and workplace. This new initiative has currently served 88 of 1,000 possible clients.

We provided 403 families on CalWORKs who have undocumented parents and US-born children with a \$2500 one-time benefit to compensate them for not qualifying for the federal COVID-19 stimulus funds. CalWORKs and WDD staff provide light case management to the families after the payment is issued to help them toward self-sufficiency goals.

Last year, we began engagement incentives for CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work participants in unpaid activities, allowing them to earn up to \$500 in incentive payments if they participate in activities for 10 weeks. To date, 49 participants have received incentives.

The annual Working Families Credit program received 3,700 applications this year. We anticipate that about 3,200 will be approved. Under Mayor Breed, the program, once a one-time benefit, is now available every year. In addition, families will receive \$500 instead of the usual \$250.

We had a large budget planned for JobsNOW! but with the second surge the dollars were not needed. We decided in partnership with the Mayor to shift the money to the undocumented community. The new program, the COVID-19 Relief for Healthy SF Participants Program, provides \$550 VISA gift cards to over 5,400 undocumented, low-income San Franciscans. The clients were identified through their participation in the Healthy San Francisco (HSF) health plan, which provides affordable health care services to uninsured San Francisco residents who do not qualify for Medi-Cal (mostly due to immigration status). The San Francisco Health Plan (SFHP), which administers Healthy SF, will donate all labor and mailing costs associated with this project. This is another example of successful department partnerships.

## **SFBN**

### ***Medi-Cal***

Assembly Bill (AB) 133 expands eligibility for full scope Medi-Cal to individuals who are 50 years of age or older (it was previously for those 60 and older) and who do not have satisfactory immigration status. This is called the Older Adult Expansion and will be implemented no sooner than May 1, 2022.

The Asset Test, which used to require that Medi-Cal-eligible recipients have no more than \$2,000 in assets/savings for individuals or \$3,000 for families, was altered with AB 470. Effective July 2022, asset limit standards increase to \$130,000 for 1 individual with \$65,000 for each additional household member (up to 10 members). Contingent on Federal approval and the completion of automation, the asset test could be completely eliminated by January 2024. We have fought for this for over 20 years.

Under provisions of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Medi-Cal postpartum coverage period will be extended from two months to 12 months effective April 1, 2022. Pregnant individuals who are eligible under a Medi-Cal program will maintain coverage through their pregnancy and an extended postpartum coverage period regardless of income changes, citizenship or immigration status.

## **CalFresh**

You may have seen this in the press. The revised Thrifty Food program takes effect in October for all CalFresh households. Allotments will increase an average of over 20% for the first time in decades. A household of one could see a monthly issuance of \$250, as opposed to \$204 a year ago. This will effect over 55,000 San Franciscans.

The Pandemic EBT program rolls out new reloadable P-EBT cards across California for the 2020-21 school year. The California Department of Social Services has mailed all benefit cards to young children under the age of 6 who were part of a CalFresh household. Approximately one million cards with up to \$492 in benefits cover October to January. P-EBT cards for about four million school-aged children who qualify for free or reduced priced meals have been mailed. The first issuance of up to \$738 in benefits covers the August to January period and then benefits continue throughout the school year.

## **FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES (FCS)**

In response to Commissioner Semel's question from the June commission meeting where she asked about the success of resource family recruitment efforts, Executive Director Rhorer received the necessary data from his staff and shared that there has been a 244% increase in interest since last fiscal year (FY), meaning 327 San Franciscans contacted FCS to inquire about becoming a resource parent/family compared to 134 the prior fiscal year. There was a 70% increase in actual applications this FY compared to last FY, and a fourfold increase in approvals this FY. Total approvals this FY, while only 22, is actually an impressive number, especially when we consider the challenges of doing any business during the pandemic. We only had six approvals during FY19-20. Existing resource parents are hesitant to take children during COVID-19 for fear of exposure, so it is especially worth applauding the work of the campaign that it was able to produce four times more families willing to take in children during these unprecedented times. Our goal for this fiscal year is 100 approved families.

A priority for FCS has been to reduce the number of days it takes to approve a resource family and they have been successful. In 2019, the median rate was 153 days. In 2020, during the pandemic, which complicates everything, FCS reduced the time to a median of 96 days.

California has received federal funding to send a one-time direct stimulus payment in the form of a pre-paid debit cash card to all eligible current foster youth ages 18-20 who complete the application on the Chafee Card Portal, manned by the state, by the September 3, 2021 deadline. The supportive transition units (STU) have been working with Robin Love's team to ensure our youth who meet the criteria have all of the information they need in order to get their Chafee Cards. Over 80% of our youth have been contacted regarding their Chafee cards as of this report.

At the end of Executive Director Rhorer's report, Commissioner Semel shared her appreciation of and admiration for Mr. Rhorer and his team's work.

EMPLOYEE OF  
THE MONTH  
AWARD

President Kahn announced DEANNA MAXEY, SFBN Supervisor, as the August 2021 Employee of the Month. The Commission recognized Deanna for her management skills with the SFBN outreach team that provides application assistance to the homeless persons living in the shelter-in-place hotels, congregate sites and Safe Sleep encampments. Deanna was awarded an engraved desk clock.

CONSENT  
CALENDAR

On motion of Commissioner Singh, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved and ratified actions taken by the Executive Director since the June 24, 2021 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of August 26, 2021:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$23,341,012 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts.
2. Submission of 9 temporary positions for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of June 16, 2021 – July 16, 2021.
3. Submission of 3 temporary positions for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of July 17, 2021 – August 20, 2021.
4. Submission of 28 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of June 16, 2021 – July 16, 2021.
5. Submission of 26 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of July 17, 2021 – August 20, 2021.

HOMELESSNESS  
AND  
SUPPORTIVE  
HOUSING FUND

Justin Chan, Principal Budget Analyst, presented the HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FUND FY 21-22 pursuant to Administrative Code Section 10.100-77(e).

Commissioner McCray asked about the bottom of the memo, page 1, where it states that both Care not Cash savings vehicles will be affected by the continuing COVID pandemic and economic recession. “How deeply have you projected the recession to be and how does that effect the fund?” Mr. Chan responded that the fund is mainly affected by how often we can offer shelter to CAAP recipients versus cash aid. The shelter capacity drives how much money we can save. If there aren’t beds available then CAAP clients receive the full cash amount. The fund will also be affected by our ability to find permanent housing solutions and get clients off of aid with employment opportunities. Executive Director Rhorer added that during the pandemic, HSH closed the shelters and for existing shelters significantly reduced capacity for safe social distancing. Part of Care not Cash is to be able to offer a shelter bed as an entitlement for homeless CAAP recipients. Since the beginning of Care not Cash in 2004, we have never had to cash people out but because we always had enough beds. Because of the pandemic, we did not have enough shelter beds, so as a result you will see a lot less money in the fund for housing since we spent money on cash grants to CAAP recipients. This was the first time we had to cash people out. Because of Delta, we are again halting the addition of more people/beds. We will slowly be able to have enough beds for everyone while we work on permanent housing, which will halt the cash grants.

On motion of Commissioner Singh, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the findings regarding the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Homelessness and Supportive Housing Fund savings of \$16,755,777 and approved the transmittal of the information to the Board of Supervisors and the Office of the Controller.

ANNUAL  
STATEMENT  
OF PURPOSE

Deputy Director Susie Smith presented the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Annual Statement of Purpose as required under Charter Section 4.102.2.

Commissioner McCray thanked Deputy Director Smith for her work and offered that the statement of purpose was exciting to read. He was impressed with the number of programs and the Agency's reach. Commissioner McCray noticed in Lucky Grocery yesterday that the shelves were quite bare so something is going on with food in the community. He then asked who provides the food coordination within our system and the community. In response, Ms. Smith stated that we of course administer CalFresh, but we also provide cash grants to community organizations who provide culturally appropriate food. HSA has also increased dollars to the food bank. During the pandemic, the community stepped up and some groups transitioned from their usual work to food support, which we supported. There are grocery store vouchers for San Franciscans who do not qualify for CalFresh. The home delivery meal program was expanded. We did community focus groups to find out the strengths and weaknesses of our pandemic efforts and we were told that, for example, working families actually need meals delivered. They often don't have time to go to the food bank. We also provide isolation & quarantine food support. Ultimately, there will be a \$42M investment by Mayor Breed in food support. Many of these contracts will go to the commission for approval in October. This has been a great opportunity for our department to be in the community with more frequency and has broadened our reach. Great Plates Delivered will be phased out because the FEMA funding is ending.

On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the Annual Statement of Purpose for Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

SF NEW DEAL

Thomas McClain, Community Services Specialist, presented the request to enter into a new grant agreement with SF NEW DEAL.

On motion of Commissioner Singh, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new grant agreement with SF NEW DEAL for the provision of the Takeout Today Program; for the period of August 30, 2021 through June 30, 2022; in the amount of \$500,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$550,000.

LA CASA DE LAS  
MADRES

Vlada Gulchin, Administrative Analyst, presented the request to enter into a new grant agreement with LA CASA DE LAS MADRES.

Commissioner Yamasaki supports the program but notes that local funds dominate at 65% of total cost. "Is there any coordinated effort to have either the state and/or the federal government contribute to this type of very important service?" Robin Love stated that we are using general fund due to

the local issue of a high rate of domestic violence in our FCS families. At this time, Ms. Love does not have state or federal funds on her radar, but her team is always looking for grant opportunities in partnership with Deputy Director Smith's team.

Executive Director Rhorer then added that under the federal Family First Act, which goes into effect October 1, we will be able to draw for the first time prevention dollars. It remains to be seen if this program would qualify; it is too early to know. The federal dollars would only apply to families not yet engaged in the child welfare system, which we do all the time, so we could possibly look at other contracts outside this existing contract to see if we can leverage federal dollars. We will be doing this with all relevant contracts anyway.

On motion of Commissioner McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new grant agreement with LA CASA DE LAS MADRES for the provision of Domestic Violence Prevention Services to families involved with Child Welfare; for the period of August 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024; in the amount of \$1,623,000, with a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$1,785,300.

#### AVANTPAGE

Katrina Williams, Human Resources Director, presented the request to modify an existing grant agreement with AVANTPAGE.

Commissioner Yamasaki requested clarification between a grant and contract. Avantpage is listed as a grant in the agenda and as a contract in the memorandum. Johanna Gendelman, Senior Contract Manager, stated that there was an error on the agenda, which she discussed with Commission Secretary Elizabeth LaBarre the previous day. Let it be noted in the minutes that the agenda is erroneous and should refer to Avantpage as an existing contract agreement.

On motion of Commissioner Singh, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing contract agreement with AVANTPAGE for the provision of Translation Services; for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022; for an additional amount of \$35,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$121,000.

#### TRUSTFORTE

Katrina Williams, Human Resources Director, presented the request to modify an existing grant agreement with TRUSTFORTE.

Let it be noted in the minutes that the agenda is erroneous and should refer to Trustforte as an existing contract agreement.

On motion of Commissioner McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing contract agreement with TRUSTFORTE for the provision of Translation Services; for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022; for an additional amount of \$35,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$121,000.

#### INTERNATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS CENTER

Katrina Williams, Human Resources Director, presented the request to modify an existing grant agreement with INTERNATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS CENTER.



Let it be noted in the minutes that the agenda is erroneous and should refer to International Effectiveness Center as an existing contract agreement.

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing contract agreement with INTERNATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS CENTER for the provision of Translation Services; for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022; for an additional amount of \$450,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$1,837,000.

LANGUAGE LINE Katrina Williams, Human Resources Director, presented the request to modify an existing grant agreement with LANGUAGE LINE.

Let it be noted in the minutes that the agenda is erroneous and should refer to Language Line as an existing contract agreement.

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing contract agreement with LANGUAGE LINE for the provision of Translation Services; for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022; for an additional amount of \$10,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$651,200.

EVIDENT CHANGE Casey Schutte, Program Support Analyst, presented the request to enter into a new contract agreement with EVIDENT CHANGE.

Commissioner Yamasaki noted that the memorandum for the Evident Change new contract request lists the request as a new grant agreement. Error so noted in the minutes.

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new contract agreement with EVIDENT CHANGE for the provision of Child Welfare Reporting and Analytics; for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024; in the amount of \$320,445, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$352,490.

MCT TECHNOLOGY Wei-min Wang, Data, Policy, and Impact Manager with OECE, presented the request to modify the existing contract agreement with MCT TECHNOLOGY.

Commissioner Semel asked Mr. Wang how many families are on the waitlist to which he responded that it is not technically a waitlist, it is an eligibility list, and there are currently 2,400 families on the list. It does not work as a first come, first served list. When families apply to Early Learning San Francisco, they are ranked based on various needs such as homelessness, involvement with FCS and income. Those with highest need are the first to receive subsidies. He added that families are especially looking for infant and toddler care.

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved to modify the existing contract agreement with MCT TECHNOLOGY, INC. for the provision of an OECE Waitlist Database; for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2023; for an additional amount of

\$164,430, plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$1,223,708.

ATT - BOX

Alex Shoyket, Infrastructure Manager, Information Technology, presented the request to modify an existing contract agreement with ATT – Box.

Commissioner Yamasaki stated that cloud is a hot item today, and this is a large amount of money paid for by 75% local dollars. ATT was selected in 2018. In this current contract, was there any search or thought of exploring other contractors both as to cost and capability? Mr. Shoyket responded that his team conducted a case study, they calculated the cost of an on-site upgrade, and they checked out the main competition, which is Microsoft 365. It was deemed, based on FCS use case, that ATT – Box is the best based on price and usability.

Commissioner McCray then mentioned that \$3M is wrapped up in the Box, including the licensing and hosting by ATT to which Mr. Shoyket stated yes, and the cost actually covers not only HSA but also HSH and DPH.

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing contract agreement with ATT-BOX for the provision of BOX access licenses and cloud content management; for the period of September 1, 2019 through June 30, 2024; for an additional amount of \$3,063,851, plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$3,874,559.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Kahn’s call for public comment yielded no responses.

PUBLIC MEETING  
ADJOURNMENT  
CLOSED  
SESSION

At 11:06 a.m., President Kahn adjourned the public meeting.

At 11:15 a.m., President Kahn convened the closed session as permitted by Government Code Section 54957 and San Francisco Administrative Code Section 67.10(b): Consideration of Executive Director’s performance under the Management Classification and Compensation Plan (MCCP) Post-Appointment Compensation Adjustment process.

RECONVENE IN  
OPEN SESSION

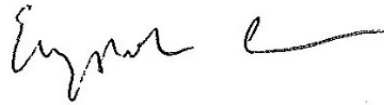
At 11:51 a.m., President Kahn reconvened the public meeting into open session. On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission elected to disclose some of the closed session discussion, to-wit:

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission acknowledged receipt and review of Executive Director Rhorer’s FY2020-2021 Performance Plan including progress and completion of department signature deliverables.

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission recommended that Mayor Breed approve a one-time compensation increase for Mr. Rhorer due to the Executive Director’s exemplary performance during FY2020-2021.

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the 2021-2022 HSA Executive Director Performance Plan.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT  
ADJOURNMENT      President Kahn's call for public comment yielded no responses.  
President Kahn adjourned the meeting at noon.



Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary  
Human Services Commission

Posted: September 17, 2021