

County of Santa Cruz

HUMAN RESOURCES AGENCY

Cecilia Espinola, Administrator

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August 20, 2001

AGENDA: September 25, 2001

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Santa Cruz

701 Ocean Street

Santa Cruz, CA. 95060

APPROVE THE INCLUSION OF CASH BENEFITS IN THE ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER PROJECT

Dear Members of the Board:

As you may know, the California Department of Social Services and the Health and Human Services Data Center (HHSDC) are partnering with California counties to implement an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system as mandated by welfare reform legislation. EBT is the automated delivery, redemption, and reconciliation of Food Stamp Program (FSP) and cash program benefits. It provides clients electronic access to food stamp and cash benefits through the use of EBT cards at point of sale (POS) devices and automated teller machines (ATMs). The EBT system will replace the current paper-based food coupon and warrant benefit issuance methods employed in the State of California for the distribution of the CDSS program benefits. Once implemented EBT will become, in effect, a statewide benefit issuance system. While EBT is federally mandated to replace food coupons, Counties have the option to use EBT for cash programs. In order to implement the EBT project within the mandated time period, HHSDC is requiring each county to make their decision regarding cash benefits. The purpose of this letter is to seek your Board's approval to include cash benefits for the CalWORKs, Refugee Cash Assistance, and General Assistance programs as part of EBT for Santa Cruz county.

To support this recommendation, HRA staff and the Auditor Controller's office have analyzed cost information provided by the project. In addition, HRA facilitated an informational meeting to inform the community about EBT and to solicit input on the cash decision. Based on the cost analysis and community input, HRA and the Auditor Controller recommend that the County of Santa Cruz include cash programs in the EBT project. Santa Cruz County is scheduled to implement EBT in October 2002.

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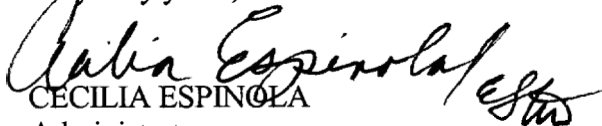
Agenda: September 25, 2001

APPROVE THE INCLUSION OF CASH BENEFITS IN THE ELECTRONIC BENEFIT TRANSFER PROJECT

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED that your Board:

1. Approve the inclusion of cash benefits for the CalWORKs, Refugee Cash Assistance, and General Assistance programs in the Electronic Benefit Transfer Project.

Very truly yours,


CECILIA ESPINOLA
Administrator

CE/ES

RECOMMENDED:



SUSANA A. MAURIELLO
County Administrative Officer

CC: County Administrative Office
Auditor-Controller

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