



County of Santa Cruz

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HUMAN RESOURCES AGENCY

Cecilia Espinola, Administrator

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April 9, 2002

Agenda: April 23, 2002

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

County of Santa Cruz

701 Ocean Street

Santa Cruz, California 95060

AUTHORIZE ISSUANCE OF REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS PROGRAM

Dear Members of the Board:

As you know, the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) annually allocates Title IV-E funds to individual counties in order to provide life skills education and services to foster youth ages 16 to 21. These funds allow the County to operate an Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP). The purpose of this letter is to request your Board's approval to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from community-based agencies to provide comprehensive E S P services to Santa Cruz County youth. Appropriations for this program will be included in the Human Resources Agency's FY 2002/03 budget, and are funded entirely by State and Federal funds.

Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP)

The ILSP program is designed to assist foster youth and former foster youth ages 16-21 in making the transition to independent living. The program collaborates closely with the Human Resource Agency's (HRA) Child Welfare Services and Careerworks programs, Children's Mental Health Services, and the Probation Department to provide a continuum of services to assist youth in the development of independent living skills.

As you may recall, all inclusive program services for the ILSP are currently provided internally by HRA's Family and Children's Services Division and are complemented by a contract with the Santa Cruz Community Counseling Center (SCCCC). In FY 2002/03, HRA proposes to enhance positive program outcomes and strengthen relationships in the community by contracting the entire E S P allocation to a community-based organization. Under this model, comprehensive ILSP services will be provided by a community agency, continuing to work in close collaboration with HRA and other

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County programs. Pending State notification of the FY 2002/03 allocation, the anticipated amount of the proposed contract is not to exceed \$181,654.

Services to be provided under the ILSP contract will include: individualized assessment and direct case management; development and monitoring of a written transitional independent living plan; independent living skills classes providing youth with knowledge about securing a job, money management, decision-making, self-esteem, and other relevant topics; training in specific skills such as computer applications; transportation assistance; and financial assistance with college or vocational schools. Mentorships, employment training opportunities and scholastic improvement activities will also be offered. The program will operate much as it has in the past, but it will be more integrated with other community resources and will result in improved opportunities and outcomes for youth. The selected provider will work closely with HRA Family and Children's Services and Careerworks Divisions, Community Mental Health Services, and the Probation Department, as well as the Independent Living Program at Cabrillo College, which is the state contracted companion program that focuses on college and career preparation.

With your Board's approval, HRA will issue a Request for Proposals seeking a provider that has expertise in providing social, employment, and/or mental health services to current and former foster youth. In addition, the County will give preference to applicants that have the capacity to leverage additional funds to augment ILSP program services. In particular, the County hopes to identify a provider that is certified to provide Medi-Cal Early and Periodic Screening Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) services, which would enable the provider to leverage Medi-Cal funds, thus freeing up a portion of the ILSP allocation to augment and enhance program services.

Conclusion

The ILSP funding allocation provides Santa Cruz County with much needed resources to serve foster children who are exiting the system and require special educational and life skill services, so that they can successfully transition to independent living. At this time, HRA requests your Board's approval to initiate an RFP in order to identify a community based nonprofit organization to contract with the County to provide these important services. The proposed RFP will be issued on April 24, 2002, with all proposals due to HRA on May 8, 2002. The RFP contains a provision that contracting is contingent upon the availability of Federal and State funds. A Proposal Review Committee composed of members of the Children's Network and HRA staff will review proposals. HRA will return to your Board on June 4, 2002 with recommendations for a contract award. A copy of the proposed RFP is on file with the Clerk of the Board.

IT IS THEREFORE RECOMMENDED that your Board:

1. Authorize the Human Resources Agency Administrator to issue a Request for Proposals for the Independent Living Skills Program; and

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2. Direct the Human Resources Agency Administrator to return to your Board on June 4, 2002 with a recommendation for the award of the contract.

Very truly yours,


CECILIA ESPINOZA

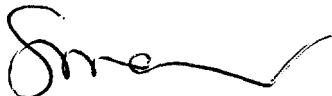
Administrator

Attachments:

Independent Living Skills Program Request for Proposals

CEVH

RECOMMENDED:



Susan A. Mauriello
County Administrative Officer

cc: County Administrative Office
Auditor-Controller