

CCA

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: Community Services Agency

BOARD AGENDA # *A-4

Urgent Routine

AGENDA DATE June 16, 2009

CEO Concur with Recommendation YES NO
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES NO

SUBJECT:

Proclaim the Week of June 21-27, 2009 as Family Services Specialist Recognition Week

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Proclaim the Week of June 21-27, 2009 as Family Services Specialist Recognition Week.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this agenda item.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2009-398

On motion of Supervisor Chiesa, Seconded by Supervisor Grover

and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Grover, Monteith, and Chairman DeMartini

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) X Approved as recommended

2) _____ Denied

3) _____ Approved as amended

4) _____ Other:

MOTION:

Christine Ferraro

ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

DISCUSSION:

Family Services Specialists play a vital role in administering programs within our community that provide a safety net for individuals and families who lack the basic necessities in life, such as shelter, food, clothing and health care.

In Stanislaus County, over 135,000 residents rely on Family Services Specialists to accurately, efficiently and compassionately determine their eligibility to public assistance programs, including Medi-Cal, Food Stamps, Foster Care, CalWORKs, Welfare to Work, Refugee Assistance, Child Care, and General Assistance. Currently, Family Services Specialists are providing assistance to over 25% of the individuals residing in our County.

Customers may access assistance at multiple locations throughout the County, including Modesto, Ceres, Riverbank, Hughson, Oakdale, Patterson and Turlock. In addition, Family Services Specialists assist customers throughout the year at health clinics and at community events. Community based locations and outreach events are essential to informing the community about services available to meet their basic needs. Meeting customers in their neighborhood increases the opportunity to share information about the Agency's programs and services and promote economic stability, nutrition, health and well being.

The current economic decline has had a significant impact on individuals and families residing in our County. The unemployment rate has increase from 7.7% in September 2007 to 16.8% in April 2009. As a result, during that same time period, the number of individuals accessing services administered through the Agency has increased from 119,554 to over 135,000, applications for Cash Aid have increased by 7%, applications for Food Stamp benefits have increased by 58%, and applications for Medi-Cal have increased by 50%.

In Fiscal Year 2007-2008, Family Services Specialists in the StanWORKs and Adult Services Division were responsible for the accurate issuance of over \$130,479,124 in Cash Aid, Supportive Services, and Food Stamp benefits. During the first ten (10) months of Fiscal Year 2008-2009, the amount of benefits issued has already exceeded \$151,149,863.

Family Services Specialists also provide employment services to families receiving CalWORKs through the Welfare-To-Work Program. Employment services are designed to assist families and individuals reduce barriers and enhance opportunities for long term employment. Individuals are referred to services that assist in developing job skills through vocational training, work experience, and specialized assessments. Beginning in July 2008 Family Services Specialists assisted over 1,766 customers to enter employment.

Access to Child Care is an essential element in assisting customers to obtain training and secure employment. Family Services Specialists link parents with Child Care providers and issue payments. 1,400 families are enrolled and receive child care assistance on a monthly basis. To date \$7,045,749 was issued in direct payments to Child Care providers throughout the county in Fiscal Year 2008-2009.

Family Services Specialists partner with Social Workers and Probation Officers to issue accurate and timely payments for children in Foster Care placement. Direct payments to Foster Care providers

Proclaim the Week of June 21-27, 2009 as Family Services Specialist Recognition Week in Stanislaus County-Community Services Agency

Page 3

throughout the county through April 2009 total \$ 8,214,175.

General Assistance is administered by the Agency's Adult Services Division and is funded through County funds. Family Services Specialists provides guidance and professional advocacy services to assist customers with the Social Security Application process. In Fiscal Year 2007-2008, over \$435,472 was received in Interim Assistance repayments as a result of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) advocacy program.

Family Services Specialists in the Agency's Finance and Operations Division are recognized for their commitment to a high level of program integrity. The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) is responsible for the prevention, detection and investigation of welfare fraud. In Fiscal Year 2007-2008, SIU fraud investigations, overpayments and over issuances totaling \$2,138,069, 1.6% of the total benefits issued, were identified by SIU.

Program integrity and accuracy are also reflected in audit results. The programs administered by Family Services Specialists meet the performance standards set forth by the Department of Health Services, the Department of Social Services, and Department of Education. The role of the Family Services Specialists in the Agency's Appeals Unit is to resolve applicant disputes on actions taken by the County. Over 90% of the cases are successfully resolved prior to the State hearing. On approximately 98% of the cases taken to State hearing, the County's action is upheld. Family Services Specialists in the Quality Control (QC) Unit receive a random sampling of cases to review and verify conformity with State and Federal tolerance levels for accuracy. Family Services Specialists take pride in delivering services in a compassionate and culturally responsive manner.

POLICY ISSUE:

Proclaiming the week of June 21-27, 2009 as Family Services Specialist Recognition Week supports the Board's priorities of ensuring a healthy community, a strong local economy, effective partnerships and efficient delivery of services.

STAFFING IMPACT:

There is no staffing impact associated with this request.

Proclaim the Week of June 21-27, 2009 as Family Services Specialist Recognition Week

WHEREAS, the County of Stanislaus takes great pride in recognizing Family Services Specialists who work with the community in administering public assistance programs and who strive for excellence in their work.

WHEREAS, Family Services Specialists administer programs that assist customers in accessing services that provide for their basic needs, including, food, shelter, health care and housing. In the first ten (10) months of Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Family Service Specialists issued Cash and Food Stamp benefits exceeding \$150 million dollars to over 135, 000 county residents and have assisted 1,766 individuals in attaining employment

WHEREAS, the benefits issued by the Family Services Specialists represents an economic value of \$24,242,170 to the County each month.

WHEREAS, Family Services Specialists support Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors Strategic Priorities and the mission of the Community Services Agency by successfully implementing Federal, State, and local mandated programs, practicing program integrity and promoting innovative effective business strategies while providing excellent customer service. Family Services Specialist staff is located throughout CSA's Divisions –Adult Services, Child and Family Services, Finance and Operations and StanWORKs.

WHEREAS, Family Services Specialists maintain the performance standards set forth by the Department of Health Services, the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education.

WHEREAS, Family Services Specialists working in partnership with the General Assistance Supplemental Security Income Advocacy Program recouped \$435,472 in Fiscal Year 2007-2008 through Interim Assistance Repayments. In Fiscal Year 2007-2008, SIU fraud investigations, overpayments and over issuances totaling \$2,138,069, 1.6% of the total benefits issued, were identified by SIU.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors does hereby proclaim the week of June 21-27, 2009 as Family Services Specialist Recognition Week and commend the work of Stanislaus County Family Services Specialists to all members of the community.