



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, ROOM 335, SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92101-2470

AGENDA ITEM

DATE: March 24, 2009
TO: Board of Supervisors
SUBJECT: IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REFORM (DISTRICTS: ALL)

SUMMARY:

Overview

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program provides assistance to needy seniors and persons with disabilities, so they can be given an alternative to costly out-of-home facilities. Currently, the cost of IHSS is a staggering \$274 million annually to taxpayers in San Diego County alone. In addition, since the State and Federal governments fail to provide sufficient funding to cover this mandated program, the County pays \$43 million of the total program costs out of its realignment funds. The County's share is diverting funds that otherwise would be available for children and other critical programs that serve seniors.

With an annual caseload growth rate of 7%, IHSS has become the fastest growing social service program in the County. Time is of the essence for the County to take a serious look at how IHSS can be changed to keep costs at a manageable level, all while maintaining the original intent of the program. Without immediate action, this program will become a bigger financial burden to the County of San Diego and the State.

Today's action will direct the Chief Administrative Officer to develop a proposal for reform of the IHSS program.

Recommendation(s)

CHAIRWOMAN JACOB AND VICE CHAIRWOMAN SLATER-PRICE

Direct the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to develop a proposal to reform the IHSS program and return to the Board of Supervisors within 180 days.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action.

Business Impact Statement

N/A

SUBJECT: IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REFORM (DISTRICTS: ALL)

Advisory Board Statement

N/A

BACKGROUND:

The State of California is facing a budget deficit of epic proportions. Seventy-five percent of County revenues come from the State for local services. Because of the state budget crisis and the downturn in the economy, the challenge to continue to provide services to our residents will become increasingly difficult. As a result, the County is looking for innovative ways to work more efficiently with the limited resources available.

The In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program is one that demands attention. IHSS provides assistance to needy seniors and persons with disabilities, so they are given an alternative to costly out-of-home placements. The State of California sets the guidelines to administer IHSS and the County is mandated to carry out this program within State guidelines. The program employs many hardworking caregivers who tend to 24,800 fragile children, adults and seniors in San Diego County.

Nevertheless, this program has become extremely costly to the County in recent years and forces the County to divert funds that would otherwise be available for Child Welfare Services, Foster Care, Welfare-to-Work, Childcare, CalWORKs, and California Children Services. The cost of IHSS is a staggering \$274 million annually to taxpayers in San Diego County alone. In addition, the County pays \$43 million of the total program costs since the State and Federal governments fail to provide sufficient funding to cover this mandated program. The increase in IHSS expenditures has also skyrocketed to over 9% annually. This is more than twice the rate of increase in spending on children's programs.

The reasons that program costs have spun rapidly out of control are abundant. Increases in enrollment are the most significant factor for IHSS' ballooning costs, which could easily double over the next 8 years if its growth remains the same. In less than a decade, enrollment has doubled to 444,000 people statewide. It is now the fastest growing State social service program, costing taxpayers an astonishing \$5 billion annually statewide.

In San Diego County, out of the 24,800 individuals enrolled in the IHSS program, only about 5,000 of them are considered "severely impaired" and unable to care for themselves. There is no question that changes need to be made. The original intent of the IHSS program is to provide an alternative to costly out-of-home facilities—as such, we need to ensure that we focus our efforts on the individuals with the most need.

The program also has major administrative flaws. IHSS workers—who are not County employees—are trusted to turn in their timecards via the honor system. Unfortunately, there are no checks and balances in place to confirm the accuracy of the timecards, validate the hours caregivers have worked, or verify that services have actually been provided.

Additionally, only 1,200 out of the roughly 22,000 IHSS providers are on the IHSS Public Authority registry of home care workers. To be eligible for our local registry, workers need to

SUBJECT: IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REFORM (DISTRICTS: ALL)

complete an application, provide references, attend a mandatory orientation and go through mandatory background checks. However, the majority of caregivers in IHSS is hired directly by the recipient and is often a family member. In these cases, background checks are not required, presenting an administrative loophole that potentially could jeopardize the life and safety of seniors and persons with disabilities who depend upon this service. For instance, in July 2008, a patient was beaten unconscious by a caregiver who had a lengthy criminal history.

Therefore, due to the escalating costs of the IHSS program and the countless administrative flaws, this program undoubtedly needs major reform. Today's action will direct the Chief Administrative Officer to develop a proposal to reform the IHSS program.

We urge your support!

Respectfully submitted,

DIANNE JACOB
Chairwoman

PAM SLATER-PRICE
Vice Chairwoman

SUBJECT: IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REFORM (DISTRICTS: ALL)

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

CONCURRENCE(S)

COUNTY COUNSEL REVIEW	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	
Written Disclosure per County Charter Section 1000.1 Required	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY FINANCE DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
Requires Four Votes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
GROUP/AGENCY INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
COUNTY TECHNOLOGY OFFICE	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A

Other Concurrence(s): N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: : Second Supervisorial District
Third Supervisorial District

CONTACT PERSON(S):

<u>Tale Halse</u>	<u>Aaron Byzak</u>
Name	Name
<u>619-531-5522</u>	<u>619-531-5533</u>
Phone	Phone
<u>Fax</u>	<u>Fax</u>
<u>A-500</u>	<u>A-500</u>
Mail Station	Mail Station
<u>E-mail</u>	<u>E-mail</u>

AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE: _____

SUBJECT: IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REFORM (DISTRICTS: ALL)

AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET
(continued)

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

N/A

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

N/A

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

N/A

CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):

N/A

SUBJECT: IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES REFORM (DISTRICTS: ALL)

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT: [Click here and type]

PROGRAM: [Click here and type]

PROPOSAL: [Click here and type]

FUTURE YEARS ESTIMATED BUDGET OF PROPOSAL IF ADOPTED				
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Budgeted Amount For Proposal	Proposed Change in Budgeted Amount	Proposed Revised Current Year Budget (a+b)	1st Subsequent Year	2nd Subsequent Year

Direct Cost

Revenue/Other Offset

**NET GENERAL
FUND COST**

Staff Years

Sources of Revenue/Other Offset for Proposed Change and Subsequent Years:

Space-Related Impacts: Will this proposal result in any additional space requirements? Yes N/A

Support/Other Departmental Impacts: Yes N/A

Remarks: Yes N/A