

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS SHEILA KUEHL AND
JANICE HAHN

April 24, 2018

Chapin Hall Funding

In September of 2016, the Board unanimously approved a motion designed to improve family visitation for foster children. Court-ordered visitation with a child's birth family or caregiver has been consistently linked to positive outcomes, and is the number one factor in effectively achieving family reunification. Consistent visitation is essential to maintaining and strengthening parent-child relationships, as well as alleviating possible attachment and adjustment disorders.

In response to the motion, in 2017, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) submitted a comprehensive visitation plan, which included several areas of work:

- Collaborating with Sidebench, a consulting firm, to develop an in-house **technological tool** that aids social workers and Human Service Aides in scheduling family visits—a task that currently takes an estimated two million hours to coordinate four million hours of visits each year.

MOTION

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- Creating a **parent-coaching curriculum** based on best practices by exploring ways to expand community-based programs and maximize the use of family-friendly visitation centers.
- Hiring 20 **Children’s Services Administrators** to support the complex logistics of scheduling visits in and across regional offices.
- Developing guidelines for **improving visitation case plans** in order to provide the courts with the information they need to order reasonable visitation requirements, including assessments for liberalizing or ordering unmonitored visits when appropriate.
- Exploring the feasibility of using **ridesharing services** to help transport families to and from their visits.

In order to measure the effectiveness of the Visitation Initiative, DCFS must gather baseline data to evaluate whether reunification or permanency outcome are positively impacted when the new visitation matrix is utilized. With the support of the Office of Child Protection’s (OCP) Center for Strategic Public Private Partnerships (CSPPP), DCFS has been working with philanthropic organizations to partner with and engage Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago in support of these efforts. In addition, Chapin Hall will work to ensure integration among the scheduling tool and visitation centers, as well as the work of the Children’s Services Administrators. To date, generous contributions in support of the initiative have been made by the following organizations:

- The Bowen H. & Janice Arthur McCoy Charitable Foundation
- First 5 LA

- Pritzker Foster Care Initiative
- The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation

Of the total \$160,000 needed to fully complete this robust plan, \$130,000 has been raised to complete Chapin Hall's work over the next 12 months. In order for Chapin Hall to achieve its full potential in improving LA visitation, it will be necessary to obtain their policy and implementation guidance. To that end, the visitation project it is necessary to allocate the remaining \$30,000 in order to ensure that Chapin Hall is able to take the project from data analytics to practice. DCFS proposes to contribute this amount in furtherance of the overall project.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors delegate authority to the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services to enter into a funding agreement with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago in the amount of \$30,000 as a match to the \$130,000 in philanthropic commitments made toward the Visitation Initiative. The County funds will be used to gather baseline data, and to undertake geospatial analysis and integration of visitation efforts. We also direct the Director to enter into a data sharing agreement as approved by County Counsel.

S: LP/Chapin Hall Funding