



Sacramento – Pursuits of County Advocacy Position on Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 State Budget Proposals Related to Justice, Social Services, and Child Welfare

Executive Summary

This report contains pursuits of County-advocacy position on State budget proposals included in Governor Gavin Newsom's FY 2024-25 January Proposed Budget (Proposed Budget) related to justice, social services, and child welfare.

Pursuits of County Advocacy Positions on State Budget Proposals

JUSTICE

Public Defender Pilot Program

State Budget Proposal

- The Governor's Budget proposes reducing the Public Defender Pilot Program by \$40 million in one-time State General Fund (SGF), which would eliminate funding for the last year of the pilot, which funds indigent defense providers, including public defenders, alternate defenders, and other qualifying entities that provide indigent defense.

County Impact

- The Chief Executive Office's Budget Division reports that the proposed cut to the Public Defender Pilot Program will result in a \$9.8 million reduction in funding for Los Angeles County, which will impact County attorneys, paralegals and social workers who have worked tirelessly to reduce prison sentences for eligible Los Angeles residents incarcerated in State prisons.
- Los Angeles County's grant currently funds 47 positions at the Public Defender's Office (PD) and 13 positions at the Alternate Public Defender's Office (APD), as well as related support to program operations, including Court funding for panel attorney review of cases not handled by either office due to conflicts of interest.
- Through this pilot, the County has already helped over 2,500 residents with early release or sentence reductions, which have resulted in reduced prison time totaling over 10,000 years.

- According to PD, there are over 3,000 cases in LA County that are still eligible for resentencing that would be significantly disrupted by this proposed cut.
- The Office of the State Public Defender estimates that in 2023 alone, the Public Defender Pilot Project resentencing saved the state up to \$325.5 million by reducing the costs of over-incarceration.

Support and Opposition

- Support and opposition for this State budget proposal are unknown at this time.

Status

- This State budget proposal has not yet been scheduled for a hearing by the Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees.

Recommendation

- This Office, the PD, and the APD recommend opposing the reduction of \$40 million to the Public Defender Pilot Program.
- Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to support proposals that reduce mass incarceration and enhance and increase the access to, or amount of funding for, resources for adults involved in the justice system, **the Sacramento Advocates will oppose the Governor's proposal to reduce the Public Defender's Pilot by \$40 million.**

SOCIAL SERVICES

CalWORKs Single Allocation (CWSA)

State Budget Proposal

- The Proposed Budget reflects a reversion of \$336 million in SGF from FY 2022-23, which was previously approved as part of an ongoing augmentation for CWSA. The Proposed Budget also reflects a reversion of \$40.8 million in SGF in FY 2023-24 and a reduction of \$40.8 million in SGF in FY 2024-25 and ongoing for CWSA.

Background

- The CWSA funds administrative activities related to determining and maintaining CalWORKs eligibility and employment services. It also provides program infrastructure to support eligibility functions such as general administration, training, contract costs, accounting, supplies, equipment, rent, utilities, and building maintenance.
- The eligibility component of the CWSA has been historically underfunded.

County Impact

- The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) reports that this State budget proposal would result in a loss of \$54.6 million in federal funding and SF in FY 2024-25 and would have a negative impact on both staffing and services as well as impair the County's ability to meet State and federal performance metrics.

- DPSS reports that as of December 2023, approximately 117,000 families, comprised of 217,838 children and 70,757 adults, rely on CalWORKs funding.

Support and Opposition

- Support and opposition for this State budget proposal is unknown at this time.

Status

- This State budget proposal has not yet been scheduled for a hearing by the Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees.

Recommendation

- This Office and DPSS recommend opposing this State budget proposal as it would negatively affect both staffing and CalWORKs services provided to low-income families.
- Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to oppose proposals that reduce funding for human services programs serving low-income individuals and families, **the Sacramento Advocates will oppose the proposed reversion of \$336 million in SGF from FY 2022-23, reversion of \$40.8 million statewide in FY 2023-24, and reduction of \$40.8 million statewide in FY 2024-25 to the CWSA and other similar funding decreases.**

Family Stabilization (FS)

State Budget Proposal

- The Proposed Budget includes a \$55 million in SGF reversion in FY 2023-24 and a decrease of \$71 million in SGF beginning in FY 2024-25 and ongoing, eliminating the program.

Background

- FS provides intensive case management and services to clients experiencing an identified situation or crisis. Services are provided when the issue is destabilizing the family and interfering with their ability to participate in Welfare-To-Work (WTW) activities. The program was created to strengthen CalWORKs families and to ensure housing, mental health, safety, and family stability.

County Impact

- DPSS reports that this State budget proposal would result in a loss of \$5.8 million annually in funding for the County if the program is eliminated.
- DPSS reports that services are currently provided to 950 families per month.
- In addition, DPSS currently has a memorandum of understating with the Department of Mental Health that includes providing mental health services to children on CalWORKs cases, which is funded with the Family Stabilization allocation. Currently, there are 96 open cases, and 340 referrals were made during this Fiscal Year. Last Fiscal Year, a total of 762 referrals were made.

Status

- This State budget proposal has not yet been scheduled for a hearing by the Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees.

Recommendation

- This Office and DPSS recommend opposing this State budget proposal, as the reduction in funding would eliminate this valuable resource and would run counter to efforts underway to offer robust support to families as they are seeking to transition off of public assistance.
- Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to oppose proposals that reduce funding for human services programs serving low-income individuals and families, **the Sacramento Advocates will oppose the proposed reversion of \$55 million statewide in FY 2023-24 and reduction of \$71 million statewide in FY 2024-25 and ongoing to FS and other similar funding decreases.**

Expanded Subsidized Employment (ESE)

State Budget Proposal

- The Proposed Budget reflects a \$134.1 million in SGF reversion in FY 2023-24 and a decrease of \$134.1 million in SGF beginning in FY 2024-25 and ongoing, eliminating the program.

Background

- The ESE provides WTW participants with job experience, a connection to the labor force, and the job experience needed to obtain unsubsidized employment and reach self-sufficiency. Counties work in partnership with local businesses, nonprofits, and public agencies to provide these opportunities.

County Impact

- DPSS reports that this State budget proposal would result in a loss of \$37.7 million annually in funding for the County if the program is eliminated.
- DPSS reports that ESE is one of their more successful program components, with subsidized employment provided to over 1,000 families in Los Angeles County in the current fiscal year (FY 2023-24).

Support and Opposition

- Support and opposition for this State budget proposal is unknown at this time.

Status

- This State budget proposal has not yet been scheduled for a hearing by the Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees.

Recommendation

- This Office and DPSS recommend opposing this State budget proposal as it would eliminate the program and negatively impact those families already benefiting from ESE and many more that are currently being enrolled.

- Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to oppose proposals that reduce funding for human services programs serving low-income individuals and families, **the Sacramento Advocates will oppose the proposed \$134.1 million reversion statewide in FY 2023-24 and reduction of \$134.1 million statewide in 2024-25 and ongoing to ESE and other similar funding decreases.**

Employment Services Intensive Case Management (ESICM)

State Budget Proposal

- The Proposed Budget includes a \$47 million decrease in SGF beginning in FY 2024-25 and ongoing, eliminating the program.

Background

- ESICM provides CalWORKs parents employment services to assist them in obtaining and retaining employment through various work, educational, and training activities. Intensive case management is available for families in crisis who are in Welfare-to-Work and require additional assistance with removing employment barriers, which may include other supportive services to address issues such as substance use or mental health disorders.
- DPSS reports that there are currently 950 families receiving ESICM per month.

County Impact

- DPSS reports that this State budget proposal would result in loss of \$13.9 million annually in funding for the County if the program is eliminated.
- DPSS reports that this budget reduction will impact the services provided to DPSS customers who are receiving employment services and will also undermine new strategies being used in the post-pandemic era to engage families, such as phone appraisals and video job services sessions.

Support and Opposition

- Support and opposition for this State budget proposal is unknown at this time.

Status

- This State budget proposal has not yet been scheduled for a hearing by the Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees.

Recommendation

- This Office and DPSS recommend opposing this State budget proposal as it would eliminate the program and negatively impact the services provided to DPSS customers who are receiving employment services.
- Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to oppose proposals that reduce funding for human services programs serving low-income individuals and families, **the Sacramento Advocates will oppose the proposed reduction of \$47 million statewide in FY 2024-25 and ongoing to the ESICM and other similar funding decreases.**

CHILD WELFARE

Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program (HNMP)

State Budget Proposal

- The Proposed Budget reflects a reduction of \$13.7 million in ongoing SGF for the HNMP.

Background

- The HNMP program funds housing navigators for counties to act as a housing specialist to assist young adults with their pursuits of locating available housing and overcoming barriers to locating housing.
- Los Angeles County received \$4.576 million in 2023.

County Impact

- DCFS reports that this State budget proposal would result in loss of \$4.5 million annually in funding for the County.
- The Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) reports that HNMP provides referrals to the LACDA for participation in the agency's Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) initiative. The FYI initiative makes Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance available to foster youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Decreased funding may cause a reduction in DCFS housing navigation resources, which may ultimately cause FYI vouchers to go unused due to lack of referrals.

Support and Opposition

- Support for this State budget proposal is unknown at this time.
- This State budget proposal is opposed by a large coalition of organizations including: John Burton Advocates for Youth; California State Association of Counties; Children Now; and County Welfare Directors Association of California; among many others.

Status

- This State budget proposal has not yet been scheduled for a hearing by the Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees.

Recommendation

- This Office and DCFS recommend opposing this State budget proposal as it would essentially eliminate a program that assists young adults with locating available housing and overcoming barriers to locating housing, thereby increasing the risk of homelessness for youth.
- Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with existing policy to oppose proposals that reduce funding for child welfare services such as foster care, child protective services, adoption assistance, independent living, and family preservation, among other services to promote the safety, well-being of and permanency for children and youth, **the Sacramento Advocates will oppose the proposed reduction of \$13.7 million in ongoing SGF for HNMP.**

Housing Supplement for Foster Youth in Supervised Independent Living Placements (SILP)

State Budget Proposal

- The Proposed Budget includes a \$195,000 reduction in FY 2024-25 and \$25.5 million (\$18.85 million in SGF) in FY 2025-26 and ongoing.

Background

- [AB 120 \(Chapter 43, Statutes of 2023\)](#), the Human Services Budget Trailer Bill to the [2023 State Budget Act](#), created a housing supplement to the basic rate paid for a nonminor dependent (NMD) placed in a SILP.
- AB 120 requires the monthly housing supplement payment, which is based on the cost of housing in the county where a NMD lives, to be added to the Basic Rate paid to the NMD and prorated based on the number of days in a month the dependent is in a placement eligible for the supplement. The 2023 State Budget Act appropriated \$1 million for first-year funding, increasing to \$18.8 million in FY 2025-26 to implement the housing supplement for foster youth in SILP.
- The goal of the SILP Housing Supplement is to reduce homelessness and housing instability by providing youth additional funding for housing costs, which have increased drastically since the establishment of the SILP, outpacing the growth in the Basic Rate paid to youth.
- The County supported both [AB 525](#) and its companion state budget request of \$16.5 million in SGF via a Board [motion](#) approved on February 28, 2023.

County Impact

- DCFS reports that the County's prospective total monthly SILP payment (Basic Rate plus the SILP Housing Supplement) was projected to be \$1,901 per NMD beginning in FY 2025-26.
- DCFS reports that although foster youth in SILPs receive a monthly aid payment meant to cover living costs, the cost of housing has increased substantially since the SILP was established, and the monthly payment provided to youth in these placements has not kept with housing inflation. Eliminating this funding could decrease housing affordability and increase homelessness among youth in foster care who are placed in a SILP.

Support and Opposition

- Support for this State budget proposal is unknown at this time.
- This State budget proposal is opposed by a large coalition of organizations including but not limited to: John Burton Advocates for Youth; California State Association of Counties; Children Now; and County Welfare Directors Association of California; among many others.

Status

- This State budget proposal has not yet been scheduled for a hearing by the Assembly and Senate budget subcommittees.

Recommendation

- This Office and DCFS recommend opposing this State budget proposal as it would take away funding that could address the housing affordability crisis experienced by youth living in a SILP and the needs of young adults in foster care living independently by ensuring that youth are paying no more than 30 percent of their monthly SILP payment on rent.
- Therefore, unless otherwise directed by the Board, consistent with the February 28, 2023, Board-approved [motion](#), **the Sacramento Advocates will oppose the proposed \$195,000 reduction in FY 2024-25 and \$25.5 million (\$18.85 million) in FY 2025-26 and ongoing for SILP.**



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