



# County of Monterey

## Item No.11

### Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

**Legistar File Number: RES 23-178**

October 03, 2023

**Introduced:** 9/15/2023

**Current Status:** Scheduled PM

**Version:** 1

**Matter Type:** BoS Resolution

- a. Receive a presentation regarding the Board Referral No. 2023.08 (Alejo) Monterey County COVID-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program progress, outreach, and community use; and,
- b. Direct the Department of Emergency Management to close the application period for the Monterey County COVID-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program on October 1, 2023; and,
- c. Authorize the Auditor-Controller's Office to increase appropriations for the Department of Emergency Management (001-1040-DEM001-8589) FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget by \$100,000 to cover expenses incurred for staffing the Pajaro Disaster Recovery Manager, offset by a corresponding increase in County Administrative Office non-program revenue (001-1050-CAO019-8041), financed by reallocated prior year American Rescue Plan Act funding. (4/5ths vote required); or
- d. Provide additional direction during the County Administrative Office's Budget End of Year Report presentation to include any unused departmental allocations and reallocations.

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

Receive a presentation regarding the Board Referral No. 2023.08 (Alejo) Monterey County

- a. COVID-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program progress, outreach, and community use.
- b. Direct the Department of Emergency Management to close the application period for the Monterey County COVID-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program on October 1, 2023.
- c. Authorize the Auditor-Controller's Office to increase appropriations for the Department of Emergency Management (001-1040-DEM001-8589) FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget by \$100,000 to cover expenses incurred for staffing the Pajaro Disaster Recovery Manager, offset by a corresponding increase in County Administrative Office non-program revenue (001-1050-CAO019-8041), financed by reallocated prior year American Rescue Plan Act funding. ((4/5ths vote required); or
- d. Provide additional direction during the County Administrative Office's Budget End of Year Report presentation to include any unused departmental allocations and reallocations.

#### SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

In response to Referral No. 2021.04, initiated by Supervisors Luis Alejo and Chris Lopez, Monterey County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) worked to create a program supporting eligible low-income Monterey County families with COVID-19-related funeral and burial expenses. In May 2021, DEM established the COVID-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program. The program provides aid to qualified undocumented Monterey County Applicants who had expenses associated with deceased individuals. The County program mirrors the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Funeral Assistance, the difference being applicants are not required to be U.S. citizens, or qualified alien status to receive assistance. The Monterey County COVID-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program application period began November 17, 2022, and will end October 1,

2023; allowing staff 30 days to process eligible applications, closeout documents, and conclude the program.

The FY 2021-22 total allocation was \$350,000 and offered up to \$9,000 in financial aid for funeral expenses directly linked to COVID-19. On April 21, 2023, in response to Board Referral No. 2023.08 (Chair Alejo), the Board of Supervisors reallocated \$250,000 of the unencumbered funds to aid in the recovery of the Pajaro and San Ardo communities following the 2023 winter storms; \$100,000 was allocated to extend the COVID-19 Funeral Assistance Program until October 31, 2023.

### **Outreach and Advertising**

With the program extended for an additional six (6) months, the Department of Emergency Management expended \$5,000 for targeted advertising. This covered the expenses for 261 Public Service Announcement (PSA) spots across three different Spanish-speaking radio stations, along with 2 advertisements and articles featured in the Monterey County Weekly. In addition to targeted advertising, a comprehensive outreach campaign occurred between October 2022 and September 2023. This included a wide range of initiatives:

- A bilingual COVID-19 Funeral Assistance website with program details, application guidelines, and eligibility criteria.
- A dedicated hotline (831-356-3137) for residents to call
- Collaboration with 2-1-1 to share information and make referrals to the program (From November to September, the hotline made 3 referrals total).
- 6 Interviews broadcasted on Radio Bilingue/Comunidad Alerta in Spanish between November 2022 and August 2023.
- 261 Public Service Announcement Spots in English and Spanish on CO2 Media and Entravision Group Radio Stations during August and September.
- Television interviews and media coverage in all major outlets with Telemundo, Univision, KSBW, and KION
- Monterey County Weekly and the Monterey County Herald published two (2) articles each promoting the program.
- 90 Social media posts and engagement on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Further, the posts were shared with 114 media outlets, 135 CBO's and District Offices twice. In total, the social media posts generated over 2,980 interactions.
- Community event, engagement at "Día del Trabajador Agricola" in King City further engaged residents and disseminated information through direct interactions and printed materials.
- The VIDA Community Health Worker Program and County staff engaged in door-to-door outreach with residents in churches, bakeries, laundromats and foodbank distributions in different areas of the county including San Ardo, San Lucas, King City, Greenfield, Soledad, Salinas, Castroville, Las Lomas, and Pajaro.

### **Community Use**

To date staff have received eighteen (18) inquiries from the community requesting additional information about the program and eligibility. Sixteen (16) of these requests resulted in a determination

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that the decedent/beneficiary was not eligible for the program. Two (2) requests resulted in the determination that the decedent/beneficiary was eligible for the program; one (1) failed to produce legitimate documentation and one (1) did not follow-up with staff to move forward with the program.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Staff worked directly with the Monterey County Sheriff's Office, County Counsel, United Way / 2-1-1, County Communications, and Santa Cruz Community Ventures.

FINANCING:

The Department of Emergency Management requests an increase in appropriations of \$100,000 in DEM's Emergency Operations Center FY 2023-24 Adopted Budget 001-1040-DEM001-8589 and a corresponding increase County Administrative Office non-program revenue (001-1050-CAO019-8041) funded by reallocated prior year ARPA funding. The item was presented at the September 27, 2023, meeting of the Budget Committee for their consideration; the Committee did not support the department's request on item c. but would like the matter to go before the full Board.

The Budget Office will be providing a comprehensive overview of all ARPA program expenditures to date, including any unused departmental allocations and reallocations, as part of the Budget End of Year presentation to the Board for their consideration and direction.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:


- Economic Development
- Administration
- Health & Human Services
- Infrastructure
- Public Safety

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Attachments:

- Attachment A: Resolution
- Attachment B: Power Point Presentation
- Attachment C: MCFBAP Communications Recap

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