



County of Monterey

Item No.5

Board Report

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

Legistar File Number: 24-036

February 23, 2024

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- a. Receive an oral update from the County of Monterey Health Department's Planning, Evaluation, and Policy (PEP) Unit Community Foundation for Monterey County staff on the progress and impact of the Farmworker Resource Center (FRC) grant activities during the period of July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023; and
- b. Provide direction to staff, as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisor's Health, Housing and Human Services Committee:

- a. Receive an oral update from the County of Monterey Health Department's Planning, Evaluation, and Policy (PEP) Unit and Community Foundation for Monterey County staff on the progress and impact of the Farmworker Resource Center (FRC) grant activities during the period of July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023; and
- b. Provide direction to staff, as appropriate.

SUMMARY:

Staff from the County of Monterey Health Department PEP Unit and Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC) will present an update on the progress and impact of the Farmworker Resource Center (FRC) grant activities from July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. The FRC grant, awarded on January 12th 2023, by Department of Community Services and Development employs the Community Health Worker (CHW) model successfully implemented during COVID response efforts with a specific focus on supporting farmworkers and their families in accessing services. The FRC officially launched its funded services on July 1, 2023, through an agreement with the CFMC and their funded partners including Mujeres en Acción, Center for Community Advocacy (CCA), and Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO). The FRC Program aims to increase access to information and services for farmworkers and their families to reduce challenges they face.

FRC programmatic areas of focus:

- Increase access to health and human services,
- Increase access to labor and employment rights and legal services,
- Increase to financial information/services,
- Increase access to emergency support services,
- Increase access to education and access and supports, and
- Increase access to employee assistance and advocacy.

From July through December 2023, the FRC conducted community outreach activities throughout Monterey County with a specific focus on the Salinas Valley, to inform members about general resources in the area, emphasizing the six programmatic areas of focus noted above. These areas included activities such as providing support for public benefit applications like CalFresh and Medi-Cal, advocating for the expansion of Medi-Cal, facilitating an Affordable Connectivity Program, conducting labor and wage presentations, organizing mental health workshops, and offering information through health "platicas" talks in partnership with Natividad Residents and presentations in agricultural fields.

From July to December 2023, the FRC Program provided a wide range of services, engaging in over 14,429 individual outreach and service interactions. The program played a key role in connecting resources, offering application assistance, and disseminating valuable information and education.

Under health and human services, 7,235 individuals were assisted, conducting educational workshops on mental health, coordinating referrals to behavioral health agencies, offering information and screenings for mental health, and providing referrals for childcare assistance. Additionally, there were referrals for safe water access, information on clean and safe food access, and promotion of food banks. The program facilitated a little over 1006 Medi-Cal and Cal Fresh information and application assistance, offering support for disability insurance and paid family leave. Notably, the program distributed 173 COVID-19 vaccines and 384 Narcan kits during this period.

In the realm of labor and employment rights and legal services, 4,589 individuals received assistance, covering wage and hour rights through workshops, identification of wage theft, advocacy, tenant rights presentations, and occupational health and safety.

Financial assistance reached 618 individuals through CalWorks application support, information on community vouchers, and referrals to 211 for available cash assistance supports. Under the emergency support services FRC assisted 3,282 people, providing referrals to agencies such as rental and deposit assistance agencies, utility aid through Central Coast Energy Services, and references for food, clothing, household goods, and hygiene product supports. The program also collaborated with partners to deliver mattresses to Pajaro community members. Also, citizen and immigration legal services were provided, linking individuals to the Mexican Consulate for various services, legal aid, appointments, and more.

Under employment assistance and advocacy supports, 7,200 individuals received assistance with job application support, referrals, and placement assistance. In education access and supports services, 1,163 individuals were supported with resources for computer and internet access, GED/high school diploma acquisition, and after-school program accessibility.

In August 2023, County of Monterey Health Department celebrated execution of a MOU with the Mexican Consulate, reinforcing our commitment to better serve the farmworker community. The purpose of this MOU is to establish common understandings and cooperative relationships, particularly concerning the administration and coordination of our Farmworker Resource Center Program. The MOU is also aligned with the Consulate's strategy to implement and operate a Window

for Comprehensive Attention to Origin and Indigenous Peoples of Mexico Abroad, known as VAIPOIME. This initiative, housed at the Consulate offices in San Jose, aims to amplify information and advice for the diverse community. Our collaboration encompasses implementing activities that align with the goals of the FRCP and the Mexican Consulate's commitment to comprehensive attention for the indigenous community.

While much of the outreach and engagement efforts have been done in community settings and places of work, the FRC partners have established a drop-in location for farmworkers and their families to have direct access to FRC services at CBDIO's office location in Greenfield. Additionally, we are actively collaborating with the Agricultural Commissioner's office to elevate the services offered and establish deeper connections with growers/farmworker employers. This partnership aims to bring resources directly to agricultural sites, further enhancing accessibility and support for farmworkers and their families. Through this initiative, we aim to strengthen community bonds and address the evolving needs of the agricultural workforce.

What's next? Although the FRC grant term ends May 15, 2024, community members, including farmworkers will continue to be supported in accessing information and services needed through other Health Department CHW efforts and work to maintain physical presence at the CBDIO offices in Greenfield. Inclusively, the Health Department, utilizing other grant resources, is in the process of acquiring a van that will be outfitted as a mobile office to ensure we are meeting people where they are whether that be at their place of work, worship, and residence to ensure their immediate access to needed information and linkages to services.

This work supports the County of Monterey Health Department's 2018-2024 Strategic Plan Goal(s): 1. Empower the community to improve health, 2. Enhance community health and safety through prevention, and 3. Ensure access to culturally and linguistically appropriate, customer-friendly, quality health services. It also supports the following of the ten essential public health services, specifically: 3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues, 4. Mobilize community partnerships and action to identify and solve health problems, and 7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The FRC Program is implemented in partnership with County of Monterey Health Department, Community Foundation for Monterey County, Mujeres en Acción, Center for Community Advocacy (CCA), and Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño (CBDIO).

FINANCING:

There is no impact to the General Fund from this action. The FRC agreement term is January 12, 2023 to May 15, 2024 and will be fully expended.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives:

- Economic Development
- Administration

Legistar File Number: 24-036

Health & Human Services

Infrastructure

Public Safety

Prepared by: Jennifer L. Rivas, Management Analyst II, 279-5633

Approved by:

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Date 2/16/2024 | 3:34 PM PST

Elsa Mendoza Jimenez, Director of Health Services, 755-4621 On behalf of Elsa Mendoza Jimenez

Attachments:

Board Report

FRC Presentation