



Monterey County

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

Board Report

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Matter Type: Budget Committee

Receive and accept the quarterly report of expenditures and caseload data for the Department of Social Services.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Budget Committee:

Receive and accept the quarterly report of expenditures and caseload data for the Department of Social Services.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

The attached report represents actual caseload and expenditure data through March 2019. The report compares data month-to-month and year-to-year for three years. In addition to administrative costs, the programs highlighted are:

General Assistance

Medi-Cal

In-Home Support Services (IHSS)

CalWORKs

CalFresh (Food Stamps)

Out-of-Home Care (Foster Care and Adoptions)

- ✓ General Assistance (GA) program caseload had a slight increase from 451 in December 2018 to 469 individuals in March 2019. This represents a 5.39% increase over last year at the same time and has a corresponding increase in expenditures of 7.53% when compared to last year due to the slight increase in caseload. This reflects the typical winter seasonal trend when applications for assistance and active cases increase due to decreased employment opportunities.
- ✓ CalWORKs caseload increased from 3,287 in December 2018 to 3,690 in March 2019. This reflects the typical winter seasonal trend when applications for assistance and active cases increase due to decreased employment opportunities. However, from a year to year perspective, there is an overall caseload decline of 14.8% from this time last year which may be the result of recent developments related to immigration and proposed changes to what constitutes a "Public Charge" along with improving economic conditions. Expenditures has a corresponding decrease attributable to the decline in caseload.
- ✓ Medi-Cal caseload increased from 74,592 in December 2018 to 75,465 in March 2019. However, this reflects a slight increase of 0.3% when compared to March 2018. Overall, there are approximately 171,886 individuals receiving Medi-Cal health insurance through the Department of Social Services public assistance eligibility systems.
- ✓ CalFresh caseload increased slightly from 16,592 in December 2018 to 16,660 in March 2019 and is holding steady. However, this is a decrease of 10.9% when compared to March 2018 which may be the result of recent developments related to immigration and proposed changes to what constitutes a "Public Charge" along with improving economic conditions.

- ✓ IHSS paid hours increased from 463,657 in December 2018 to 484,184 in March 2019. The IHSS paid hours continue to rise which is reflective of the 8.8% increase when compared to March 2018. The increase in cases and hours attributes to the corresponding increase in expenditures in comparison to last year.
- ✓ Out of Home Care includes cases in Foster Care (including youth opting to stay in Foster Care to age 21), Probation, and Adoption Assistance. The caseload is trending slightly higher from 1,207 in December 2018 to 1,223 in March 2019 with an overall increase of 1.8% over the prior year. Whereas, expenditures are 4.7% higher than March 2018 due to increased foster care costs resulting from the implementation of a new rate structure as required by the Continuum of Care Reform, as well as an increase in adoption cases which results in increased adoption assistance expenditures. The cost per child in placement varies greatly and depends upon the level of care required and additional services needed to ensure the safety and well-being of the child. The caseload fluctuations and commensurate expenditures do not closely correlate due to these variables.
- ✓ Overall, the Department's public assistance entitlement caseloads increased from 96,129 in December 2018 to 97,507 active cases in March 2019. This represents a decrease of 2.4% when compared to this time last year. Operational costs for March 2019 decreased to \$9,109,524 as compared to \$9,389,171 for December 2018.


OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Probation placement costs are included in Foster Care.

FINANCING:

Caseload trends are mostly consistent with the trends built into the FY 2018-19 Budget. Sufficient appropriations and County General Fund contributions are currently available. Social Services is monitoring the Out of Home Care Budget closely because the mid-year projection reflected an increase of \$1.5 million for foster care costs due to the implementation of a new rate structure as required by the Continuum of Care Reform, as well as an increase in adoption costs. The Department may return to the Budget Committee at a later date to request an increase in appropriations for Out of Home Care. Federal revenue and sales tax realignment funds is anticipated to cover these increased costs.

Prepared by: Becky Cromer, Interim Finance Director, x4404


Approved by: Henry Espinosa, Acting Director, x4430

Attachments: 2019_03 Caseload and Expenditure Report