



County of Monterey

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

Board Report

File #: 21-329, Version: 1

- a. Consider options for a Monterey County COVID-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program (**Board Referral No. 2021.04**); and,
- b. Provide direction to staff.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors accept the referral and presentation regarding the Monterey County Covid-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program and provide direction regarding the options presented for a Monterey County Funeral Assistance Program.

SUMMARY:

The CAO received a Board referral for the Monterey County Covid-19 Funeral and Burial Assistance Program on February 23, 2021. This referral was assigned to Gerry Malais (OES) and Ezequiel Vega (Budget Office Director). Currently FEMA has a Funeral and Burial Assistance Program through their Covid-19 Individual Assistance Program. The FEMA program provides financial assistance up to \$9000 and is available to any U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien who incurred funeral expenses after January 20, 2020, directly related to Covid-19. Several options exist for the County to continue or supplement the FEMA program. This is in response to **REFERRAL # 2021.04**.

DISCUSSION:

FEMA has a Funeral and Burial Assistance Program through the Covid-19 Individual Assistance Program. The FEMA program is available to any U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien who incurred funeral expenses after January 20, 2020, directly related to Covid-19 and provides financial assistance up to \$9000. Several options exist for the County to continue or supplement the FEMA program:

1. The FEMA program can stand alone, and the County will assist residents by providing information and support navigating the FEMA program.
2. The County can develop its own Program:
 - a. that will assist residents by providing information and support navigating the FEMA program, and
 - b. provide the same benefits as the FEMA program with the same criteria for eligibility for a defined period of time after the FEMA Program ends.
3. The County can develop its own Program:
 - a. Assist residents by providing information and support navigating the FEMA program,
 - b. provide the same benefits as the FEMA program with the same criteria for eligibility for a defined period of time after the FEMA Program ends.
 - c. Extend the same eligibility criteria and benefits to include undocumented residents that incur funeral expenses.
4. Option 2 or 3 above with a reduced maximum benefit to:
 - a. \$6000
 - b. \$4000
 - c. \$2000
5. Other direction from the Board of Supervisors

The Board can also direct staff request the State of California to develop a Funeral and Burial assistance Program like FEMA's to continue after FEMA's Program ends, in addition to or in place of the above.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

OES coordinated with the CAO Budget Office and County Counsel.

FINANCING:

Funding for this referral program would require Board action to add funding to the Emergency Operation Center Covid-19 response operations

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

One or two sentences explaining how this recommendation supports/advances the Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives. Reference to any Key Objectives and/or Milestones that are related.

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives

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

Prepared by: Gerry Malais, Emergency Services Manager

Approved by: Nicholas E. Chiulos, Assistant County Administrative Officer

Attachments:

Board Referral No. 2021.04

Power Point