



San Joaquin County

Department of Child Support Services

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Lori A. Cruz
Director

August 22, 2017

Board of Supervisors
44 North San Joaquin Street
Stockton, CA 95202

Dear Board Members:

Request Approval For Establishing a New Legislative Priority for the Department of Child Support Services to Advocate and Support Legislative, Administrative, and Budgetary Efforts to Revise the California Child Support Department Funding Allocation Methodology to Adequately Address Funding Issues Identified by San Joaquin County

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors approve and establish a new legislative priority for the Department of Child Support Services by advocating for and supporting legislative, administrative, and budgetary efforts to revise the funding allocation methodology, utilized by the California Department of Child Support Services.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

The current model for allocating funds to local child support agencies was developed in the 1990s when the child support program was managed by local district attorneys. In 2000, oversight of the program was transferred to a new and independent state child support department. The California Department of Child Support Services (CDCSS) adopted and continues to use the same base allocation methodology that was developed several decades ago. Furthermore, the methodology does not account for additional expenses including increased county costs, cost of living or salary/benefit negotiations.

In 2009-2010, the CDCSS requested additional funding from the State legislature to maintain revenue generating caseworker staffing levels in order to stabilize child support collections. The revenue stabilization funds were approved by the legislature and each county received a share of the funds. San Joaquin County's share was and continues to be \$409,049 annually.

The base administrative allocation and revenue stabilization fund is no longer sufficient to maintain an adequate number of caseworkers to generate the court-ordered amount of child support collections for San Joaquin County families. Further, the outdated allocation

MISSION STATEMENT

Partnering with parents to develop cooperative family relationships and shared responsibilities

methodology is partially responsible for creating negative outcomes for the children and families of San Joaquin County.

The impacts of the CDCSS' outdated allocation methodology are significant and devastating and affect County residents even beyond those served by the child support department:

- Child support caseworker staffing has decreased from 182 (2009) to 127 (2016) in order to absorb increased operating costs;
- Child support is a safety net for lower income families. A decreased ability to collect support for lower income families results in a higher incidence of child poverty in the County;
- Fewer caseworkers requires more reliance on automated enforcement measures and diminishes customer service;
- Fewer caseworkers results in a time lag for customer requests such as support order modifications;
- Decreased collections results in less family self-sufficiency;
- Decreased collections results in less recoupment to the County;
- The quality of customer service may result in additional constituent complaints; and
- Fewer caseworkers may contribute to reduced employee morale.

In 2015, the State Child Support Director established a committee of local child support directors to develop and recommend several potential allocation methodologies. San Joaquin County was represented by its Director of DCSS. The committee, along with assistance from Maximus, sent three separate methodologies each utilizing a slightly different set of criteria agreed to by the committee. To this date, none of these methodologies has been fully reviewed or implemented, nor has a full discussion of their benefits and challenges occurred. Using a different methodology would provide San Joaquin County an increase of several million dollars that could be used to provide greater financial security to families in our community.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The current allocation methodology does not mandate a county to contribute to the operating costs of DCSS. None of the proposed allocation methodologies would require the County to make contributions. At this time, there would be no additional fiscal impact or Net County Cost.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN FOLLOWING APPROVAL:

Following Board approval of this new legislative priority, DCSS Administration intends to immediately work with County legislative advocates to bring this issue to the State Department of Finance and to build a coalition of support among local child support directors.

Should efforts with the Department of Finance be unsuccessful, the County advocates will work with legislators to sponsor legislative relief to achieve parity in allocation to local child support offices statewide.


Sincerely,



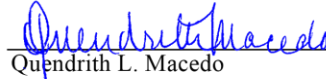
Lori A. Cruz
Director

Reviewed by County Administrator's Office:

Reviewed by County Counsel's Office:


Sandy Regalo

8/29/2017


Quendrieth L. Macedo

8/29/2017

Before the Board of Supervisors

County of San Joaquin, State of California

B-17-603

MOTION: Miller/Villapudua/5

APPROVE ESTABLISHING A NEW LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES TO ADVOCATE AND SUPPORT LEGISLATIVE, ADMINISTRATIVE, AND BUDGETARY EFFORTS TO REVISE THE CALIFORNIA CHILD SUPPORT DEPARTMENT FUNDING ALLOCATION METHODOLOGY TO ADEQUATELY ADDRESS FUNDING ISSUES IDENTIFIED BY SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

THIS BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DOES HEREBY Approve establishing a New Legislative Priority for the Department of Child Support Services to Advocate and Support Legislative, Administrative, and Budgetary Efforts to Revise the California Child Support Department Funding Allocation Methodology to Adequately Address Funding Issues Identified by San Joaquin County

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the above order was passed and adopted on 09/12/2017 by the following vote of the Board of Supervisors, to wit:

AYES: Villapudua, Miller, Patti, Elliott, Winn

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None



MIMI DUZENSKI
Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
County of San Joaquin
State of California

Mimi Duzenski