



# County of San Mateo

## Inter-Departmental Correspondence

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**Department:** HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

**File #:** 19-976

Board Meeting Date: 10/8/2019

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**Special Notice / Hearing:** None  
**Vote Required:** Majority

**To:** Honorable Board of Supervisors

**From:** Iliana Rodriguez, Interim Director, Human Services Agency

**Subject:** Resolution Authorizing the Modification to the General Assistance Standard of Aid

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adopt a resolution authorizing a modification to the rules and regulations of the General Assistance (GA) Program by increasing the General Assistance grant to the same level as the CalWORKs grant, consistent with the statutory formula, effective November 1, 2019.

**BACKGROUND:**

State law requires counties to provide support for indigent county residents who do not qualify for other financial assistance. Counties meet this requirement by providing financial assistance through the General Assistance (GA) program. The GA program provides this financial assistance in the form of vouchers for essential services and a minimal cash grant to individuals who have no minor children and whose income and property do not exceed certain limits. It is incumbent on the county Board of Supervisors to set the county "standard of aid".

The Welfare and Institutions Code 17000.5 permits the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to set the County's GA grant levels according to a statutory formula, which requires GA to be based on and subject to the same annual adjustment as CalWORKs grant levels. Compliance with the formula relieves the County of the requirement of setting the grant based on the cost of subsistence in the County. It ensures consistency of grant levels between counties and discourages recipients from "grant shopping."

Pursuant to Section 2.30.050 of the San Mateo County Ordinance Code, the Human Services Agency (HSA) is responsible for proposing changes to the rules and regulations concerning policies and procedures for GA program administration to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

**DISCUSSION:**

The California State Department of Social Services (CDSS) has advised counties that the maximum aid payment to CalWORKs families will be increasing effective October 1, 2019. HSA recommends that the monthly GA standard for aid be increased effective November 1, 2019 to align with the

State's CalWORKs standard as follows:

- From \$391 to \$550 for individuals who live alone, in shared housing, or who are homeless.
- From \$341 to \$480 for individuals residing in a drug & alcohol treatment facility.
- From \$461 to \$648 for individuals residing in a board & care facility.

In 1993, the Board adopted a resolution which authorized a change in the General Assistance Program from a cash program to a program comprised of cash and vendor/vouchers for housing and food. The maximum cash payment issued to clients remains at \$80.

County Counsel has reviewed and approved the resolution as to form.

Approval of this resolution contributes to the Shared Vision 2025 of a Prosperous Community by providing funds to indigent individuals in the community until they gain employment or federal disability, becoming self-sufficient.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The FY 2019-20 fiscal impact of implementation of the November 1, 2019 General Assistance (GA) Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is estimated at \$375,240 in additional Net County Cost. Funding for the GA COLA increase is included in the FY 2019-20 Adopted Budget.