



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

File #: 21-721

Board Meeting Date: 9/14/2021

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Ken Cole, Director, Human Services Agency

Subject: Modification to the Rules and Regulations of the General Assistance Program Standard of Aid

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing a modification to the rules and regulations of the General Assistance Program by increasing the General Assistance grant to the same level as the CalWORKs grant, consistent with the statutory formula, effective October 1, 2021.

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 a cash grant, or in the form of vouchers, for essential services 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, 2021. HSA recommends that the monthly GA standard for aid be increased effective October 1, 2021 to align with the State's CalWORKs standard as follows:

Category	# of Cases	Current Rate	New Rate	Variance
Individuals who live alone, in shared housing, or who are homeless	155	\$550	\$579	\$29
Individuals residing in a drug & alcohol treatment facility	9	\$480	\$505	\$25
Individuals residing in a board & care facility	0	\$648	\$682	\$34

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

FISCAL IMPACT:

The FY 2021-22 fiscal impact related to the increase in the General Assistance (GA) standard for aid is estimated to be \$112,230. Funding for this increase is included in the FY 2021-22 Adopted Budget and no additional Net County Cost is needed.