

MEMORANDUM
PLACER COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Children's System of Care

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Richard J. Burton, M.D., M.P.H.
Placer County Health Officer and Director of Health & Human Services
Richard S. Knecht, Director of Children's System of Care

DATE: May 7, 2013

SUBJECT: Provide an update on the Independent Living Program and consider an Agreement with Placer County Office of Education to provide Independent Living Skills

ACTION REQUESTED:

1. Receive an update on the Independent Living Program provided through a contract with Unity Care.
2. Approve a contract with Placer County Office of Education (PCOE) from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2015 for mandated Independent Living Skills services for eligible Placer County youth ages 15-21 in an amount not to exceed \$460,000 (no net County cost), and authorize the Director of Health and Human Services to sign subsequent amendments up to 10 percent of the original contract amount, consistent with the current agreement's subject matter and Scope of Work.

BACKGROUND:

To meet Federal and State mandates, the Children's System of Care provides educational and vocational/career preparation, personal budgeting, and other independent living supports to foster youth approaching adulthood. These services allow youth to more quickly adapt to independence and adulthood, and in so doing, prevent homelessness, unemployment, substance abuse, and otherwise reduce the need for public services.

HHS and Probation department staff, with the support of local court partners and other SMART policy agencies, have spent the last year reviewing service gaps and evaluating delivery models in other communities. Current and former foster youth have been inquired of as to their preferences about how to improve and enhance existing services.

The proposed collaborative model for delivery of these Independent Living Skills services through PCOE will significantly expand and enhance the historic services in Placer County, and offer the most seamless and comprehensive continuum of resources and supports for our foster youth. Assigned PCOE staff will have access to key data sources, including Child Welfare, enhancing communication with County social workers and the courts, and enabling a smooth transition into the Independent Living Program (ILP) as soon as the child is eligible.

This contract approach will facilitate far greater accessibility for Placer County youth to PCOE's Regional and Occupational Training Programs, to vocational services provided through the Local Education Agencies (LEA), including access to California Department of Rehabilitation services for youth with disabilities, and to specialized tutoring not currently accessed by the preponderance of involved foster youth. PCOE already maintains a countywide database of all foster youth required by its own State mandates. Linking the additional ILP services through PCOE will close any and all gaps in coordination and tracking of Placer County's emancipating youth. It will further link foster youth, in the most seamless and efficient manner, to the College Transition Support Services at Sierra College, where PCOE is a founding member. Placer County students enrolled in Tahoe Truckee Unified Schools will now be directly linked to ILP, which has been a systemic challenge for our county. While PCOE pioneered many elements of the historically successful ILP services currently practiced, it has also successfully obtained commitments from a number of private partners, including banks and healthcare providers, to construct a network of unique and value-adding service structures, including voluntary "in kind" supports.

Placer County's ILP model, under this proposed partnership, will become the benchmark for counties across the State. The Nevada County ILP/Schools partnership, a model similar to the proposed, was recently celebrated by the State for its effectiveness and efficiency.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Total annual expenditures of \$230,000 are an increase from the previous annual cost of \$202,496 and are included in the Department's FY 2013-14 Requested Budget. The remaining \$230,000 will be included in the Department's FY 2014-15 Requested Budget. This contract is fully funded by Federal and State funds and no County General Funds are required.

The PCOE contract is on file with the Clerk of the Board for review.