

MEMORANDUM
PLACER COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Community Health & Clinics

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Richard J. Burton, M.D., M.P.H.
Placer County Health Officer and Director of Health & Human Services
Mark Starr, D.V.M., M.P.V.M., Director of Community Health, Clinics, and Animal Services

DATE: September 28, 2010

SUBJECT: Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program FY 2010-11 Contract

ACTION REQUESTED:

Approve a contract with the California Department of Public Health for operation of the Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) in Placer County from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011 in the maximum amount of \$1,327,750, and authorize the Director of Health & Human Services to sign the contract and any subsequent amendments. No County General Fund match is required. This revenue is included in the Department's FY 2010-11 Final Budget.

BACKGROUND:

The Placer County Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides participants with access to scientifically-selected nutrient-rich foods, information on healthy eating and referrals to health care. The program serves pregnant women, new mothers, infants and young children up to age five who are low-income and determined to be at nutritional risk by a health care professional.

Each year, women and children in Placer County's WIC Program have access to millions of dollars worth of healthy foods from local grocers with program issued vouchers. These foods are specifically targeted to supplement the diets of over 4,300 children, infants and breastfeeding women with needed nutrients each month, resulting in three balanced healthy meals each day. The vouchers provide supplemental fruits, vegetables, whole grains, cereals, milk, cheese, eggs, juice and other items for child participants and breastfeeding mothers. Those that don't breastfeed receive vouchers for infant formula that meets about two-thirds of their monthly needs. Vouchers for healthy baby foods begin at six months of age. Nutrition and health education are also provided along with support and information about breastfeeding, help in finding health care and other community services in Placer County, and referrals for food stamps.

The \$3.1 million in vouchers contribute an estimated \$4.6 million in economic impact to local businesses. Placer County's WIC Program partners with the local agriculture community, the U.C. Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Best Program, and local farmers' markets, where WIC participants utilize over \$13,000 of fruit and vegetable vouchers each year. Additionally, a pilot project is in place to enable greater use of farmers' markets.

Research has shown that every \$1.00 spent on WIC results in estimated savings of \$2.45 in infant health care costs. Children under age three who receive WIC are more likely to be in good health than children who are eligible but do not receive services. Because the brain doubles in size during the first 12 months of life if the nutritional building blocks are provided, WIC has its most protective effect on children in their first year of life. Also, WIC decreases the risk of developmental delays in young children and helps them to be ready to learn when they enter school.

The allocation for this program has increased steadily over the last four years. In FY 2007-08, the Placer County WIC Program received an allocation of \$846,000. For FY 2010-11, the allocation has

increased to \$1,327,750. This significant increase is the result of the current economic downturn and the hard work of the Placer County WIC Program to promote and encourage Program participation. The current average monthly WIC participant caseload in Placer County is 4,308, an increase of over 800 visits per month since 2007.

The WIC allocation is included in Placer County's Consolidated Contract with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) which will be finalized later this year. That contract will supersede this "bridge" contract when it is finalized. This contract allows prompt reimbursement from CDPH for WIC services provided in Placer County in the interim.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The total award amount of \$1,327,750 includes 100 percent Federal funds. No County General Fund match is required. This revenue is included in the Department's FY 2010-11 Final Budget.

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