



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 1/9/2024

File #: 24-20

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Social Services

Agenda Section: Consent

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Memorandum of Understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Regarding the Coordination of Investigations Related to Suspected Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Department of Health and Human Services Director, or a designee thereof, to execute, the attached memorandum of understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program regarding the coordination of investigations related to suspected elder and dependent adult abuse for the period of Jan. 9, 2023 through June 30, 2034;
2. Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to, and any other agreements, certifications, attestations and documents directly associated with, the attached memorandum of understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office; and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to provide the Department of Health and Human Services - Contract Unit with one fully executed, certified copy of the Board order related to this item.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Social Services fund (1160-511)

DISCUSSION:

Pursuant to the federal Older Americans Act, every state is required to have a Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program that addresses complaints and advocates for improvements in the long-term care system. The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and local Ombudsman Coordinators are responsible for recruiting, training and supervising Ombudsman representatives, who then perform regular on-site visits to long-term care facilities. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program serving Humboldt and Del Norte Counties is hosted by the Area 1 Agency on Aging. The

program is built largely of volunteers who are trained and certified to advocate for the rights of residents of skilled nursing and residential care facilities.

Ombudsman advocacy involves receiving and resolving individual complaints, including, without limitation, allegations of elder abuse or neglect, and issues by, or on behalf of, residents and patients of long-term care facilities, and pursuing resident advocacy in the long-term care system, its laws, policies, regulations and administration through public education and consensus building. The Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services - Adult Protective Services ("DHHS - Adult Protective Services) is responsible for investigating elder and dependent adult abuse in Humboldt County pursuant to the Elder Abuse and Dependent Adult Civil Protection Act (California Welfare and Institutions Code Sections 15600, *et seq.* DHHS - Adult Protective Services' goal is to provide protective services to elders and dependent adults who are unable to protect their own interests or to care for themselves.

The attached Memorandum of Understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program provides clarification of each agency's respective role and addresses jurisdictional issues with the ultimate goal of increasing collaboration, addressing gaps in services and enhancing outcomes for elders and dependent adults. The framework for this MOU was provided by the California Welfare Directors Association, which is a nonprofit organization representing human service directors from each of California's 58 counties.

Accordingly, DHHS - Adult Protective Services recommends that the Board approve, and authorize the DHHS - Director, or a designee thereof to execute, the attached memorandum of understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program regarding the coordination of investigations related to suspected elder and dependent adult abuse for the period of Jan. 9, 2023 through June 30, 2034. Staff also recommends that the Board authorize the DHHS Director, a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to, and any other agreements, certifications, attestations and documents directly associated with, the attached memorandum of understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office, in order to avoid any unnecessary delays in the coordination of investigations related to suspected elder and dependent adult abuse.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There are no direct costs associated with the attached memorandum of understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. As a result, approval of the attached memorandum of understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STAFFING IMPACT:

The attached memorandum of understanding with the Humboldt Del Note Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program will not impact current staffing levels.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Framework by protecting vulnerable populations, creating opportunities for improved safety and health and providing community-appropriate levels of service.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board may choose not to approve the attached memorandum of understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program regarding the coordination of investigations related to suspected elder and dependent adult abuse. However, this alternative is not recommended because it would decrease collaboration regarding investigations related to suspected elder and dependent abuse and reduce the quality of services provided to vulnerable elders and dependent adults in Humboldt County.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Memorandum of Understanding with the Humboldt Del Norte Counties Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Regarding Coordination of Investigations Related to Suspected Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A