COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 7/8/2025

File #: 25-741

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Administration

Agenda Section: Consent

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Renewal of the Professional Services Agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation Regarding the Provision of Training, Consultation and Support Services that are Designed to Assist with the Development and Implementation of an Institutional Process for Advancing Racial Equity in an Amount of $155,078

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve, and authorize the Chair of the Board to execute, the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation regarding the provision of training and support services that are designed to assist with the development and implementation of an institutional process for advancing racial equity within the Department of Health and Human Services in an amount not to exceed One Hundred Fifty-Five Thousand Seventy-Eight Dollars ($155,078.00) for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026; and
2. Authorize the Department of Health and Human Services Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Are Foundation, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management, and the County Administration Office; and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to return one (1) fully executed copy of the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation to the Department of Health and Human Services - Contract Unit for further processing.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The recommended actions support the following areas of the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Plan:

Area of Focus: Workforce & Operational Excellence
Strategic Plan Category: 3001 - Support a well-trained workforce

DISCUSSION:

The Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services ("DHHS") has engaged in a variety of efforts to address racial and cultural inequities over the years. With the inception of the Racial Equity Steering Committee in 2020, and allocation of the Racial and Cultural Equity Manager position in 2022, DHHS has continued to advance efforts to address structural racism within the department. Guided by the Racial Equity Strategic Plan, DHHS staff have launched initiatives to broaden staff's awareness and understanding of concepts related to privilege, unconscious and conscious bias, cultural humility and racial equity.

Since September 2020, Humboldt Area Foundation, by and through Stepping Stone Consulting, has provided training and coaching tailored to support the DHHS Racial Equity Steering Committee, the Racial and Cultural Equity Manager and DHHS leadership staff with core objectives found within the DHHS Racial Equity Strategic Plan. Activities include development and facilitation of department-wide trainings such as *Implicit Bias - An Introduction,* which was launched in July 2023, and *Foundations of Racial Equity,* which was launched in September 2023. These trainings offer DHHS staff with a stepped approach that advances material introduced in *Exploring Racial Equity: Common Terms,* developed by DHHS staff in 2021, and since adopted as a county-wide mandatory training. In 2024, the quarterly Racial Equity Leadership Institute and Branch Leadership Coaching Sessions were introduced. Both aim to build capacity among supervisory-level staff to lead activities addressing structural racism, refine hiring and retention practices and better support clients and staff. In 2025, plans include a train-the-trainer program to further develop internal capacity to sustain equity efforts into the future.

Outcomes of this work have been reflected in the department-wide Workforce Development Survey, with ninety percent (90%) of respondents reporting familiarity with core terms explored in trainings, and sixty percent (60%) of respondents indicating that equity trainings have impacted how they approach their job or interactions with clients, co-workers and/or the community. Additionally, eighty-six percent (86%) of supervisory and non-supervisory staff rated the usefulness of material and effectiveness of facilitation of the *Foundations* training as 4.1 and 4.4 of five, respectively, with 5 being "extremely" useful and/or effective in post-training surveys.

Through provision of training, coaching and consultation services, Stepping Stone Consulting's work with DHHS assists the department in meeting a number of mandates, regulations and standards related to racial equity, diversity and inclusion that are required in their work. For example, Department of Health Care Services' Cultural Competence Plan requires behavioral health departments to identify, analyze and report disparities in behavioral health services for unserved and underserved communities and to develop a plan to address these disparities. Some criteria required include strategies and efforts for reducing racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic mental health disparities and culturally competent training activities. California Department of Social Services requires each social services funded position receive cultural awareness training pertaining to specific cultural characteristics of cultural groups served by DHHS to gain a better understanding of and sensitivity to the various cultural groups to ensure equal delivery of services. Additionally, as an accredited Local Health Department, Public Health is required to meet several standards that relate to racial equity training, including considering diversity, equity or inclusion in recruitment and hiring efforts, and considering staff competence in the areas of cultural humility, diversity or inclusion.

The attached professional services agreement will allow Humboldt Area Foundation to continue providing training, consultation and support services that are designed to assist with the development and implementation of an institutional process for advancing racial equity within DHHS for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. It should be noted that the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation comes to the Board after the start date thereof due to inadvertent delays that occurred during the contract development process.

Accordingly, DHHS recommends that the Board approve, and authorize the Chair of the Board to execute, the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation regarding the provision of training, consultation and support services that are designed to assist with the development and implementation of an institutional process for advancing racial equity within DHHS for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. It is also recommended that the Board authorize the DHHS Director, or a designee thereof, to execute any and all subsequent amendments to the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation, after review and approval by County Counsel, Risk Management and the County Administrative Office, in order to avoid any unnecessary delays in the provision of needed training, consultation and support services.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:
Social Services Funds (1160-516)

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Expenditures (1160-516)	**FY25-26 Adopted**
Budgeted Expenses	$155,078.00
Total Expenditures	**$155,078.00**
Funding Sources (1160-516)	**FY25-26 Adopted**
State/Federal Funds	$155,078.00
Total Funding Sources	**$155,078.00**

The attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation has a maximum amount payable of One Hundred Fifty-Five Thousand Seventy-Eight Dollars ($155,078.00) for the period of July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026. However, in the event local, state or federal funding or allowance rates are reduced or eliminated, the County of Humboldt may reduce the above-referenced maximum amount payable or terminate the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation in its entirety.

Expenditure appropriations related to the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation have been included in the approved fiscal year 2025-26 budget for DHHS Administration budget unit 1160-516. Funding for the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation is funded through a variety of funding sources from each of the branches including the County Expense Claim (CalWORKs, CalFresh, etc.), Mental Health Services Act and Public Health Realignment.

STAFFING IMPACT:
Approval of the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation will not impact current staffing levels.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:
None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:
The Board may choose not to approve the attached professional services agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation regarding the provision of training, consultation and support services that are designed to assist with the development and implementation of an institutional process for advancing racial equity within DHHS. However, this alternative is not recommended as it will not allow DHHS to follow through with their objectives around becoming an anti-racist organization and supporting a healthy and engaged workforce.

ATTACHMENTS:
1. Professional Services Agreement with Humboldt Area Foundation Regarding the Provision of Training, Consultation and Support Services that are Designed to Assist with the Development and Implementation of an Institutional Process for Advancing Racial Equity within the Department of Health and Human Services

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:
Meeting of: 11/29/2022
File No.: 22-1483