Request

The Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD) requests that the six-month wait period, required for retirees before they can return to work, be waived for Daniel Chan. Mr. Chan, a Senior Social Services Information Systems Analyst, is singularly qualified to provide crucial support to the Department at a pivotal time in the Health Care Reform Affordable Care Act (ACA) implementation. The Department recognizes the need to be judicious in requesting such exceptions but in the case of Mr. Chan an exception is warranted to meet current non-deferrable County obligations with the most appropriate and effective systems specialist who can help meet them.

Background

ACA implementation, through major federal and State regulation changes, includes unprecedented government-sponsored enrollment of customers for private health care coverage and the expansion of Medi-Cal benefits to include recipients not previously covered. The new regulations, in the process of being implemented, include mandated implementation time frames for enrollment and delivery of service and benefits. They also include cross-program impacts to be addressed.

Implementation and ongoing administrative and operational support for these programs are dependent upon business-specific systems and their interfaces. There are three large-scale State-mandated systems required to receive, process, and transfer data among each other. Their data and functionality support the determination, monitoring, and reporting of ACA enrollment and Medi-Cal eligibility status according to policy regulations:

- o CalWORKS Information Network (CalWIN): a Consortium system for eighteen counties, the Welfare Client Data System (WCDS) that manages the administration of benefit programs that include Medi-Cal, CalWORKS, CalFresh, Foster Care, General Assistance, and Child Care.

- o Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS): a State system that administers the issuance of Medi-Cal benefits statewide for all 58 California counties.

- o California Healthcare Eligibility, Enrollment and Retention System (CalHEERS), also called CoveredCA.com: a new State system that manages the enrollment and tracking of ACA applicants and recipients for all 58 California counties.

These systems and their interfaces must be developed and/or changed to implement new and expanded Medi-Cal programs while maintaining continuity of business for all programs for which the Department is responsible. Systems staff must create these technical solutions by collaborating with staff from multiple functions in the County, the Consortium, State, and contractors, taking into consideration accuracy of policy interpretation, staff's operational needs, technical constraints, and system governance rules.

Justification

Mr. Chan has been a systems analyst for over ten years assigned to support systems that administer the Medi-Cal program. He has demonstrated expertise consistently in the systems necessary for the implementation of ACA and Medi-Cal program expansion and has been in the forefront of collaborating, researching, and performing work to implement Health Care Reform.

He is consulted by State, other counties', and Consortium staff because of his well-earned reputation for in-depth business and technical knowledge and analytical ability. He has been and is an important leader and contributor within the Consortium of counties to change CalWIN and develop interface specifications between CalWIN and CalHEERS to complete ACA implementation.

Within EHSD, he is much respected and relied upon for his ability and initiative to interpret and implement policy regulations and translate them into systems specifications; support Medi-Cal policy staff; instruct and support operational staff to use systems to accomplish intended business outcomes; advocate for systems changes that will facilitate policy compliance and mitigate staff workload; develop business processes and integrate them with systems use to compensate for missing or incorrect systems functionality; address the most technical of details within the context of meeting customer service and staff support objectives; mentor other systems analysts; manage implementation of systems changes; and communicate to and propose solutions for management about anticipated impacts of policy and system changes.

Mr. Chan's pertinent knowledge and experience, personal attributes, and quality of work are key factors in requesting his retention to ensure continuity of, and reduce risk to, the Department's efforts to effectively and timely implement Health Care Reform and address its impacts.

Transition

In anticipation of the significant systems requirements, impact, complexity, and workload of Health Care Reform and to reduce dependency on one person, EHSD has already made progress in transitioning systems staff to share existing and new workload. To ensure a smooth transition and continuity of systems support for the Department, Mr. Chan, will continue to provide training to systems staff about multiple systems that support ACA and Medi-Cal, systems and operational support requirements, and the need to match systems functions and data with business requirements. The Department will facilitate and monitor progress of the transition.