



**Contra
Costa
County**

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Kathy Gallagher, Employment & Human Services Director

Date: June 26, 2018

Subject: Resolution No. 2018/241 - Changes to General Assistance Program

RECOMMENDATION(S):

APPROVE changes to the General Assistance program effective July 1, 2018, to provide a more efficient service delivery model for General Assistance clients.

ADOPT Resolution No. 2018/241, which supersedes Resolution Nos. 97/212, 97/213, 98/100, 2009/459, 2012/63, to reflect the program changes in the Standard of Administrations for the General Assistance Program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

It is anticipated that the proposed General Assistance program changes will cost an additional \$1,000,000 per fiscal year, once implemented. EHSD's budget has been increased by \$1,000,000 for FY 18-19 to fund the proposed General Assistance program changes. (100% General Fund)

BACKGROUND:

The General Assistance Program is governed by the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC), sections 17000 through 17410. Every County has a mandatory duty to relieve and support indigent residents. The Board of Supervisors establishes the policies and procedures related

☒ APPROVE

☐ OTHER

☒ RECOMMENDATION OF CNTY ADMINISTRATOR

☐ RECOMMENDATION OF BOARD COMMITTEE

Action of Board On: **06/26/2018** ☒ APPROVED AS RECOMMENDED ☐ OTHER

Clerks Notes:

VOTE OF SUPERVISORS

AYE: John Gioia, District I Supervisor
Candace Andersen, District II Supervisor
Diane Burgis, District III Supervisor
Karen Mitchoff, District IV Supervisor
Federal D. Glover, District V Supervisor

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of an action taken and entered on the minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the date shown.

ATTESTED: June 26, 2018

David Twa, County Administrator and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: June McHuen, Deputy

Contact: Elaine Burres
608-4960

to the administration and implementation of General Assistance in Contra Costa County, and funds 100% of the costs of the program out of the County's general fund. The WIC requires counties to provide aid to all indigent residents who have no

BACKGROUND: (CONT'D)

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other means of support, to construe General Assistance laws fairly and equitably, and to provide assistance to people in a prompt and humane manner. General Assistance programs must be administered in a manner that reasonably effectuates the legitimate program purposes and allocates the correct amount of aid to which a person is entitled. The General Assistance program, along with Cal-Fresh, Medi-Cal, and Cal-Works is administered by the Employment and Human Services Department (“EHSD”).

EHSD now recommends streamlining the General Assistance Program to enhance service delivery for Program applicants and participants. The proposed changes are intended to make service delivery more efficient for all applicants and recipients, including those who are homeless and/or disabled. The proposed General Assistance Program changes are described below and would take effect July 1, 2018. Proposed Resolution 2018/241, “In the Matter of Standards of Administration for the General Assistance Program” reflects the program changes. Resolution 2018/241 would supersede Resolution 97/212 which currently governs standards of administration for the Program. The changes would:

- Reduce the number of appointments in the application process from two appointments to one mandatory “Intake and Orientation” appointment. (See, Reso. 2018/241, section 201.)
- Provide that homeless applicants who refuse a shelter bed for good cause, as defined, will receive the full housing allowance for the first 30 days of assistance. (See, Reso. 2018/241, section 105.)
- Provide that housing assistance will be issued on a monthly, rather than a weekly, basis. (See Reso. 2018/241, section 104.)
- Recoup overpayment of benefits at a reduced rate. General Assistance recipients who have been overpaid will have their benefits reduced by 5% a month (instead of 10%) for Administrative Errors and 10% a month (instead of 20%) for Inadvertent Household Errors. (See Reso. 2018/241, section 112.)
- Provide that either the Department’s, the applicant’s, or the recipient’s licensed health care provider may deem a General Assistance applicant or recipient “unable to comply” with the General Assistance program rules because of a mental or physical disability. (See Reso. 2018/241, section 309.)
- Provide that all General Assistance applicants and recipients will be clearly notified in writing of the responsibilities of their assigned employability level as either, Level 1 employable, Level 2 temporarily unemployable, or Level 3 permanently unemployable. Applicants or recipients will not be required to comply with the obligations corresponding to more than one employability level. (See Reso. 2018/241, section 308.)
- Provide that all Level 1 employable General Assistance applicants will be notified in writing, at the time of granting aid, that they will be eligible for a maximum of ninety (90) days of financial assistance in a twelve (12) month period. They will again be notified of the termination date of aid no less than forty-five (45) days

prior to the effective termination date. (See Reso. 2018/241, section 304.)

- Provide that General Assistance applicants and recipients who state that they are disabled and have not submitted medical verification will be categorized as Level 1 employable, pending medical verification. This category of Level 1 applicants and recipients will not be required to search for jobs or perform work-related activity pending verification of their disability. Once satisfactory verification justifying a Level 3 categorization is submitted, the recipient will be categorized as Level 3 unemployable retroactively to the date of the most recent General Assistance application, and the grant amount will be adjusted accordingly. (See Reso. 2018/241, section 305.)
- Provide that General Assistance applicants and recipients will not be subject to photographing or fingerprinting. (See Reso. 2018/241, section 606.)
- Provide that applicants and recipients may verify housing costs either by submitting receipts or by signing a declaration under penalty of perjury. (See Reso. 2018/241, section 106.)

In addition, for ease of reference, the provisions of several resolutions addressing elements of the General Assistance Program have been incorporated into Resolution 2018/241 and the prior resolutions will be superseded. No substantive changes are made to the provisions of the incorporated resolutions.

- Resolution 97/213 regarding Provisions for Employable Recipients, would now be included in Resolution 2018/241 as Part 3. Employability, Paragraph 303.
- Resolution 98/100 regarding Time Limits for Employable Individuals, would now be included in Resolution 2018/241, as Part 3. Employability, Paragraph 301.
- Resolution 09/459 regarding Application Process, would now be included in Resolution 2018/241, as Part 2. General Assistance Eligibility, Paragraphs 203, (a), (b), (c), 204 and 205.
- Resolution 2012/63 regarding Replacing “Monthly” Reporting for “Quarterly” Reporting, and changing the Department name from “Social Services Department” to “Employment and Human Services Department”.

EHSD also will modify or create various program forms to implement the Program changes. These forms include:

- GA MED 1: Contra Costa County Medi-Cal Resource Guide.
- GA 33: Verification of homeless housing expenses.
- GA 94 H: Homeless client self-declaration.
- GA 239.17: Notice of action regarding approval of housing allowance.
- GA 239.18: Notice of action regarding denial of housing allowance.
- GA SL 700: Employable persons’ notification of termination of aid.
- GA 3435: Classification of employable persons pending disability verification.

CONSEQUENCE OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

If the proposed General Assistance Program changes are not implemented, the County will not streamline and improve services for General Assistance clients.

ATTACHMENTS

Resolution No. 2018/241

Resolution No. 2018-241 Highlighted

Resolution No. 2018-241 Standards of Administration