



Legislation Text

File #: 20-535, Version: 1

Receive a presentation and update from Shelter Solano regarding its shelter operations and contracts with Solano County

Published Notice Required? Yes ☐ No ☒
Public Hearing Required? Yes ☐ No ☒

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION:

Receive a presentation and update from Shelter Solano regarding its shelter operations and contracts with Solano County.

SUMMARY:

Solano County Health & Social Services (H&SS) maintains three contracts with Shelter Solano, two with Behavioral Health which purchases approximately 25 beds per day, and one with Employment and Eligibility which provides housing services for California Opportunity and Work Responsibility to Kids ("CalWORKs") clients. In Behavioral Health, one contract is funded with Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funds and provides an average of 15 beds per day, with an annual contract of \$500,000. This contract is intended to shelter individuals with severe mental illness who are referred by staff in the Behavioral Health system. These are typically clients who have received services at a psychiatric hospital, the crisis unit, or other intensive mental health services. The MHSA contract with Shelter Solano calls for transitional housing for a targeted time frame of six to nine months. The program is expected to provide housing case management which includes tenant education and skill building to prepare residents to live independently.

The other Behavioral Health contract is for the Proposition 47 project, funded through the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), which funds an average census of 10 beds per day with an annual contract of \$310,250. Clients served in Proposition 47 who are housed with program funds require engagement in substance use disorder treatment and the shelter provides sober housing to support their recovery efforts. The Proposition 47 contract maintains clients at the shelter until they successfully complete outpatient substance use disorder treatment or until they move to a more independent living arrangement.

The CalWORKs Housing First model supports families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. It provides up to two years of support including case management, housing identification, move in assistance, and rent. In July 2019 through January 2020, E&E identified 124 families eligible for this support. E&E social workers were able to permanently house 58 families (47%). To improve this success rate, E&E issued an RFP and entered into a contract with Shelter Inc. The contract is funded through the CalWORKs Housing Support Program allocation and provides housing navigators to establish new partnerships with landlords and property managers, conduct housing inspections, secure housing for families, and develop a database of landlords and property managers. The primary performance measure requires that 80% of families referred by Employment and Eligibility are permanently housed within forty-five days. The FY2019/20 contract amount was \$52,100 and the FY2020/21 amount is \$124,900.

The shelter has arranged for contracts and other funding sources as means to expand the shelter capacity. These details will be shared by Shelter Solano as part of their presentation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

FY2020/21 contracts include \$500,000 in MHSA funds, \$310,250 in Proposition 47 funds and \$124,900 from the CalWORKs allocation as represented in the Department's FY2020/21 Preliminary Budget. There are no County general funds in these contracts.

DISCUSSION:

Shelter Solano operates the shelter property at 310 Beck Avenue in Fairfield for Solano County residents who are homeless. Solano County entered into two agreements with Shelter Solano in FY2018/19. The first agreement was a start-up funding agreement for \$270,000 from February 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020 and provided for two beds per night. The second agreement was a Contribution Agreement where the County excused outstanding obligations tied to the shelter property in return for one bed per night for ten (10) years. The three beds have been occupied since the start of both agreements.

Solano County Health & Social Services, Behavioral Health Division has maintained contracts with the shelter since its conversion from the prior operator, using a combination of funding sources. In January 2019, the Board approved a behavioral health contract with Shelter Inc. for \$700,000 for the period of February 1, 2019, through June 30, 2019. This initial contract included \$500,000 in MHSA funding and \$200,000 from a one-time State grant, the Homeless Mentally Ill Outreach and Treatment (HMIOT) grant. The HMIOT funds could be flexibly used to serve the homeless, and this supported some of the residents who were housed at the shelter at the time of the conversion between vendors. In that partial fiscal year, the HMIOT funds in the amount of \$250,000 and \$41,747 in MHSA funds were expended.

Solano County H&SS continues to maintain annual contracts with Shelter Solano with MHSA, Proposition 47, and CalWORKs Housing Support Program funds. Solano County's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Integrated Three-Year Program Plan FY 2017/20 and MHSA Annual Update FY2019/20 support ongoing efforts to provide a comprehensive array of behavioral health services encompassing prevention, early intervention, and treatment services along with the necessary infrastructure, technology and training elements to effectively support the mental health system. MHSA funded services include housing support for adults with severe mental health conditions, identified by local stakeholders as a priority service population.

The MHSA contracted deliverables and outcomes achieved from July 1, 2019, through May 30, 2020 include:

- 64 residents served, 45 of the residents admitted in FY2019/20
- Average length of stay: 78.5 days
- 59 residents discharged from the shelter, 29% (n=17) discharged to permanent housing
- 97% of residents housed 30 days or more received case management services to support housing skills
- 64% of residents who discharged to permanent housing had maintained that housing for six months

The Proposition 47 project deliverables for FY2019/20 include:

- 51 residents served
- Average length of stay: 47 days
- 44 residents discharged, and 27% successfully transitioning to a more independent living arrangement or graduated from substance use disorder treatment

The CalWORKs Housing Support Program deliverable for FY2019/20:

- From January 2020 through June 2020, 90 families referred to Shelter Inc. from E&E.

- 20 clients permanently housed - a 22% placement success rate (compared to the 80% contract requirement). At the same time, E&E social workers successfully housed 16 of these 90 families (18% of the families). To date in 2020, 40% of eligible CalWORKs families have been permanently housed.
- 29 new landlords/property managers identified in FY2019/20.

Shelter Inc. has had challenges in meeting their contracted deliverables, but this appears to be largely due to factors associated with the housing market rather than their performance itself:

- Lack of rental housing supply - there is currently a 5% vacancy rate.
- Cost of rental housing - the goal of the program is that families are permanently housed - even after E&E no longer funds the rent. Therefore, they are housed in rentals that they are likely to afford on their own. There are very few such affordable rentals.
- Competition with better candidates - CalWORKs families often have credit problems and negative tenant histories. E&E works with families to resolve these issues and become good tenants. However, landlords are not always willing to take the risk with them.

To help improve contract performance, E&E is providing Shelter Inc. with technical assistance to develop effective tracking mechanisms, improve case conferencing, and standardize monthly meetings. E&E is also providing navigation training support from Home Base.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Board may choose not to receive this presentation on Shelter Inc.; however, this presentation was requested by the Board on June 23, 2020.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Shelter Solano staff have prepared the presentation for the Board of Supervisors.

CAO RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION