

**Agenda Item No. 7
May 7, 2014 Meeting**

DATE: April 21, 2014

TO: Children and Families Commission of Orange County

FROM: Christina Altmayer, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Approve Annual Implementing Actions for the AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps/VISTA Programs

SUMMARY:

The Children and Families Commission participates in the federal AmeriCorps and the AmeriCorps/VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) programs with a total annual net cost of just over \$1 million. The Commission's local program includes 23 AmeriCorps members and 22 VISTA members. Included in this agenda item is a request to authorize funding for the AmeriCorps program, an overview of potential changes to the VISTA program, and an update on the transition of the programs' administration. This is an update from the item presented at the March 5, 2014 Commission meeting that focused on the Capacity Building Goal area.

DISCUSSION:

The Commission has participated in both AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps/VISTA programs since 2004. The programs support community members who provide a year or more of service to community-based agencies in exchange for stipends and/or educational funding. AmeriCorps members provide direct services to low income communities, while VISTA members support agencies through capacity building, fund development, and administrative services. The Commission is required to reauthorize the funding and the agreement for the administration of the program annually.

AmeriCorps Program

The AmeriCorps program is a collaborative in which the First 5 Association of California is the lead and contracts with Prevent Child Abuse California (PCA CA) for statewide administrative support. Starting July 1, 2014, the collaborative will be in its third year of the AmeriCorps grant term. The structure of the grant agreement provides that PCA CA handles all payments made to the members and is reimbursed by each participating First 5/Children and Families Commission the net cost once offset by the proceeds of the grant. The Orange County Commission is one of 13 county commissions that participate, with an annual allocation of 23 of the 90 members statewide.

The program's structure requires that all AmeriCorps members provide direct services to children ages 0-5 focused on improving educational outcomes. All programs report progress towards common goals and outcomes. The Commission has supported THINK Together and the Garden Grove Boys and Girls Club programs with AmeriCorps members who focus on early learning activities and improving early literacy outcomes. During program year 2012/13, AmeriCorps members provided early learning services to over 6,800 children ages 0-5. Historically, over 80 percent of the children served improved their school readiness. AmeriCorps members are also required to help develop volunteer programs within their community and for the agencies they are

supporting. In program year 2012/13, the Orange County AmeriCorps members recruited over 100 volunteers who provided almost 600 hours of volunteer services. Staff recommends maintaining all 23 members for the 2014/15 program year to support these two programs which have successfully demonstrated targeted outcomes for young children.

THINK Together and the Garden Grove Boys and Girls Club have been selected to participate in an evaluation funded by the state. The evaluation work will examine the cost effectiveness, identification of best practices, and models of programs that fit well within the AmeriCorps program model.

The Fiscal Year 2014/15 annual cost to the Commission for these members is \$470,000 and is consistent with the adopted FY 2014/15 Budget approved in April. Staff does not recommend any changes to the AmeriCorps program and is requesting authority to enter into an agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California in an amount not to exceed \$470,000 for a 23 member allocation.

VISTA Program

The Orange County Commission serves as the lead for the statewide First 5 Service Corps collaborative, which includes seven other county commissions and 42 members in service. Of the 42 members in service throughout the state, Orange County places 20 members in service with local nonprofit agencies. At the March 2014 meeting, the Commission received an agenda item on the Capacity Building Goal Area. Included in this item were staff recommendations regarding changes to the local administration and program emphasis of the VISTA program (Volunteers In Service To America).

Subsequent conversations with representatives from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the agency that allocates the VISTA program resources and administers the program at the federal level, have indicated the program may be undergoing a significant redesign including limitations on how the Commission can manage the program, reduction in the number of members in service, and structure of the financial claims for reimbursement. Further clarification from CNCS has been requested and staff anticipates returning to the Commission with recommendations for future program administration at the July 2014 meeting.

Statewide and Local Program Administration

The Orange County Commission has a combined local AmeriCorps/VISTA program of 43 members that serve in nonprofit agencies. Additionally, the Commission provides administrative support to the seven other county commissions that participate in the VISTA program and to their 22 VISTA members and host agencies. This support includes recruitment and enrollment of the members, time keeping and processing of living stipends, training, and data collection for semi-annual and annual reporting to CNCS. In order to manage the administrative workload the Commission subcontracts with two agencies: Orangewood Children's Foundation for direct support for the members, host agencies and county commissions; and, Public Health Foundation Enterprises, Inc., for member timekeeping and payment process.

In November 2013, the Commission was notified that Orangewood Children's Foundation would not be pursuing a renewal of their subcontract which terminates on June 30, 2014. The Commission has completed a process to identify another administrative partner, but is on hold pending further direction from CNCS regarding the VISTA program redesign as it has significant implications for the scope, reimbursement for administrative responsibilities, and size of the VISTA program. Once

direction is received from CNCS, which is anticipated for early May 2014, staff will return to the Commission at the July 2014 meeting with a recommendation for subcontract(s) to support the VISTA program. In the interim and as part of a long term strategy to reduce administrative costs for the program, Orangewood Children's Foundation and Commission staff have met with and trained AmeriCorps partner agencies (Boys and Girls Club of Garden Grove and THINK Together) on recruitment, selection, and enrollment of members. Both agencies have agreed to take on more of the member support administration. If needed, the Commission will identify resources or consultants within the Executive Director's authority to address any gaps in administrative resources. Given the federal requirements and audit requirements, it is critical that the Commission ensure consistent compliance with all data collection and reporting requirements.

STRATEGIC PLAN & FISCAL SUMMARY:

The proposed action has been specifically reviewed in relation to the Commission's Strategic Plan and is consistent with the Commission's Early Learning and Capacity Building goals. The total funding amount of up to \$470,000 is included in the FY 2014/15 budget within the Capacity Building funding category.

PRIOR COMMISSION ACTIONS:

- March 2014 – Capacity Building Goal Area Update
- May 2013 – AmeriCorps Funding approval for program year 2013/14
- June 2012 – Updated funding approval for FY 2012/13
- March 2012 – Funding approved for program year FY 2012/13

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Adopt resolution (Attachment 1) authorizing the Executive Director, or designee, and Commission Counsel to prepare and negotiate an Agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California in a total amount to exceed \$470,000 for a term of 12 months.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Resolution for Prevent Child Abuse California

Contact: Kim Goll

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION OF ORANGE COUNTY

RESOLUTION NO. ___-14-C&FC

May 7, 2014

A RESOLUTION OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION OF ORANGE COUNTY DIRECTING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR DESIGNEE AND COMMISSION COUNSEL TO PREPARE AND NEGOTIATE THE FINAL FORM OF AN AGREEMENT WITH PREVENT CHILD ABUSE CALIFORNIA FOR THE AMERICORPS PROGRAM; AND, AUTHORIZING APPROVAL AND EXECUTION OF SUCH AGREEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE COMMISSION

WHEREAS, in order to facilitate the creation and implementation of an integrated, comprehensive, and collaborative system of information and services to enhance optimal early childhood development, the legislature adopted legislation set forth in the California Children and Families Act of 1998, Health and Safety Code Section 130100, *et seq.* (as amended, the “Act”) implementing the Children and Families First Initiative passed by the California electorate in November, 1998 and establishing the California Children and Families Commission and County Children and Families Commissions, including this Children and Families Commission of Orange County (“Commission”); and

WHEREAS, Commission adopted its Strategic Plan to define how funds authorized under the Act and allocated to the Commission should best be used to meet the critical needs of Orange County’s children prenatal to five years of age as codified in the Act; and

WHEREAS, Commission desires to authorize the Executive Director or designee and Commission Counsel to prepare and negotiate an Agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California for participation in the First 5 Service Corps collaborative AmeriCorps Program, in an amount not to exceed \$470,000 for a twelve month term, as specified in the May 7, 2014 staff report for this Agenda Item, and

WHEREAS, Commission has reviewed the staff report relating to the scope of services to be provided and hereby finds and determines that the proposed Agreement is in furtherance of and consistent with the Commission’s Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, Commission desires to authorize the Executive Director and Commission Counsel to enter into an Agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California, in an amount not to exceed \$470,000, for a twelve month term, as specified in the May 7, 2014 staff report for this Agenda Item.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION OF ORANGE COUNTY AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1 Commission finds and determines the foregoing Recitals are true and correct and are a substantive part of this Resolution.

Section 2 Commission hereby authorizes the Executive Director or designee and Commission Counsel to prepare and negotiate the terms, conditions and final form of an Agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California, in an amount not to exceed \$470,000, for a twelve month term,

for participation in the First 5 Service Corps collaborative AmeriCorps Program, consistent with the May 7, 2014 staff report and scope of services referenced therein; and

Section 3 The approval by the Executive Director of the Agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution and delivery of the Agreement by the Executive Director to the Commission Clerk.

Section 4 Commission hereby approves the Agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California, in an amount not to exceed \$470,000, for a twelve month term, for participation in the First 5 Service Corps collaborative AmeriCorps Program, as specified in the May 7, 2014 staff report for this Agenda Item.

Section 5 The Executive Director and Commission Counsel are hereby authorized to execute the Agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California on behalf of the Commission.

Section 6 A copy of the final Agreement when executed shall be appended hereto as a part of Exhibit A to this Resolution. Exhibit A is hereby fully incorporated as a part of this Resolution by this reference and made a part hereof. The final executed Agreement shall be placed on file in the office of the Clerk of the Commission.

Section 7 In addition to the authorization of Section 2 above, the Executive Director, or designee, is hereby authorized, on behalf of the Commission, (i) to sign all documents necessary and appropriate to carry out and implement the Amendments to Agreement(s), (ii) to cause the issuance of warrants, (iii) to administer the Commission's obligations, responsibilities, and duties to be performed under such agreement(s), and (iv) during the term thereof to provide waivers, administrative interpretations, and minor modifications of the provisions of such agreement(s) in the furtherance thereof.

Section 8 The Clerk of the Commission shall certify to the adoption of this Resolution.

The foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the following vote of the Children and Families Commission of Orange County on May 7, 2014 to wit:

AYES: Commissioners: _____

NOES: Commissioner(s): _____

EXCUSED: Commissioner(s): _____

ABSTAINED: Commissioner(s) _____

CHAIR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
)
COUNTY OF ORANGE)

I, SUSAN NOVAK, Clerk of the Commission of Orange County, California, hereby certify that a copy of this document has been delivered to the Chair of the Commission and that the above and foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly adopted by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto set my hand and seal.

SUSAN NOVAK
Clerk of the Commission, Children and Families Commission of
Orange County, County of Orange, State of California

Resolution No: __-14-C&FC

Agenda Date: May 7, 2014

Item No. __



I certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the Resolution adopted by the

SUSAN NOVAK, Clerk of the Commission

By: _____
Deputy

EXHIBIT A TO RESOLUTION OF COMMISSION

(Attach copy of final executed Agreement with Prevent Child Abuse California)