



SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY 2009 STATE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The mission of the Human Services Agency (SF-HSA) is to promote well-being and self-sufficiency among individuals, families and communities in San Francisco. In accordance with this mission, SF-HSA helps to shape public policy at the state and federal level through the development of an annual plan that identifies legislative priorities; through proactive collaboration with the Mayor's Office, other City departments, the City's lobbyists, community partners, and state, regional and other affinity groups; and through communication and outreach to elected officials and other decision makers. This document will serve as a framework to guide the Agency's advocacy on state legislative, regulatory and budget issues in 2009.¹

AGING & ADULT SERVICES & LONG TERM CARE

1. Support stable or increased funding for programs serving seniors and adults with disabilities. Oppose reductions in funding for these categories of service, [including reductions in the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants](#).
2. Support proposals to preserve or increase funding for the Adult Protective Services program. Also support legislation that enhances the program's ability to identify, investigate and respond to reports of abuse and neglect and provide appropriate services to elderly and disabled victims of abuse.
3. [Support efforts to restore and where possible increase funds for Long Term Care Ombudsman Program. The Ombudsman serves the most vulnerable clients in nursing homes and residential care, to investigate complaints, monitor facilities, advocate for better care, rights, and transition plans if desired by the resident. The Governor recently line item vetoed all state funding for local Long Term Care Ombudsman Programs, a \\$3.8 million cut that represents about half of local program funding. San Francisco's Ombudsman Program has reduced staff by 50% to 2.6 FTE for more than 3000 beds, not counting Board & Care.](#)
4. Support legislative and regulatory changes that streamline the process for organizations to become approved as providers of services funded through Medi-Cal Home and Community Based Services waivers. Support legislative and regulatory changes that increase the availability of local Medi-Cal Home and Community Based Services waiver and increase the value of non-distinct part waivers, which would allow persons discharged from acute care facilities, who are at risk of institutionalization, to receive waivers of a value equal to those received by persons being discharged from skilled nursing facilities like Laguna Honda Hospital.
5. Support proposals that increase funding for the entire spectrum of community-based long term care and expand access to community-based living options and services that allow seniors and people with disabilities to avoid institutionalization and receive appropriate levels of care and support in the community.
6. Support legislation, budgetary proposals and regulatory changes that provide increased funding for Paratransit and funding of alternative transportation options for seniors and adults with disabilities.

¹ Items in blue indicate revisions or additions as compared to HSA's 2008 plan.

7. Support increased funding for Public Guardians in order to help meet new deadlines and levels of service mandated by the Omnibus Conservator Bill, which will result in larger court appointed caseloads and double the reporting requirements, and to avoid Superior Court-imposed penalties if the bill's requirements are not met.
8. Support proposals to preserve or increase funding for the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, [and oppose a reduction in state participation in provider wages and benefits](#). Also support legislation that increase access to and improve the quality of services offered by IHSS, including increasing the asset limit, [stable or](#) increased state participation in provider wages and benefits, and other program quality improvements.
9. [Support ongoing funding to implement the CMIPS II technology project, as well as system design decisions that will simplify county administration of the IHSS program and allow for some degree of county customization to meet local data tracking needs.](#)
10. Support proposals to provide flexible funding and loan assistance to support training, education and professional development for home care providers, social workers and other direct care providers in geriatric settings.
11. Support implementation of procedures to comply with the Conlon II decision, which requires timely reimbursement to eligible MediCal beneficiaries of covered services received while status is pending.
12. Support legislation making probate court investigators mandated reporters of suspected abuse or neglect of conserved individuals, requiring that court investigators share the results of any investigation regarding alleged abuse of a conserved individual with the local APS agency, and requiring that APS cross-report to the Probate Court when it receives or investigates an APS referral regarding a person under conservatorship.
13. Support legislative proposals that require comprehensive hospital discharge planning, ensure that individuals are discharged into appropriate settings where they will receive adequate care and support, and prevent exits to homelessness.
14. Support tax credits or deductions for senior home modifications, health insurance and family caregivers for seniors and adults with disabilities, as well as flexible terms to Family Leave Act to enable care for chronic as well as episodic illness.
15. Support legislation and regulation to protect elders and dependent adults from neglect and abuse including financial fraud. Specifically, support proposals to create or strengthen fraud abatement programs such as statewide professional certification for brokers and marketers of annuities, reverse mortgages and other financial products to seniors.
16. Support legislative and budgetary proposals that address the needs of the growing population of individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

CALWORKS

1. Support an adequate budget for the CalWORKs program that is based on actual costs, caseload projections and spending abilities across counties.
2. Support proposals that promote the ability of low-income families to increase their income, build and maintain assets, and attain self-sufficiency through employment services and other work supports.
3. Support legislative and budgetary proposals that will result in improvements to the state's TANF work participation rate, including implementation of the Work Incentive Nutritional Supplement program.
4. [Support elimination of the CalWORKs 100-hour rule, which makes two-parent working families ineligible for aid if the principle wage earner works 100 or more hours per month.](#)

5. Support proposals to provide additional supports to low-income families for whom housing instability is a barrier to employment.
6. Support legislation to make a vehicle exempt from the CalWORKs household property limit.
7. Oppose legislative and budget proposals that weaken the safety net for low-income families and children. Specifically, oppose proposals to implement full family sanctions and to eliminate or impose time limits on CalWORKs safety net and child-only grants.
8. Oppose legislation that requires welfare applicants and recipients to undergo drug testing or submit to a home investigation by law enforcement officials as a condition of eligibility.

CHILD CARE

1. Oppose reduction in Regional Market Rate (RMR) payment ceilings. RMRs are based on the average cost of child care within each county. If a child care provider's rates are higher than the RMR the state currently reimburses their costs up to a maximum of 85% of the RMR. Budget proposals in recent years have sought to reduce the cap to 75% of the RMR.
2. Support budget and legislative proposals that maintain or increase funding for child care, expand access to subsidized child care for working families and families on welfare, reimburse providers for their actual costs, and promote high quality child care programs through investments in the early education workforce, facilities and other quality improvement activities.
3. Support state pass-through of Child Care Development Block Grant stimulus funds for child care quality initiatives to the local level. Also encourage that stimulus funds earmarked for child care subsidies be allocated to family care providers and vouchers, which can be ramped up and down more easily than center providers.
4. Support legislation and regulatory interpretations of current law that guarantee continuity of care for children in locally-subsidized child care programs when they transfer from a local voucher into a state or federally-funded program.
5. Support proposals that give local jurisdictions flexibility to maximize resources in order to meet locally-identified child care needs. Specifically, support implementation and extension of San Francisco's pilot program, which begins to address inequities in the reimbursement system by supporting an adjusted rate for Title 5 centers that are otherwise subject to suppressed Standard Reimbursement Rates.
6. Support proposals to improve quality through the State Quality Planning Process created by the approval of SB 1629. Specifically, support moving toward a tiered reimbursement system over time which rewards quality and provides an incentive for parents to use quality providers.
7. Support proposals to adjust the Standard Reimbursement Rates (SRR) to account for regional differences in the cost of providing child care, and to implement catch-up and annual cost-of-living adjustments to the SRR.
8. Support increased funding for Community Care Licensing to improve frequency of site visits for monitoring compliance. California is last in the nation in center monitoring, with inspections currently conducted once every five years.
9. Support regulatory and legislative proposals to better align the administration of child care subsidy programs under the Department of Social Services and the Department of Education. Specifically, align CalWORKs Stage 1 and Stage 2 administration in order to maximize ease of access and retention of child care subsidies for low-income families and to better support work participation; and streamline the eligibility process for families who have existed aid by reducing the frequency and complexity of reporting and documentation requirements.

10. Support proposals and regulatory changes to increase continuity of eligibility in child care subsidies to reduce disruptions in care.
11. Support legislation to include child care in any disaster planning investments or initiatives. Specifically, permit Community Care Licensing and Child Care Resource and Referral agencies to share small family home information with local disaster planning agencies and other planning agencies in order to include small family child care homes in community planning for child care and in disaster preparedness planning, response and recovery.

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES

1. Support legislation that promotes child safety, reduces the number of children in long-term foster care, promotes adult connections and permanency, and helps foster children to sustain family ties.
2. Support legislation that promotes the adoption of older foster youth and foster youth placed in group homes. Specifically, sponsor legislation extending the deadline by which already-appropriated funds for the Older Youth Adoptions pilot project must be spent down by six months to June 30, 2010. San Francisco is one of four counties participating in this pilot. Also support legislation increasing the state tax credit for adopting older and institutionalized foster youth.
3. Oppose reductions in Child Welfare Services (CWS) funding. Support legislation that requires the state to budget child welfare services in accordance with optimal caseload standards recommended by the SB 2030 CWS Stakeholders Group and adopt an appropriate methodology for budgeting to meet child welfare program requirements and outcomes.
4. Support state legislation enabling timely implementation of the federal *Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008*. Specifically, support legislation that takes advantage of the opportunity to draw federal participation in kinship caregiver payments, extend foster care and adoption services to age 21, de-link adoptions assistance from income eligibility rules, increase incentives for adopting older youth and children with special needs and to secure federal matching grants for child welfare services.
5. Support legislation and augmented funding to expand services for emancipated foster youth, including extension of Independent Living Services to former foster children placed with non-related legal guardians.
6. Support proposals that expand educational opportunities and supports for current and former foster youth.
7. Support proposals that enhance foster and adoptive parent recruitment, retention and training.
8. Oppose reductions in payment rates for foster parents, legal guardians and adoptive parents.
9. Support the creation of a new 12-month transitional Food Stamps program for youth who emancipate from foster care.
10. Support elimination of the requirement that independent foster care adolescents file Medi-Cal eligibility information prior to receiving health care services or in order to maintain coverage through their 21st birthday.
11. Support extension or elimination of the sunset date on provisions of current law that allow counties to grant criminal record exemptions to prospective relative caregivers.
12. Support legislation extending Regional Center rates for dual agency foster youth to children in the KinGAP program.
13. Support legislation authorizing the use of 60-day trial home visits as part of a child's reunification plan.

14. Support legislation that will result in timely permanence and stability for children, including proposals to reduce delays in administrative processes in the juvenile court and child welfare systems.
15. Support legislation clarifying that it is appropriate to include CalWORKs eligibility workers in multi-disciplinary teams working with child welfare and welfare-to-work families.

FOOD STAMPS (SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM) & NUTRITION

1. Support legislative and budgetary proposals that expand access to nutrition benefits for low-income families and individuals, including former drug felons.
2. Oppose reductions in Food Stamp benefits for legal non-citizens and other low-income beneficiaries and oppose reductions in county funding to administer the Food Stamps program
3. Support legislation that allows counties to optimize their use of all available technology to make the Food Stamps program more efficient, accessible and customer friendly.
4. Support elimination of the requirement that Food Stamps clients be fingerimaged as a condition of receiving benefits.
5. Support the creation of a new 12-month transitional Food Stamps program for youth who emancipate from foster care.

HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

1. Support legislative and budget proposals that enhance San Francisco's ability to provide integrated, appropriate and high quality housing and supportive services for the homeless and people at risk of homelessness.
2. Support stable or increased funding for the Transitional Housing Placement Program and the Transitional Housing Placement Program Plus for foster youth.
3. Support proposals that would maintain and expand the supply of affordable housing in San Francisco. Monitor legislation and administrative rules and adopt positions as appropriate to ensure that implementation of Proposition 1C, the Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund Act, is consistent with the intent of the Act and that allocation methodologies do not disadvantage San Francisco.
4. Support uses of Proposition 63 Mental Health Services Act funding that are consistent with the intent of the Act, and restore AB 2034 (Integrated Services for Homeless Adults with Serious Mental Illness Program) funding that was eliminated in the FY 07-08 budget.

MEDI-CAL & HEALTHCARE

1. Oppose reductions in Medi-Cal base funding, administrative allocations and caseload growth funding. Support reinstatement of annual cost-of-doing business increases for the Medi-Cal program.
2. Support rapid implementation of the state option to use Social Security Number validation to establish citizenship and identity for purposes of determining MediCal eligibility. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 imposed new requirements for documenting the citizenship status and identity of MediCal applicants and beneficiaries. Recently adopted federal legislation reauthorizing the SCHIP provides states with a new option for meeting this requirement by accessing existing information gathered by the

Social Security Administration. This new process has the potential to significantly reduce administrative burden on county Medi-Cal eligibility offices while simultaneously reducing barriers to coverage for eligible low-income people. The CA Department of Health Care Services should be urged to establish procedures for SSN validation as quickly as possible.

3. Support legislation to increase the Medi-Cal Maintenance Need Level (MNL), or to address the sudden and disproportionate increase in the Medi-Cal share of cost that can occur as a result of modest increases in income. The MNL is intended to establish a share of cost for Medi-Cal while allowing the beneficiary to retain enough income to meet basic needs, but because it has not been increased since 1989, it is now set at an inadequate level. As a result, low-income persons, particularly those who are on SSI, may lose their coverage or experience radical increases in their share of cost due to a slight increase in income.
4. Oppose proposals that are likely to result in discontinuances and disruptions in care for Medi-Cal eligible children and adults, including reinstatement of quarterly status reporting. Support restoration of twelve month continuing eligibility for children enrolled in Medi-Cal in order to take advantage of federal stimulus funds. Support replacing the current monthly certification requirement for youth receiving Medi-Cal Minor Consent Services with 12-month continuous eligibility.
5. Support elimination of the requirement that independent foster care adolescents file Medi-Cal eligibility information prior to receiving health care services or in order to maintain coverage through their 21st birthday.
6. Support legislation to eliminate the state requirement that Medi-Cal beneficiaries submit a signed annual redetermination form, and permit counties to complete redeterminations by telephone, using either a live worker or automated system.
7. Oppose proposals that restrict access to Medi-Cal coverage or reduce benefit levels for newly qualified immigrants, undocumented immigrants or individuals with PRUCOL status.
8. Support permanent extension of the 250% Medi-Cal Working Disabled Program, which promotes self-sufficiency by allowing people with disabilities to be employed and earn up to 250% of the federal poverty level while continuing to receive medical care. Amend the program eligibility rules to allow temporarily unemployed beneficiaries to maintain their coverage.
9. Support healthcare reform proposals that expand access to coverage and health care, subsidize coverage for low income families and individuals, fairly allocate costs to all stakeholders and streamline eligibility and enrollment procedures for public programs.
10. Support legislation to increase the Medi-Cal child care deduction amounts to more closely reflect the actual cost of care.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

1. Support legislative and budget proposals that support San Francisco's efforts to build a coordinated and integrated system for the delivery of workforce services.
2. Support expansion of workforce development efforts that help move low-income people toward self-sufficiency. Particularly support enhanced workforce services for welfare-to-work clients and transitional aged youth.

CROSS-PROGRAM PRIORITIES

1. Support cost-of-doing-business increases for county administrative allocations, and oppose proposals to further reduce allocations. Among other things, the state allocations that county welfare agencies receive pay for front-line staff who provide critical services to abused and neglected children, vulnerable senior and adults and other low-income populations. Current allocations are inadequate due to the fact that they have not received a cost of doing business increase since 2001, effectively freezing allocations in time while the cost of operating programs has continued to rise. The County Welfare Directors Association of California calculates that as a result, there is a \$926 million *annual* deficit in state funding for human service programs, \$31 million of which represents San Francisco's share.
2. Oppose any proposal that would reduce San Francisco's Realignment funding allocation for health and human service programs.
3. [Support legislation giving county welfare agencies the option to align redetermination dates for clients enrolled in multiple benefit programs.](#)
4. Support proposals that reduce barriers to enrollment in human services programs and make it easier for families and individuals to retain benefits and receive services once they are found eligible. Examples of specific proposals to be supported include but are not limited to those that: enable the use of technology to facilitate program enrollment and service delivery; streamline or eliminate duplicative administrative procedures; and eliminate excessive documentation requirements.
5. Support restoration of IT hardware replacement funding for county social services agencies.