

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY BOARD**

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SSAB Meeting Minutes

August 11, 2011

Members Present

Bob Brandenburg
Nancy Rorabaugh

Staff Present

Kim Forrester, HHSA
Marsha Munoz, HHSA
Patricia Lopez, HHSA
Marie Brown-Mercadel, HHSA

Members Absent

Phil Thalheimer
Donald Stump
Bruce Abrams
Linda Blair Forth
Rev. John Hughes
Sandy Pugliese

Guests

Hilda Chan, Maria Aceves, Bill Oswald, Ilene
Davis, Esmeralda Caropia, Seth Howell, Marjorie
Larson, Jenn Tracey, Trinh Le

1. Bob Brandenburg called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.
2. June 9, 2011 minutes were not approved due to lack of quorum.
3. **Public Comments on Items on the Agenda:**
 - i. Hilda Chan representing Supportive Parents Information Network (SPIN) was accompanied by a client who spoke about her personal experiences the past five to six months with ACCESS telephone wait time and multiple Notices of Action that she felt were based on mistaken information that did not acknowledge exemptions and resulted in her benefits being terminated. She also stated she had delays in obtaining a prompt hearing date and was told by the County her two hearing dates were both postponed. Ms. Forrester offered a general comment regarding hearings being postponed. Normally hearing postponements are only made by the person who is filing (client) or the administrative law judge if there are too many cases scheduled. She said the County does not have the authority to postpone a case. Ms. Forrester agreed to review the specifics this individual client's case if provided the case number..
4. **Information Item:** The board welcomed new member Nancy Rorabaugh, representing Supervisorial District 3, appointed by Supervisor Pam Slater-Price.
4. **Discussion Item:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Work Group Update: Marsha Munoz, Health & Human Services Administrator; Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning and Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA): Ms. Munoz gave a power point presentation entitled "Improving Access to CalFresh". CalFresh participation is now over 232,000. Applications exceeded 12,000 in the month of July, and timely processing in July was at 95%. There were 309 applications pending over 30 days at the end of July. Ms. Forrester pointed out that June was one of the County's highest months in applications received (over 13,000) and the County continues to monitor closely the pending applications. Ms. Munoz recapped some of the "in Progress" recommendations. She listed several of the Program Guide updates that have been incorporated since January. Program Guide items that are currently being developed include: a Question and Answer section taken from special notices sent by the state; a Customer Service and Complaint section; an Online Application and Video Interviewing Process for disaster Cal Fresh Plan and Program Material; the SSI Waiver; a CalFresh Employment and Training section; and a Confidentiality section. The Fraud & Integrity section is under review for updating; the application section relating to drug and alcohol authorized representatives of the facilities and the applications

received from the Mail Imaging Center are under development. Ms. Munoz reported the Complaint Process has been drafted and is under review. Managers have finalized procedures and a final draft has been sent to executives for approval. Lobby posters to promote the process have been developed, as well as tracking logs to monitor the process. The CalFresh Program Guide is currently with Legal Aid for review. The Mail Imaging Center (MIC) is now supporting seven offices which now include Centre City, Southeast, and North Coastal FRCs. In the month of July, over 60,000 images were scanned. The Northeast office is planned to roll out on August 15. Ms. Munoz said the Customer Relations Management (CRM) system, a sophisticated tool to track different tasks, will begin its initial phase by tracking all documents imaged in DoRes by the FRCs and the MIC. Target date for completing the business requirements is the first week of September, and the County hopes to run a pilot at an FRC by late September. The workgroup recommendations regarding Complete Case Notes has resulted in the development of a standardized case comment template and has been given to IT to deploy. There is no completion date from the IT vendor yet. June 2011 data for ACCESS wait time revealed over 76% of calls were answered. Of the 39,000 calls answered, well over 13,000 calls were serviced through the self-service option. While the average wait time of 35:39 minutes is thought to be too long, the County has begun the process of reducing the wait time by having workers advise clients of the average wait time and improving education to clients in regard to the value of utilizing the self-service options. ACCESS launched a new service enhancement project which includes updates to self-service as well as the script menu. The Knowledge Center continues to work on developing a draft curriculum for customer service training. The workgroup will meet again on August 24. The target date for completion of the Total Quality Management report is October 1, 2011.

6. **Action Item:** CalFresh Application Process, Pending Applications, and Expedited Services Overview: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health and Human Services Agency: Ms. Forrester outlined the process of applying for and receiving CalFresh benefits. She emphasized that clients must be advised of the right to apply for expedited service at the first point of contact and workers must evaluate all clients for expedited service. An application may be filed in person, by mail, by phone, by fax, or online. Expedited services application require a determination within three days. Verification of many eligibility factors including residency, income, liquid resources, and others factors will be postponed if unobtainable within CalFresh Expedited Services (CFES) processing standards. Following the application process, the case worker conducts a case clearance to check for active or previous cases in CalWIN or MEDS. At this point a case record is established is pending. The date of application is the date the application is received by the County and the clock begins ticking for determining timely disposition for expedited services or regular processing. An interview is conducted to review all questions and resolve incomplete or unclear information. The interview may be face-to-face or by telephone. It may occur on the same day of the application or scheduled at a future date. During the interview, the case worker is required to verify the client's identity, residence, social security number, earned and unearned income, and shelter costs, including housing and utilities. All applications are considered pending from the date the application is received by the County until the client completes the interview/provides needed verification and the County worker takes action to grant or deny benefits. More than 8,000 applications for expedited services were received last month. The County exceeded the statewide average for timely processing of expedited services. Timely processing of regular CalFresh applications was 95%. In reviewing the Statewide reports the County discovered some duplicate, incomplete cases that have artificially inflated the total number of pending cases and is working on a solution to clear these duplicate cases from the system.
7. **Information Item:** Domestic Violence Training and Update: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health and Human Services Agency: Responding to public comment at SSAB, the CalWORKs and CalFresh staff reviewed policies and procedures in regard to domestic violence waivers, and together, with the Office of Violence

Prevention, are working to develop a training that will meet the curriculum required by the CA Dept of Social Services. The training is planned for September.

8. **Information Item:** Fraud & Integrity Report: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHS): No report. Item of note: Budget for In-Home Social Services has been approved by the state, but is not yet funded. The funding is dependent on realization of projected revenue that will not be known until January 2012.
9. **Information Item:** Agency Updates: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHS):
 - Ms. Forrester introduced Marie Brown-Mercadel new Assistant Deputy Director for East and North Central Regions.
 - San Diego has been selected to participate in the SNAP ED Pilot Project. The state is providing \$350,000 to the County Welfare Department and California Public Health will provide the same amount to our local health department to provide an avenue for Welfare and Public Health to partner together in efforts to implement community nutrition interventions and educate CalFresh participants on making healthier choices within their limited budget. Other objectives are to increase nutrition services within counties who have a low percentage of CalFresh participants in comparison to persons eligible for CalFresh benefits, and to establish successful and long lasting partnership between local public health and welfare departments to promote dietary guidelines, increase fruit/vegetable consumption and increase physical activity among the CalFresh population.

ADJOURNMENT/SET NEXT MEETING:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on **September 14, 2011, Mills Building, 4th Floor, Room 436 A/B, 1255 Imperial Avenue, San Diego, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

The SSAB Minutes were written and submitted by Sandee Stewart.