

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

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SSAB Meeting Minutes

November 10, 2011

<u>Members Present</u> Bob Brandenburg Philip Thalheimer Sandy Pugliese Nancy Rorbaugh Bruce Abrams Jennifer Tinsley	<u>Staff Present</u> Kim Forrester, HHSA Sylvia Melena, HHSA Michael Cargal, HHSA Patricia Lopez, HHSA Richele Swagler, Refugee Coordinator Deanna Zotalis-Ferrera, HHSA
<u>Members Absent</u> Donald Stump Linda Blair Forth John Hughes	<u>Guests</u> Jennifer Tracy, Marjorie Larson, Ilene Davis, Trinh Le

1. Chairman Phil Thalheimer called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.
2. Bob Brandenburg motioned to approve the October 13, 2011 minutes. Ms. Nancy Rorbaugh seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.
3. Mr. Thalheimer welcomed new Board Member, Jennifer Tinsley, representing District 5/Supervisor Bob Horn.
4. **Public Comments on Items on the Agenda:**
 - i. Marjorie Larson, advocate for Supportive Parents Information Network (SPIN) and the League of Women Voters, reported the difficulties of a 64-year-old woman who was verbally denied and not allowed to apply for Medi-Cal and CalFresh because she did not have a social security number. When she returned a second time with an immigration attorney from San Diego Volunteer Lawyers who provided regulations to show that a qualified alien with no social security number is still eligible for these benefits, she was again not allowed to submit an application. Her attorney requested an advocate from SPIN to accompany the client to the Family Resource Center (FRC) to an orientation for LIHP that she was instructed to attend. Before the orientation began, a county employee told her she could not attend the orientation because she is not a U.S. citizen and will not qualify for the program. She and the SPIN advocate were told a supervisor would speak with them. They waited an hour to speak to a supervisor who apologized for their wait and indicated he was not aware they were there. The supervisor informed them there was no record of her application to which the SPIN advocate replied there is no application as she has been prevented from filing one by County employees. The supervisor sent them to another worker and once again, they were not permitted to complete an application due to lack of social security number. The SPIN advocate asked for a Notice of Action denying her application. The client and SPIN advocates are meeting today at the FRC for a face-to-face interview. Ms. Larson concluded her comments by expressing her opinion that the FRCs are understaffed and the employees have too great a workload.
 - ii. Ilene Davis, speaking on behalf SPIN, reported an incident of discrimination against a Spanish-speaking client by a County employee at a Family Resource Center (FRC). The client alleges the worker not only refused to obtain a translator for an interview, but also told the client that here, in the welfare office, English is spoken and she should learn

English. This upset the client who asked to make a complaint. A supervisor came out and handed her a blank sheet of paper from a steno pad and told her to write her complaint on that, offering no instruction as to what the complaint should contain or to whom it should be addressed. On a subsequent visit to the FRC, the client was able to determine the name of the employee involved and the names of witnesses to the incident. When she could not find any way to make her complaint, she contacted SPIN who contacted the Civil Rights coordinator. The matter was treated as a personnel matter and a letter of apology was written to the client and to the advocate at SPIN. Ms. Davis brought this matter to the Board's attention to illustrate the importance of making Civil Rights complaint forms readily available in Family Resource Center lobbies.

In response to the Chair's request, Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, stated that Civil Rights posters in different languages are displayed as required in FRC lobbies and there are Civil Rights liaisons in every office. Ms. Forrester indicated a willingness to research to issues identified above if case identifying information is provided.

PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- 5. Discussion Item:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Work Group Update: Micheal Cargal, Administrative Analyst III, Strategic Planning and Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHS): Mr. Cargal gave a power point presentation entitled, "Improving Access to CalFresh". As of October 2011, CalFresh participation has increased to include over 242,000 recipients of which there are over 132,000 child recipients and over 9800 senior recipients representing an increase of 11.4% and 44% respectively from last year. The County is proud to announce 58,122 additional child and senior participants since March, 2009, achieving 116.2% of our SNAP goal to add 50,000 by 2012. There were over 13,000 CalFresh applications in October, up 29.2% from last year. There were 214 applications pending over 30 days through October 31, 2011. Mr. Cargal noted the number of applications continue to increase as a result of the economy and outreach efforts from the County. Timely processing continues to be above the 90% level. The Agency has been in the process of hiring additional staff to support the increase in demand for services. With regard to the SNAP workgroup recommendations, as of November 1, 2011, of the 69 recommendations, 44 are complete, of which 20 are ongoing and 24 are either underway or require further study. Legal Aid continues to work with County staff on their review and input for the CalFresh Program Guide. The Customer Service Chapter which was issued on October 13, 2011. Legal Aid also provided input on the Hearings and Case Flow Procedures between Appeals and Family Resource Centers chapters and determined that no changes are needed. "Your Opinion Counts", customer feedback surveys, continue to be available in Family Resource Center lobbies. Sylvia Melena, Assistant Deputy Director for SPOS Self Sufficiency, noted the Agency updating and modernizing the "We Welcome Your Feedback" posters to make them more inviting and eye catching. Mr. Cargal stated the Mail Imaging Center has been supporting all US Mail since September 9, 2011. Ms. Forrester reported the Customer Relations Management System task management tool pilot anticipated for November will be delayed due to receipt of the SNAP grant which allows for use of this product to be expanded and due to the need to first pilot in a test environment. Mr. Cargal reviewed recommendations requiring further study involving efforts to reduce ACCESS wait times and abandoned calls, and improve performance measures and open phone lines. In October 2011, there were 86,710 calls into the system. Over 10,000 participants utilized the self-service option and over 1400 communicated by email. The average wait time was 38:54 minutes. SSAB members suggested looking at mean and median. On November 8, 2011, the Agency held its Kick-Off Meeting with our IT vendor to begin developing the Customer Relations Manager task tracking tool. This technology will allow the Agency to immediately scan documents, issue receipts and track documents. Mr. Cargal said County staff are in the process of developing a market strategy that will complement the ongoing Network for a Healthy California Spanish language public service announcements on radio, tv, and buses to help promote the CalFresh Program. Ms.

Forrester shared three slides to post in accordance with performance measurements including 1. Timely processing regular applications, 2. Timely processing expedited applications, 3. Total monthly applications received, total pending, and those pending over 30 days.

5. **Information Item:** Video Interviewing: Deanna Zotalis-Ferrera, Health & Human Services Administrator, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA): Ms. Zotalis-Ferrera presented a power point entitled "Video Interviewing Project-A Collaborative Effort Between County of San Diego and Community Partners". Ms. Zotalis-Ferrera reported on the collaborative efforts between North Inland and North Coastal Family Resource Centers and several North County clinics to troubleshoot issues regarding services to clients and to identify creative ways to work more effectively and efficiently for the benefit of our community. She noted clients in rural communities often face transportation barriers to access services provided by HHSA. She said when outstation staff is sent out to do intakes in person, a 40-mile round trip requires approximately 90 minutes travel time and there is a high client no-show rate leading to loss of productivity and a greater percentage of clients not following through with applications. To better meet this customer need, the County initially collaborated with North County Health Services and the Indian Health Council in Rincon to launch a pilot project utilizing WebEx and video technology to perform virtual customer services. This has resulted in faster processing of applications and a higher same day approval rate. The outcome of this pilot project has been the elimination of transportation barriers, increase access to pregnant women, children and high-risk clients, increased efficiency and national recognition with the receipt of the 2011 Digital Government Achievement Award. More recently, the video interviewing project has been expanded to include Neighborhood Healthcare, Vista Community Clinic, North County Lifeline, and the Community Resource Center. Ms. Zotalis-Ferrera emphasized the value of video interviewing for high-risk clients such as women in battered women's shelters who may be afraid to physically visit an office to apply for needed benefits. At the Community Resource Center and at South Region, video interviewing has been used to process CalFresh applications.
6. **Information Item:** Fraud & Integrity Report: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA): No Report.
7. **Information Item:** Agency Updates: Kim Forrester, Assistant Deputy Director, Strategic Planning & Operational Support, Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA): Ms. Forrester distributed a booklet entitled, "*Live Well San Diego!* Building Better Health" which is the first component of the *Live Well San Diego!* initiative. She introduced Richele Swagler, Refugee Coordinator

ADJOURNMENT/SET NEXT MEETING:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:26 a.m.

The next regular meeting will be held on **December 8, 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.