



24-4641

DATE: February 27, 2024 (Item No. {{item.number}})

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: James Williams, County Executive
Tony LoPresti, County Counsel

SUBJECT: Resolution Establishing Ad Hoc Committee of the Board of Supervisors relating to Child Welfare Services

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Under advisement from February 6, 2024 (Item No. 23): Adopt Resolution Establishing Ad Hoc Committee of the Board of Supervisors relating to Child Welfare Services.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no fiscal implications associated with the recommended action.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION AND BACKGROUND

At the December 19, 2023 Special Meeting of the Board of Supervisors, the Board issued several referrals and requests for information on a range of topics related to child welfare, including prevention, child protection, and interventions. At the February 6, 2024 Regular Board meeting, DFCS and other County departments responded to many of the Board's December 19th referrals and will continue to provide quarterly reports to the Board of Supervisors.

During the discussion at the February 6th meeting, the Board directed Administration and the Office of the County Counsel to report back on options for the formation of an ad hoc committee of the Board of Supervisors composed of Supervisor Arenas and Supervisor Chavez to discuss, review, and evaluate a limited number of topics from the December 19th referral and February 6th Board discussion. This report responds to that request by providing an overview of ad hoc committees permitted under the Ralph M. Brown Act as well as recommending topics, based on prior direction from the Board, that would benefit from consideration by an ad hoc committee for the ultimate purpose of developing recommendations to be presented to the full Board of Supervisors.

Overview of Ad Hoc Committees

The Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act) permits the creation of advisory committees that are not subject to its requirements (*e.g.*, open and publicly noticed meetings). These committees are referred to as ad hoc committees and must satisfy certain requirements. Specifically, an ad hoc committee must (1) be advisory only; (2) be composed of less than a quorum of the members of the legislative body that created it; (3) be made up exclusively of members of the legislative body; (4) be time limited; (5) only serve a limited or single purpose; and (6) not have a meeting schedule that is set by the legislative body.¹

Accordingly, an ad hoc committee must consist of no more than two members of the full Board of Supervisors. While others (with the exception of the remaining Board Members) may attend and present information to the ad hoc committee, the committee itself may not have any other members. Finally, the Board should identify a limited or single purpose that the ad hoc committee serves, and should specify the time period during which the ad hoc committee will function. The committee itself, rather than the Board, must set its meeting schedule.

Potential Topics for the Ad Hoc Committee to Consider

Because an ad hoc committee can only address a limited or single purpose, the ad hoc committee must be appropriately scoped to focus on a single or related set of issues or tasks. Based on the Board's direction and discussion at the December 19th and February 6th Board meetings, Administration believes the following topics would benefit from extended and focused discussion in an ad hoc committee, with the conclusions of these discussions coming back to the Board of Supervisors for consideration:

- **Key Service Partnerships to Protect Children:** Review of DFCS's current service array for families and children, including a discussion about the overall capacity of current providers to effectively serve high needs youth.

At its February 6th meeting, the Board directed Administration to consider inclusion of this topic as part of the ad hoc committee discussion. As DFCS provides a number of services through different providers and because the efficacy of these services is critical to DFCS's mission, Administration recommends this discussion take place at an ad hoc committee to allow opportunity for a comprehensive presentation and analysis of the services that are offered and how service delivery can be improved and/or augmented to better serve clients, particularly for high needs youth. This discussion can also focus on engaging the community to ensure that services and support to families are aligned with the family and community's needs including, but not limited to, language and cultural needs.

¹ Overview of The Ralph M. Brown Act (California Govt. Code Section 54950 et seq.), available at <https://boardclerk.sccgov.org/sites/g/files/exjcpb656/files/2023-02/Attachment%20235172.pdf>.
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- **Appropriate Intervention to Ensure Safe Children and Families: Analysis of support to families through differential response, voluntary services, and Court-supervision.**

At the February 6, 2024 meeting, some members of the Board expressed significant interest in better understanding options to potentially expand Court supervision including for additional targeted sub-populations. This is a critically important topic as it involves an analysis of the different levels of DFCS and Court intervention, supervision and monitoring levels provided by DFCS and/or the Court, and the types of resources available to families with moderate to very high-risk factors. This topic would benefit from a robust discussion about our most vulnerable populations, and our available tools to support families through the continuum of prevention.

CHILD IMPACT

The actions described will have a positive impact on children and youth through the **Safe and Stable Families** indicator by further strengthening the child welfare system to provide individualized care for every child with the goal of safeguarding children, planned permanency, family engagement, and connections

SENIOR IMPACT

The recommended action will have no/neutral impact on seniors.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The recommended action will have no/neutral sustainability implications.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

The report will not be received.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

ATTACHMENTS:

- Resolution establishing Ad Hoc Committee of BOS relating to Child Welfare Services