



24-4257

DATE: February 6, 2024 (Item No. 20)

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Daniel Little, Director, Social Services Agency

SUBJECT: Incentives to Support Foster Youth in Completing Medical and Dental Appointments

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Under advisement from December 12, 2023 (Item No. 12): Receive report from the Social Services Agency, Department of Family and Children's Services for consideration relating to an incentive-based program to encourage foster youth to complete medical and dental well-being exams in accordance with the Bright Futures Periodicity schedule.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no fiscal implications for receiving this report. This report provides options regarding a potential incentives program to support foster youth in attending medical and dental appointments and includes ongoing cost estimates and the identification of appropriate source(s) of funds.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION AND BACKGROUND

On December 12, 2023 (Item No. 12), the County of Santa Clara's (County) Board of Supervisors approved a referral from Supervisor Chavez for Administration to consider options for an incentive-based program to encourage foster youth to attend medical and dental appointments. Children attend many medical and dental appointments each year, including appointments to care for an illness or other conditions. The California Department of Social Services only tracks compliance and makes data available related to well-being exams. Therefore, this report provides an update for a program to provide incentives to attend appointments for medical and dental well-being exams.

DFCS has designed an incentive program to provide gift cards for foster youth to complete timely medical and dental well-being exams. Because a previous case file review revealed that many youths receive exams but they are not recorded in the statewide CWS/CMS system, even youth who have completed exams can officially reflect as being out of compliance. Therefore, the program design will provide incentives for turning in to DFCS the relevant form, known as the health contact form, once an exam is completed. The health contact form is similar to an after-visit summary and can be printed out of the HealthLink

system utilized by all Valley Health Clinics.

Once a health contact form is received and identified as being a timely well-being exam, the youth or caregiver, depending on the age of the child, will be offered a gift card to a local establishment such as Starbucks, Safeway, Trader Joe's, Door Dash, Grub Hub or similar retailers. The value of the gift cards will vary from \$8 to \$20. Recipients will be eligible for up to \$80 per year in gift cards. The proposed dollar value and gift card types are consistent with other County incentive programs.

The total cost of the program each year will vary depending upon the number of youth in out of home placement and the completion of exams. The Bright Futures Periodicity Schedule recommends each youth receive two dental well-being exams per year starting with six months of age. Medical exams are recommended more frequently at first, 12 in the first three years, and one each year thereafter. For babies, there are nine recommended exams during the first year after birth. Each of those would be incentivized at \$8/exam for an annual cost not to exceed \$80. For the second year, toddlers are recommended to have five exams and would be incentivized at \$15 per exam for a total not to exceed \$80 per year. Thereafter, children are recommended to have three or four exams per year and would be incentivized at \$20 per exam for a total not to exceed \$80 per year. The total expense each year for incentives will vary depending upon the number of youth in out of home placement and the completion of exams. As an example, the expense for 500 completed exams would be up to \$10,000 with gift cards valued up to \$20 each.

DFCS will administer the program within the Program Audit Bureau in the DFCS Director's Office where the health forms are currently received and processed by the Child Health Program support staff. The funding for the program will be absorbed within the DFCS budget.

CHILD IMPACT

The recommended action will have a positive impact on the **Healthy Lifestyle** indicator by ensuring that children in the child welfare system receive timely medical and dental examinations.

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 as a consequence of negative action.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

The Clerk of the Board will follow the usual process for this type of legislative file.