

January 4, 2024

To: Tehama County Chief Administrator, Gabriel Hydrick

Cc: Tehama County Personnel Director, Coral Ferrin

**RE: Budget Unit 5013 Tehama County Department of Social Services Request for Position Allocation List (PAL) amendment.**

Social Services is requesting an amendment to the Budget Unit 5013 PAL to be effective upon approval, no later than January 23, 2024.

**Budget Unit 5013 Social Services**

The requests are as follows:

Department	Budget Unit	Position Title	Request FTE + or -	FROM	TO	Use existing PAL numbers
Social Services	5013	Eligibility Specialist I/II	-6	6	0	P0701, P0702, P0709, P0711, P0712, P0715
Social Services	5013	Eligibility Specialist Trainee/I/II - bilingual	+6	0	6	P0701, P0702, P0709, P0711, P0712, P0715
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	

**BACKGROUND**

The Eligibility branch of the Department is understaffed and has been, for a several years. As a result, we are currently at the critical stage in the Eligibility branch where we have to look at the alternate strategies in order to bring in new staff to assist with completing the work. Social Services is currently limited in hiring by the constraints put into place by being an IMS County. We are currently in the process of converting to ALMS, which will allow us greater control of our recruitment to address these barriers; however, this process has and will continue to take some time. In the meantime, we would like to address the challenges that are within our control. Currently, we are losing a large number of candidates during the application screening process, as they do not meet the minimum qualification requirements to be an Eligibility Specialist I. By adding the Trainee level to this flexibly staffed position, we are hoping more candidates will be allowed through that initial screening phase. Those selected will be trained at the lower Trainee level to then advance through the Eligibility Specialist series as they gain experience. The ability to bring in more staff and train them in Eligibility will be a great help to the Department as well as to the customers that we serve in the community.

The number of Spanish speaking customers for the department necessitates the increase in Spanish workers available to assist them. Eligibility currently only has 6 filled bilingual positions and one of which is on a LOA. Spanish bilingual job applicants have been very low. Eligibility staff work with Spanish speaking customers on the phone, at the front desk, and processing applications in Spanish; therefore, necessitating the need for this classification to be bilingual since more than 10% of their work would be in a bilingual capacity.

The total positions in the PAL remains the same. The request is to convert 6 Eligibility Specialist I/II positions to 6 Eligibility Specialist Trainee/I/II bilingual positions. These changes will not increase the overall position allocation.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

The cost of an Eligibility Specialist I at Range 17, Step A is \$18.48 per hour. The cost of an Eligibility Specialist Trainee at Range 14, Step A is \$18.45 per hour, which includes the 7.5% bilingual stipend. Deleting six (6.00 FTE) Eligibility Specialist I/II allocations and replacing them with six (6.00 FTE) Eligibility Specialist Trainee/I/II Bilingual allocations would result in an estimated annual wage and benefit decrease of approximately \$487 in the first year.

These eligibility determination positions will time study and be allocated to the public assistance programs they work in. These programs include Medi-Cal, CalWORKs, CalFresh and General Assistance. The cost will be funded by those programs' administrative allocations, which include federal, state, and local realignment revenues. The current adopted budget is anticipated to be sufficient to cover this increased cost.

Sincerely,

Shannon Anthony, Social Services Deputy Director - Operations

On behalf of Laura Hawkins, Social Services Director