

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

El Dorado County Social Services Programs General Review

Reason for the Report

The Grand Jury chose selected social service programs of El Dorado County for review.

Scope of the Investigation

The members of the Grand Jury interviewed:

- The Director of the CalWorks program;
- The Director of the Department of Social services (DSS);
- The temporary Director of Child Protective Services (CPS);
- The director of the Mental Health program;
- The director and assistant director of Community Services programs (CS);
- The recently appointed half-time directors of Child Protective Service/Child Welfare Service programs (CPS/CWS).

The Grand Jury :

- Reviewed program material from the CalWorks programs;
- Visited the offices of the Community Services programs and were given an extensive review of the Adult Protective Services programs, the Conservatorship programs, and a wide array of services for seniors;
- Reviewed the Grand Jury reports relating to DSS from 2001/2002.

Background

Members of the Grand Jury interviewed the directors and supervisory staff of programs in the Department of Social Services (DSS) and Community Services. The Grand Jury learned that the County had transferred the Adult Protective Services programs from DSS to CS. This program transfer has helped to resolve or reduce some personnel problems, which had been plaguing the DSS for several years. The Grand Jury observed that a new spirit of interdepartmental cooperation is working, allowing for better service to multi-problem populations.

The long-standing problem of lack of supervision in the CPS/CWS programs has been addressed so that program improvements will be forthcoming.

One notable improvement in CPS/CWS is the change in supervision of CPS at South Lake Tahoe. A supervisor will be directly available to CPS/CWS staff on a daily basis.

The Grand Jury learned that some program supervisors were reluctant to promote their programs to the county population, because they believed the County Supervisors would not approve promoting these programs, for both cultural and fiscal reasons. Upon investigation it appears to the Grand Jury that all members of the Board of Supervisors believe all federal/state/county social service programs should be actively promoted by the respective county departments to the citizens of the County.

Findings

F1. The Department of Social Services has been reorganized, so that the Division of Adult Protective Services is now under the supervision of the Director of Community Services.

No Board of Supervisors response required.

F2. Some programs within the Department of Social Services have not been actively promoted to the citizens of the county.

Response to F2: The respondent disagrees partially with the finding.

Child Protective Services (CPS) is actively promoted in the community by providing training to people who are required by law to report suspected child abuse.

In addition, CPS staff has many interactions and collaborations with other community agencies to actively promote the program, and the 24-hour CPS Hotline is advertised in agency brochures and community publications.

F3. Child Protective Services and Child Welfare Service programs in South Lake Tahoe now operate with improved direct supervision.

No Board of Supervisors response required.

Recommendation

County programs of Social Service and Community Service, such as CalWorks, Child Protective Services, Child Welfare Services, Adult Protective Services, and Senior Services of all types, should be actively promoted by the respective department heads.

Response to Recommendation: The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

The Department Director has requested DSS staff to submit written recommendations as to ways in which services can be promoted to the citizens of the county. The Department will review all recommendations and identify the most cost-effective ideas for implementation by December 1, 2003.

Responses to Findings

F2

Director, Department of Social Services
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors

Responses to Recommendation

Director, Department of Social Services
El Dorado County Board of Supervisor