

**IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS) ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TO THE KERN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS****MINUTES****Thursday, January 18, 2024 - 1:30 P.M.****Kern County Aging and Adult Services Department
5357 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93309**

The meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m. by Vice-Chair Lancaster. The flag salute was conducted, followed by a moment of silence.

ROLL CALL: (*Chairman, **Vice-Chair, ***Secretary [non-voting])

Present:

Sonia Dhillon

**Gail Lancaster

Eric Nisbett

Private Industry Representative

Third District Consumer Representative

County Administration Office Representative

Excused Absences:

*Kaye Davis

DeAnna Lewis

NickoleRenee Mensch

***Jeremy Oliver

At-Large Care Provider

At-Large Consumer

Second District Consumer Representative

Aging and Adult Services

QUORUM

Michele Gomez, for Jeremy Oliver, confirmed a quorum was not present.

Aging and Adult Services Staff:

Michele Gomez, Program Director for IHSS

Laura Juarez, Office Services Coordinator

INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC:

Anabel Hernandez, Kern County Commission on Aging

Ana Alonso, IHSS Care Provider

Ashley Garza, SD Healthcare Caregiver

Elizabeth McKinley, District Attorneys Investigative Aide

ACTION ITEMS:

- **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 16, 2023** – The approval of minutes was tabled to March 2024 meeting due to no quorum.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

None.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS OR REPORTS:

- **Appointment Report** – Michele Gomez, for Jeremy Oliver
 - **Reappointments:** None.
 - **New appointments:** None.
 - **Expired appointments:** None.
 - **Appointments soon to expire:** None.
 - **Resignations:**
 1. Judy Snyder – Received resignation 12/18/2023. Commission on Aging submitted recommendation for appointment of Anabel Hernandez to Board of Supervisors. Appointment is pending and will be placed on their 01/23/2024 agenda.
 - **Vacancies:** There are 5 vacancies:
 1. Consumer in Supervisorial District 1, term expires 06/30/2024.
 2. Consumer in Supervisorial District 4, term expires 06/30/2024.
 3. Consumer in Supervisorial District 5, term expired 06/30/2023.
 4. Commission on Aging, term expires 06/30/2025.
 5. At-Large Care Provider, Board of Supervisors, term expires 06/30/2025.
 - **New Applications:**
 1. Christine Hernandez – Attempted phone call and sent email 11/27/2023 requesting additional information to see if she qualifies to fill one of the vacant positions as a care provider or consumer – no response as of 01/17/2024.

AGING AND ADULT SERVICES STAFF REPORTS:

Director's Report – Michele Gomez, for Jeremy Oliver:

FEDERAL

The House is working to pass another stop-gap spending bill that will keep funding in place until March 1st for portions of the government such as veterans affairs, transportation, housing and energy department and the rest of the government would be funded until March 8, 2024. Bill must pass the senate and obtain signature of the president, but there are no current anticipated delays based on the status.

STATE

The Governor released his January Budget. The state is trying to fill the \$37.9 billion General Fund shortfall over a three-year period ending in 2024-2025. The deficit is significantly based on two factors, one being a substantial decline in stock market in 2022 around capital gains, and the other being a significant delay in income tax collections. Currently there are no projected impacts to the IHSS program.

Measures to address the shortfall include:

- \$13.7 Billion spending from the reserves.
- \$8.5 Billion in spending reductions the largest coming from the climate investments and unspent housing programs, but also including \$275 million in cuts to CALWORKS administration and services.
- \$5.7 Billion in new revenues and internal special funds borrowing including revenues from Managed Care Organizations tax.
- \$7.2 Billion in funding deferrals and delays
- \$3.4 Billion in shifts of expenditures from the General Fund to other funds.

DEPARTMENT

We continue to promote our Digital Divide program and want to encourage referrals to our department to assist seniors with understanding and navigating their digital devices. The program can meet with individuals in their homes and can assist them with obtaining digital devices to improve their access to services. Elizabeth requested flyers/brochures of the Digital Divide program, Fall Prevention program, and other services offered by the Department. Laura will work on getting these to Elizabeth.

The IHSS program continues to seek additional staff to keep up with the rising caseloads and referral growth and negotiations continue with the United Domestic Workers regarding IHSS provider wages. The department looks forward to a new year of challenges and growth.

IHSS Report – Michele Gomez:

Michele reported the following report:

Legislative Policy Changes to the Program

- Assembly Bill 120 eliminated the IHSS provider eligibility requirements for minor recipients in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program.
- Sick leave for providers increased from 3 to 5 days effective January 1, 2024
- Minimum wage increased to \$16.00 per hour effective January 1, 2024.

Kern Compliance Rates.

- Applications processed within 90 days averaged 78.82%, we are working on getting that up to 80%, which is the State requirement.
- Community First Choice Option (CFCO) reassessments are averaged at 95.83%, we are meeting that requirement.

- All other Reassessments are averaged at 91.27%, we are meeting that requirement.

IHSS Statistics at Glance Handout

Program Data from November 2023 provided. The casework count was 13,130 approved or authorized cases, with 1,763 pending referrals. They continue to receive several referrals. They received 709 applications in the month of November 2023. There was an average of 157.06 hours per Severely Impaired (SI) cases, and an average of 90.99 hours per Non-Severely Impaired (NSI) cases.

A question was asked about the elimination of State-mandated minor recipient provider eligibility rules, and Michele shared that removing the parent provider eligibility requirements in WIC section 12300(e) allows the parent or non-parent to provide authorized supportive services to a minor.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Ethics Training** – Ethics Training online course will continue to be offered free of charge so if you did not attend the training offered by County Counsel on December 1st, you can take the ethics training online. You must wait online for a minimum of 2 hours for your training to be valid. If you need assistance, you are welcome to contact our Digital Divide program at 661-868-1052, or you can come into the office to take your training.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **Bylaws** – We still need volunteers on the sub-committee to review and revise the current IHSS Advisory Bylaws to include issues of non-consumer members, attendance, ethics training, and elections process, etc. Commissioner Lancaster volunteered to serve on this committee. If others would like to join, please let Jeremy or Laura know.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES:

1. **Consumer Members** – We need to recruit more consumer Board members to fill the existing vacancies. If you know of any consumers wanting to serve, please encourage them to complete an application online at: <https://kerncounty.seamlessdocs.com/w/BCCApplicationForm>.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2024, at 1:30 p.m., at Aging and Adult Services in the Golden Generation Conference Room, 5357 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, CA 93309.

The meeting adjourned at 2:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele Gomez, for Jeremy Oliver, Secretary

MG/lj