

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Social Services	(2) MEETING DATE 8/19/2014	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Leland W. Collins	
(4) SUBJECT Submittal of a report on the status of Affordable Care Act implementation in San Luis Obispo County. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive and file the report on the status of Affordable Care Act implementation in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? N/A
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT { } Consent { } Presentation { } Hearing (Time Est. ___) { X } Board Business (Time Est. 20 Minutes)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS { } Resolutions { } Contracts { } Ordinances { X } N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A { } 4/5 Vote Required { X } N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY { } N/A Date: <u>08/13/13</u>	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW Emily Jackson			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts			

# County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Leland Collins, Social Services Department Director

DATE: 8/19/2014

SUBJECT: Submittal of a report on the status of Affordable Care Act implementation in San Luis Obispo County. All Districts.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board receive and file the report on the status of Affordable Care Act implementation in San Luis Obispo County.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Affordable Care and Patient Protection Act (ACA) was signed into law by President Obama on March 23, 2010. In June 2013, the California Legislature passed and Governor Brown signed the implementing legislation to enact the ACA in California. As a result, millions of uninsured Californians became eligible for coverage under either an expanded Medi-Cal program or under new low-cost or subsidized insurance programs offered by Covered California—our State's version of the federally-required health exchange.

The State envisioned a process in which most applicants would access services through on-line application or by telephone inquiry to three State Call Centers, where inquiries would be sorted by application category with the State processing the Covered California applications; Medi-Cal applications would be redirected to the applicants' county of residence. The County was required to establish a local Call Center and, effective October 1, 2013—the beginning of the Open Enrollment period—to maintain extended hours for its Center including evening and Saturday hours. In April 2013, the Board of Supervisors authorized a contract with Intellegy for development of the Call Center.

For anyone applying directly through the Department of Social Services (DSS), whether as a "walk-in" or by telephone, the County was given the responsibility to determine eligibility not only for Medi-Cal but also for the private insurance policies, although those completed case files are transferred to Covered California following enrollment.

In August 2013, the Board of Supervisors accepted \$2,205,774 in new Medi-Cal administrative funds and authorized the addition of 24.0 Full Time Equivalent positions to the Department of Social Services' Position Allocation List. On October 1, 2013, the County began accepting applications via "walk-in," web access and through its Call Center.

The State Department of Health Care Services, in consultation with the Universities of California Berkeley and Los Angeles, had projected each county's application activity utilizing a combination of census and demographic data. San Luis Obispo County's applications for Medi-Cal were expected to increase by 9,179; in addition, it was projected that 5,756 County residents would apply for coverage under Covered California.

In fact, however, Medi-Cal applications exceeded the estimate by nearly 44%: 13,176 applications—representing 18,424 County residents—were received by DSS. Similarly, applications for Covered California exceeded the estimate by 213%, with 12,256 residents applying for coverage. Ultimately, 30,680 individuals—one of every nine residents of San Luis Obispo County—applied for coverage under the ACA.

Computer programming inefficiencies at the State level resulted in a significant backlog in case processing, resulting in frustration for both applicants and County staff. Poor performance at the State's Call Centers added to the problem, with busy signals, dropped calls and inadequate training of State staff. In order to minimize frustration and disruption, the County encouraged local residents to apply directly through DSS's offices.

At one point, because of delays in the State's ability to process case data, the County had a backlog of over 9,000 unprocessed cases. This backlog has been significantly reduced to less than 2,000 unprocessed cases through staff overtime and workarounds that enable DSS staff to process cases despite the State's performance.

DSS worked closely with the County's Health Agency to transition former beneficiaries of the County Medical Services Program (CMSP) to the newly expanded Medi-Cal program. Additionally, DSS prioritized outreach to homeless individuals and, through a Memorandum of Understanding with the County Sheriff, assigned staff to process Medi-Cal applications for inmates awaiting release from custody.

While persons applying under the expanded Medi-Cal program may apply year-round, there is a limited Open Enrollment period for application for private coverage under Covered California. The next Open Enrollment period begins November 15, 2014 and goes through February 15, 2015. It is hoped that major improvements to the State's Call Centers and computer interface will have occurred by the advent of the Open Enrollment period.

#### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT**

The Department has consulted with the Administrative Office in preparing this report.

#### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

None.

#### **RESULTS**

Review and acceptance of this report will help inform the Board of Supervisors and the public as to the current status of implementation of the Affordable Care Act in San Luis Obispo County.