

DEPARTMENT: Administration

BY: Rich Inman, CAO
PHONE:

RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

The Director of Human Services, Cheryle Rutherford-Kelley, has discussed with the Board of Supervisors the need to fill her Child Welfare/Protection Unit positions with the highest level of Social Worker classification which is Social Worker IV. Given the importance of this particular service I concur that this Child Welfare/Protection Unit deserves the highest level classification and experience and herein recommend that the Human Services Department be allocated seven (7) Social Worker IV's positions in lieu of Social Worker III's.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

This issue has been discussed with the Board of Supervisors prior to my becoming the CAO and it is the position of Ms. Rutherford-Kelley that the Board of Supervisors approved these positions. However, no official verification of any Board action can be found and consequently the request is being made to ratify this prior discussion.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Positions will continue to be filled with Social Worker III's which require less experience.

Financial Impact? () Yes () No	Current FY Cost: \$	Annual Recurring Cost: \$
Budgeted In Current FY? () Yes () No () Partially Funded		
Amount in Budget: \$ _____		List Attachments, number pages consecutively _____
Additional Funding Needed: \$ _____		Prior Board Action request. _____
Source:		_____
Internal Transfer _____		_____
Unanticipated Revenue _____ 4/5's vote		_____
Transfer Between Funds _____ 4/5's vote		_____
Contingency _____ 4/5's vote		_____
() General () Other _____		_____

CLERK'S USE ONLY:

Res. No. 03-275 Ord. No. _____
 Vote - Ayes: 5 Noes: _____
 Absent: _____
 Approved _____
 () Minute Order Attached () No Action Necessary

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:

Requested Action Recommended
 No Opinion
 Comments: _____

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.
 Date: _____
 Attest: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board
 County of Mariposa, State of California
 By: _____
 Deputy

CAO: [Signature]

DEPARTMENT: Human Services

BY: Cheryle Rutherford-Kelly
PHONE: 966-2442

RECOMMENDED ACTION AND JUSTIFICATION:

It is respectfully recommended that your Board confirm your authorization for the Child Welfare/Protection Unit to have a staffing pattern of seven (7) Social Worker IVs with permission to under fill only if absolutely necessary.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF BOARD ACTIONS:

Please See Attached.

ALTERNATIVES AND CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION:

Please See Attached.

Financial Impact? () Yes (X) No	Current FY Cost: \$	Annual Recurring Cost: \$
Budgeted In Current FY? () Yes () No () Partially Funded		
Amount in Budget: \$ _____		List Attachments, number pages consecutively
Additional Funding Needed: \$ _____		Board Memo, 1-2
Source:		Organization Charts (Attachment I), 3-5
Internal Transfer		Job Assignments & Basic Responsibilities (Attachment II), 6-8
Unanticipated Revenue _____ 4/5's vote		
Transfer Between Funds _____ 4/5's vote		
Contingency _____ 4/5's vote		
() General () Other		

CLERK'S USE ONLY:

Res. No.: 03-275 Ord. No. _____
Vote - Ayes: _____ Noes: _____
Absent: _____
() Approved
() Minute Order Attached () No Action Necessary

The foregoing instrument is a correct copy of the original on file in this office.

Date: _____
Attest: MARGIE WILLIAMS, Clerk of the Board
County of Mariposa, State of California
By: _____
Deputy

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER:

Requested Action Recommended
 No Opinion
Comments: _____

CAO: LSA



**MARIPOSA COUNTY
HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

P.O. Box 7 • Mariposa, CA 95338 • (209) 966-2131 • Fax (209) 966-5943

Alcohol & Drug Community Action Housing Authority Mental Health Public Guardian/Conservator Social Services
CHERYLE RUTHERFORD-KELLY, MSW, DIRECTOR

May 1, 2003

TO: Members, Board of Supervisors
FROM: Cheryle Rutherford-Kelly
RE: Child Welfare/Protection / Permission to Underfill

Recommendation

It is respectfully recommended that your Board confirm your authorization for the Child Welfare/Protection Unit to have a staffing pattern of seven (7) Social Worker IVs with permission to under fill only if absolutely necessary.

Background

The Board of Supervisors conducted a workshop on Human Services on July 24, 2001 and heard the matter officially during the final budget session. The Board authorized the department to have, in child welfare, a staffing pattern that includes seven (7) Social Worker IVs. Permission was granted to under fill these positions if absolutely necessary due to the difficulty of hiring Social Worker IVs. As discussed many times, there is a nationwide shortage of MSWs (Masters in Social Welfare) which makes recruitment and retention of these individuals extremely difficult. To begin to address this difficulty, your Board authorized stipends for MSWs, LCSWs and those with a masters degree in psychology.

Attached for your convenience are the organizational charts discussed with, and approved by, the Board in July 2001 (Attachment I). The charts reflect six (6) SW IV slots in child welfare/protection and one (1) slot in Children's System of Care.

Current Situation

The department has been able to recruit three (3) Social Worker IVs since you made stipends available. The department shifted from investigation (best done by the Sheriff) to clinical treatment of children and families. In Child Welfare, we currently employ a Social Worker Supervisor II, three (3) Social Worker IVs; and one (1) Social Worker III who was under filled from an existing IV slot. That person is in graduate school and will advance to SW IV upon graduation. The Social Worker IV slot for Children System of Care is vacant. We therefore have three (3) Social Worker IV slots open.

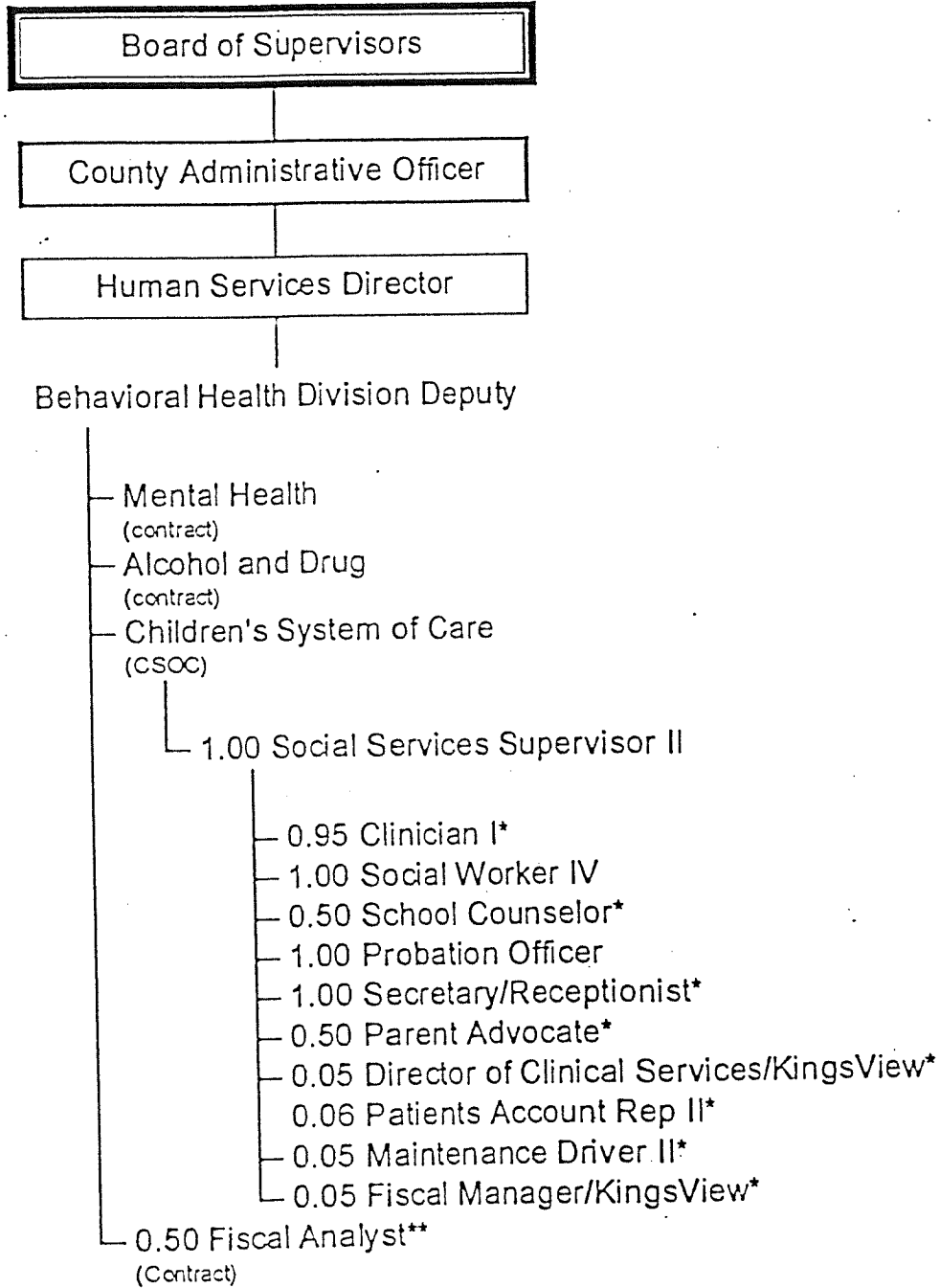
The program components in child welfare in terms of how Social Worker IVs are assigned is attached as per the request of our new CAO (Attachment II).

Due to an isolated error, most probably because of the reorganization of the entire department, the authorization to hire Social Worker IVs with permission to under fill was not translated to the county departments that support Human Services/Child Welfare. The department needs your Board approved staffing patterns confirmed so that Personnel and Auditor-Controller will allow hiring at the proper and approved level for Child Welfare/Protection. The approved staffing level would increase the number of SW IVs from 4 to 7 while decreasing the number of SW IIIs by 3.

Financial

These are budgeted positions at the advanced level. No local, general fund dollars are involved.

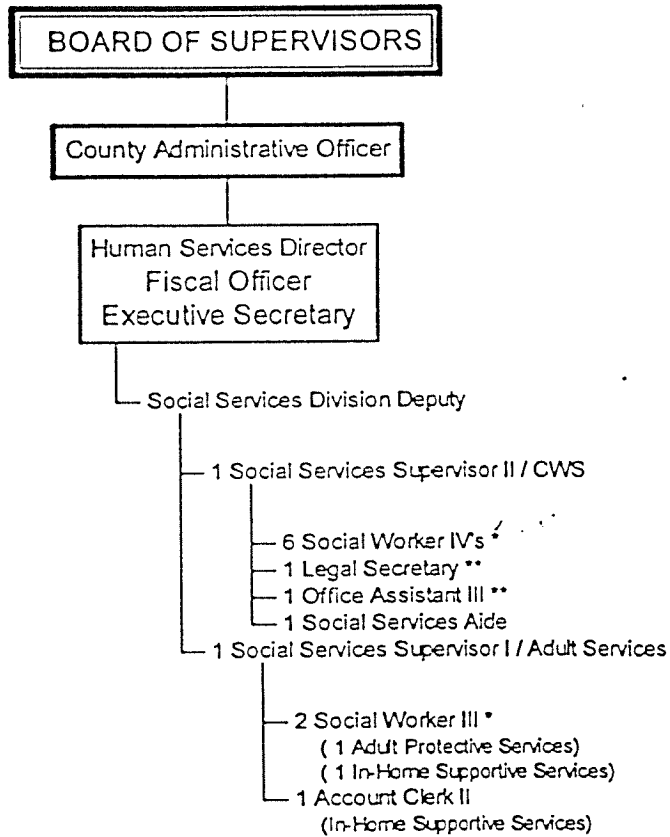
Mariposa County Human Services Department
Behavioral Health Division - #332-0512-921



*Contract

**Fiscal Analyst is a county contract employee reporting to the Fiscal Officer

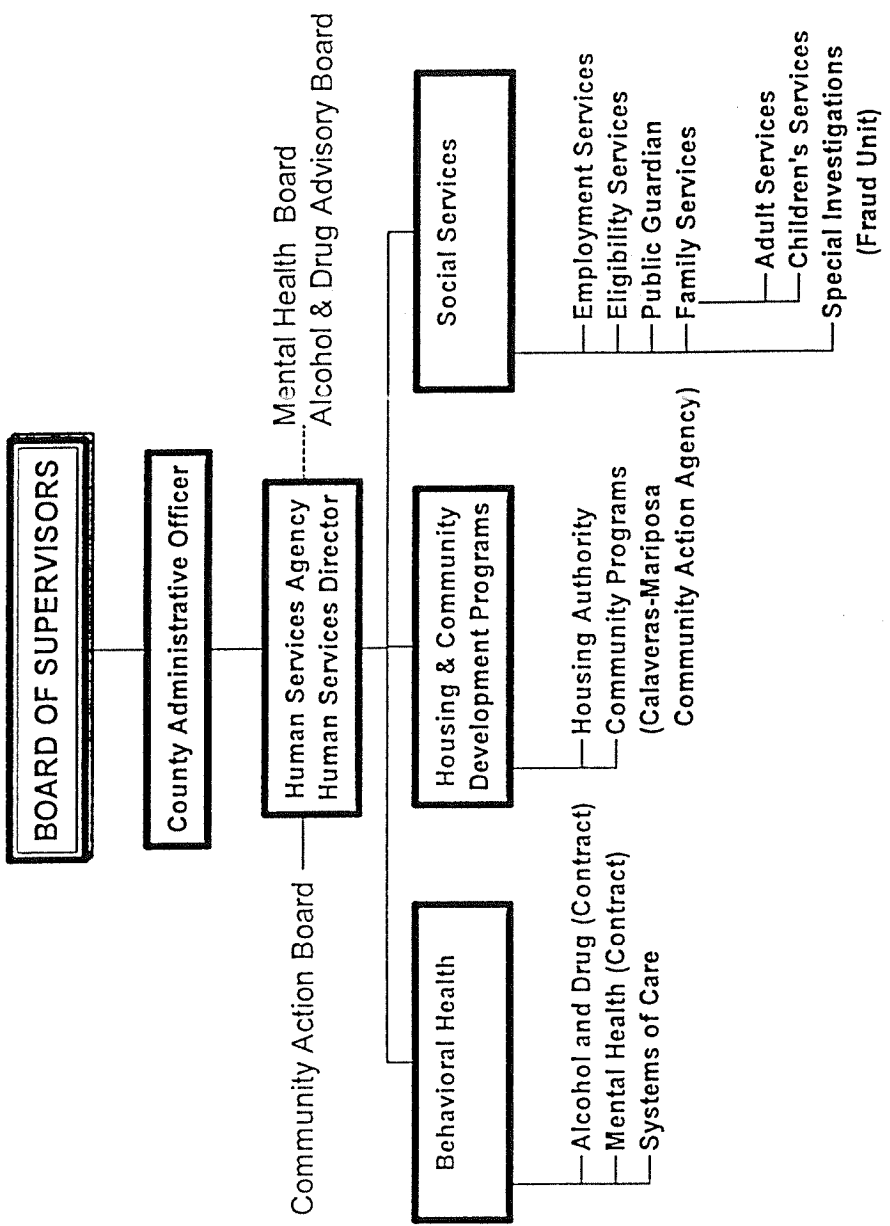
Mariposa County Department of Human Services
Social Services Division
Children and Adult Services



* With permission to underfill as necessary. Additionally, existing contracts for staff will be eliminated as Social Worker slots are filled.

** On Fiscal/Clerical chain of command.

Mariposa County Department of Human Services



**Child Welfare Services
Job Assignments and Basic Responsibilities for Social Worker IV's**

The responsibilities of our Social Workers, as discussed in the Reorganization Workshop, are different than those of other counties. We are attempting to provide very intensive counseling and therapeutic services to children and their families. The responsibilities of our social workers far surpass the norm of "investigation" and "case management." The unit offers prevention, intervention and treatment for the most dysfunctional families in our community. We are trying to avoid the pitfalls of current practice which includes removing children who could safely remain in their own homes while failing to remove children who are in imminent danger or suffering molest. Our goal is to avoid child reinjury that occurs when a child is reunited with their natural family when that family has not solved the problems that brought them to the attention of this agency and the court in the first place. Multiple foster care placements, also called foster care drift, needs to be prevented by intensive work with the children, natural parents and foster families. We want to ensure that children have a stable environment including adoption for those children who can never safely return to their own home. In conjunction with the Foster Parent Association, we now have a foster family training program operational.

Throughout California and the rest of the country, social workers are doing "investigations" which are best left to law enforcement. They are "case managing" instead of offering in depth counseling. They "refer" their "cases" to other workers, who often do not have the knowledge base to work with such troubled families or who are overloaded by other types of clients, such as the severely mentally ill. Our child welfare staff provides in-depth counseling, working with other professionals as necessary.

The following staffing pattern is an example of how workers are assigned. Flexibility is needed based on the type of problems that are brought to the attention of the agency. For example, if there are more children living with their parents than in foster care, a social worker would be moved from family reunification (services to reunify families) to family preservation (services to keep families in tact). However, every effort is made to reduce the number of social workers seeing any particular family so that the parents and children do not feel unimportant. It is also extremely important for a county's social workers to make a professional commitment to their clients, and our social workers are doing that.

Social Worker IV's

Children System of Care/One Slot

(1 FTE) Social Worker IV. Counsels extremely multi problem children and families who have come to the attention of many agencies. Efforts are to be made to prevent costly long term foster or group home care and/or reduce the level of care a particular child needs. Works daily with a deputy probation officer, school tutor, mental health worker and a parent advocate.

Child Welfare/Protection/6 Slots

Intake/Emergency Response

(2 FTE) Social Worker IV's. Screens calls and responds to referrals of child maltreatment from police, medical facilities, schools, neighbors and families. Based on the family's presenting problem, history and strengths, the social worker determines whether or not there is any risk to the child and, if there is risk, the degree. Then, one of the most critical decisions in child welfare is made; whether or not to remove the child from their parents or guardian. The social worker assists the child and the parents to understand the legal process, begins the very initial counseling program, and links families to other necessary services such as domestic violence if the spouse is also being battered; public health nursing if there are medical issues. We have approximately 35 referrals per month. Some cases are screened out (not a child welfare matter) and referred elsewhere. The Maddy Study, activated by SB 2030, indicates that the caseload should be 10-13 open cases per worker. Additional time is needed for answering, screening and computer intake for each call. One slot is currently vacant which necessitates the Court worker and supervisor assisting with this caseload.

Child Welfare Ongoing Services

Family Preservation (1 FTE) Social Worker IV. Serves those families who do not warrant Court intervention because the child is not in imminent danger as well as those families with high risk but without evidence necessary for removal. Some of the highest risk families are in this category. This work is currently being done by intake workers and Family Maintenance staff because of the lack of Social Worker IV's. (Similar to Family Maintenance, listed below, the caseload standard would range between 10-14).

Court Officer and Caseworker (1 FTE) Social Worker IV intern. (This slot is under filled by a Social Worker III who has advanced to candidacy in an MSW educational program). This Social Worker is under licensed supervision in terms of his casework and operates under the lawyer for child welfare, Mike Figalde. This social worker is assigned cases in Emergency Response and Children's System of Care.

Family Reunification and Family Maintenance (1.5 FTE) Social Worker IV's. Attempts to reunify those families with parents who are capable of making change (the majority of parents). Provides in-depth counseling to children who are in care to assist them to avoid self blame for what has happened to them and to break the cycle of abuse in the next generation. In-depth counseling with parents with difficulties that range from sexual attraction to children to rage. Family Maintenance provides intensive services to families before and after reunification to avoid subsequent abuse and repeated removal of children from their homes. (Caseload sizes should be 7.45 to 10 in Family Reunification and 10-14 in Family Maintenance). Our current caseload size is 19 in Family Reunification and 14 in Family Maintenance.

Permanency Planning (.5 FTE) Social Worker IV. These are services to children who can never safely return to their own home. In-depth counseling is offered to children to help them to understand why their parents could not change and, again, to break the cycle of molest or violence in the next generation. Services are linked to adoption. In fact, state adoption does not provide therapeutic adoption services to older children and our social workers must provide that service to avoid adoption failure. (Vacant slot –

work is covered by one of the social workers above). The recommended caseload size is 16 to 24 per worker while our caseload is actual caseload size is 26.

Other CWS Services Not in The Above Staffing Pattern

Independent Living (1 FTE) Social Worker III proposed. If approved by your Board in a separate action, Child Welfare will no longer be contracting out for Independent Living Services and will have a Social Worker III assigned to provide this service. Independent Living services are for teenagers who have been in foster care, either as dependents through the Child Welfare System or as Wards, through Probation. These are young people who are about to emancipate, or who have emancipated, and need assistance with such skills as budgeting, shopping, designing resumes and completing and submitting applications for college and financial educational aid. This person does not provide in-depth counseling and a master's degree is therefore unnecessary.