

STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: December 5, 2023

CATEGORY: Consent Calendar {{item.number}}

SUBJECT: Approve an agreement with His Ideas, Inc., dba Children First Foster Family Agency, in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000, for youth mental health services and therapeutic foster care.

DEPARTMENT: Health and Human Services Agency-Behavioral Health and Social Services

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT #: All

DEPARTMENT CONTACT: Miguel Rodriguez, Director of Mental Health, Behavioral Health & Social Services, (530) 225-5705

STAFF REPORT APPROVED BY: Miguel Rodriguez, HHSA Branch Director

<u>Vote Required?</u>	<u>General Fund Impact?</u>
Simple Majority Vote	No Additional General Fund Impact

RECOMMENDATION

Take the following actions: (1) Approve an agreement with His Ideas, Inc., dba Children First Foster Family Agency, in an amount not to exceed \$1,200,000, for youth specialty mental health services and therapeutic foster care for the period of three years from the date of signing; and (2) designate authority to the CEO or their designee to terminate this agreement, provided County Counsel concurs, and all other conditions are met.

DISCUSSION

The agreement will allow His Ideas, Inc., dba Children First Foster Family Agency (Children 1st), to provide youth specialty mental health services to Medi-Cal eligible clients, their family members and care providers and Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) services to eligible foster youth in Shasta County for three years from the date of signing.

The Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Services Request for Proposal, released December 12, 2022, received four proposals, and selected all providers (His Ideas, Inc., dba Children First Foster Family Agency, Northern Valley Catholic Social Services, Victor Community Support Services and Wayfinder Family Services). Proposals submitted were evaluated for five critical areas: Technical / Program Design, Organization Capacity, Relevant Experience, Budget, and Performance Measures. Each of the five criteria were considered and rated by a 3-person evaluation panel whose scores were then applied to a weighted scale resulting in each proposal's total score.

The Shasta County Mental Health Plan has a responsibility to provide mental health services to eligible Medi-Cal Beneficiaries. Per Shasta County Mental Health Plan 22-20136, no person shall be denied medically necessary covered specialty mental health service solely because of diagnosis, type of illness, or condition. Per Government Code Section 11135, no person on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, mental disability, physical disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, or sexual orientation, may be unlawfully denied full and equal access to the benefits of, or be unlawfully subjected to discrimination under, any program or activity that is conducted, operated, or administered by the state or by any state agency or is funded directly by or receives any financial assistance from the state.

Resulting from a recent competitive procurement cycle for mental health services, the proposed agreement will allow Children 1st to provide medically necessary specialty mental health services to children, adolescents and young adults (up to 21 years of age) who fall within Shasta County's eligible population. Children 1st will provide both clinic-based and community-based services.

The agreement contains specific requirements to ensure maximum access to services for Shasta County clients and their families,

including children placed in foster care. The Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) has oversight processes in place and has been satisfied with their performance. Continual performance monitoring includes evaluating client outcomes by the implementation of the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool as well as progress towards individual treatment goals.

On October 11, 2015, the California Legislature passed Assembly Bill (AB) 403, commonly known as Continuum of Care Reform. The AB 403 Continuum of Care Reform (CCR) changes include, but are not limited to, providing services and supports to youth and families to reduce the reliance on congregate care, thereby increasing placements in home-based settings. One of the goals of CCR is to advance the shared commitments of county child welfare departments, county probation departments, and county Mental Health Plan's (MHPs) to address the mental health needs of children and youth. One of the ways to do this is to provide TFC as a Medi-Cal Specialty Mental Health Service (SMHS).

TFC is a short-term, intensive, highly coordinated, and individualized Medi-Cal service provided as an Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit to full scope Medi-Cal children and youth up to age 21 with complex emotional and mental health needs who are placed with trained, intensely supervised, and supported TFC parents and who meet medical necessity criteria for SMHS as set forth in California Code of Regulations, Title 9, Chapter 11, Section 1830.205 or Section 1830.210. TFC is to be provided by resource parents under the direction of a Foster Family Agency (FFA). TFC services are intended for youth who require intensive and frequent mental health support in a one-on-one environment. TFC is a home-based alternative to high-level care in institutional settings such as Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs). TFC homes may also serve as a transitional placement from STRTPs to other care levels.

Delegation and designation of authority to terminate this agreement allows for timely termination of this agreement by the CEO or their designee directly, in the event the consultant is unable to meet expectations, funding is no longer available, or services are no longer necessary, without having to return to the Board.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could choose not to approve this agreement, defer consideration to a future date, provide alternate direction to staff, or approve one or only part of the recommended actions.

If the Board chooses to not approve this agreement, the Health and Human Services Agency Behavioral Health and Social Service Branch will be required to absorb the number of clients typically that would have been referred to Children First in order to fulfill County's obligations to the required Shasta County Mental Health Plan with the state and would be in violation of State requirements to have a Therapeutic Foster Care program in place. If the Board chooses to defer consideration to a future date or provide alternate direction to staff, it will further delay our ability to provide these mandatory services to our community's youth.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

County Counsel has approved the agreement as to form. Risk Management has approved the agreement. Support Services-Purchasing Unit administered the competitive procurement process and has reviewed the agreement. The recommendation has been reviewed by the County Administrative Office.

FISCAL IMPACT

The maximum compensation amount of the proposed agreement is included in the Mental Health (Cost Center 410) Fiscal Year 2023-24 Recommended Budgets. Specialty Mental Health Medi-Cal services are funded through a combination of federal Medicaid funds (approximately 50%) with a county match which is largely met through a combination of 1991 and 2011 realignment revenue.

ATTACHMENTS:

1: Agreement