

**REPORT TO MENDOCINO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FROM: MENDOCINO COUNTY IHSS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 4, 2017**

INTRODUCTION:

The Mendocino County In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Advisory Committee was established in 2002, pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code 12301.6, to provide on-going advice to the Board of Supervisors, The Department of Social Services and the IHSS Public Authority regarding the IHSS program. The Committee provided this report pursuant to that statutory responsibility.

CURRENT STATUS:

There are currently 1,742 IHSS recipient in Mendocino County and 1,625 providers of in-home care. Providers currently receive a wage of \$11.00 per hour. This wage was negotiated by the IHSS provider union, SEIU 2015. The wages were increased from \$9.90 per hour to \$11.00 which includes a \$.60 healthcare offset. Currently IHSS providers do not receive health insurance, a retirement program, or sick leave.

The current Social Worker staffing levels for the Public Authority (PA), IHSS and APS are almost at full level. However, hiring and retention remain a huge problem due to the fact that Mendocino County has a much lower pay scale than surrounding counties.

The IHSS Advisory Committee has concerns regarding the lack of training for providers. There is a mandatory orientation of ½ day for all providers. However, this does not include basic caregiver training addressing the needs of our elder and dependent adults. Currently the PA staff do not offer additional trainings other than the minimum State requirements. Please note the attached article on the training given in San Bernardino and Santa Clara Counties. The Committee feels that training is of critical importance for the safety of both the vulnerable recipient population and the worker. A caregiver training program was available at Mendocino College for a time but has been discontinued due to lack of funding and lack of participation. There is a training video library that is available at HHSA at no charge. It is not well used.

HEALTH OF THE IHSS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

On 8-3-2011, the bylaws of the IHSS Advisory Committee were changed to reduce the Committee meetings from ten to six meetings per year. This was necessary due to deep cuts made to the IHSS Advisory Committee budget. Currently the Committee meets every other month for 2 hours. There are problems attracting and retaining members. Presently there are 6 members on the Advisory Committee (3 recipients, 1 provider, 2 Adult Advocates from the community).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. According to Ordinance No. 4093, Section 9.35.080 Subdivision {c}, the Authority shall not be obligated to, but may provide training directly, to pay for training provided privately or in the community, to pay for the providers time spent in training, to accompany clients to training, to pay for transportation to training or to pay for any materials required by the training. The Authority shall not be obligated to ensure that any provider or client attend or complete any training.
 - ❖ The Advisory Committee recommends that the Board of Supervisors provide funding to Public Authority as needed for training of Providers and Recipients.
2. In view of the difficulties with hiring and retaining Social Workers the Advisory Committee asks County Board of Supervisors to perform a base salary study with the goal of increasing wages for county staff. It is imperative that the IHSS program staff is available to provide best practices to our elders and dependent adults.
3. We would request the Board of Supervisors to select one of its members to be a standing liaison for the IHSS Advisory Committee to call upon for information and advice.

CONCLUSION:

The PA and IHSS staff is doing a very good job meeting the needs of their clients. However, the Advisory Committee urges the County Board of Supervisors and community partners to provide as much support as possible to continue to improve services.