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Date: April 13, 2020

TO: Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

From: Lloyd Weer, Auditor-Controller

Re: April 14, 2020 Agenda Item 4a) Amendment to Policy 18  
Travel Advances and March 6, 2020 Memo from Sheriff-Corner

I'd like to provide a brief history of Sheriff's Office travel advances. The Sheriff's Office used to have special funding available that was not general fund, to pay for travel and per diem advances for their employees. That special funding and expenditures went through separate non general fund accounts. The Sheriff's Office was routinely allowed to submit travel advances for employees attending training that was covered by that special funding. When that funding ended, the Sheriff's Office continued to pay travel advances out of the non-general fund accounts, causing those accounts to run negative. The end result was that the general fund had to cover those costs. When the situation came to my attention I directed my staff to let the Sheriff's Office know that those travel advances would no longer be automatically approved.

Due to staff changes in the Auditor-Controller's office it recently came to my attention that the Sheriff's Office was still submitting and being paid travel advances out of the general fund. Those advances were up to and including single meal per diems for lunch. I requested that Auditor-Controller's office staff reaffirmed my direction with the Sheriff's Office that travel per diems will not be automatically advanced when paid from the general fund and that advances are for emergency or otherwise unusual circumstances per Policy 18. My office has not received any Special Requests for consideration of a hardship or otherwise.

Regarding the statement provided in the March 6, 2020 memo from Undersheriff Brewster that personnel were not given the ability to have advances on their per diem:

Supervisory Course:

2019 Lima was provided an advance of \$722 paid 5/2/19 for training beginning 5/6/19

2019 Espinoza was provided an advance of \$722 paid 5/2/19 for training beginning 5/6/19

Basic Dispatcher Course:

2019 Tindall was provided an advance of \$270 paid 9/6/19 for training beginning 9/9/19

ICI Homicide Course:

2019 Ochoa paid weekly based on the claims submitted \$333 paid 12/12/19 for 12/2-6-19, and \$333 paid 1/3/20 for 12/8-13/19

Basic SWAT Course:

2019 Julian was provided an advance of \$666 paid 10/10/19 for course beginning 10/14/19

2019 Woida was provided an advance of \$666 paid 10/10/19 for course beginning 10/14/19

Basic K-9 Handler Training:

2019 Andrade was paid based on the claim submitted. Paid \$1,633 3/7/19, could have requested advance or reimbursement weekly.

2019 James was paid based on claims submitted \$284 2/14/19, \$355 2/14/19, \$355 2/28/19, \$284 2/28/19, \$355 3/7/19 could have requested advance or reimbursement weekly.

The memo from the Sheriff's Office makes it sound as though employees would be required to wait until after all training, even weeks long training, to receive their per diem, that simply has not been, nor would it necessarily be the case. In most cases employees were allowed to submit weekly per diem reimbursements and some others may have been longer based on when the Sheriff's Office prepared and submitted the claim. Again, I'll restate that since the reminder to the Sheriff's Office that advances will not be automatic, the Auditor-Controller's Office has not received any Special Requests for per diem advances from the Sheriff's Office. A Special Request would need additional information about the reason for the advance and be signed by the department head.

Please be aware that when an advance is processed, the department must ensure that the employee completes all days of training and was in fact entitled to all per diem advanced. Any per diem that should not have been advanced must be returned by the employee in the form of payment back to the County for deposit into the account originally charged with advance.