

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



ITEM: 2.9
(ID # 18717)

MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, March 29, 2022

FROM : EXECUTIVE OFFICE:

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE OFFICE: Status Report on the Activity of the Board Ad Hoc Committee on Inter-Departmental Systems Improvements for Protection of Vulnerable Children and Adults

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Receive and File this Status Report on the activity of the Board Ad Hoc Committee on Inter-Departmental Systems Improvements for Protection of Vulnerable Children and Adults

ACTION:Consent

Jeff Van Wageningen, County Executive Officer 3/25/2022

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Spiegel seconded by Supervisor Perez and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is received and filed as recommended.

Ayes: Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Hewitt
Nays: None
Absent: None
Date: March 29, 2022
xc: E.O.

Kecia R. Harper
Clerk of the Board
By:
Deputy

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
NET COUNTY COST	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
SOURCE OF FUNDS: N/A			Budget Adjustment:	No
			For Fiscal Year:	21/22

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND

On December 7, 2021, the Board of Supervisors approved the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on Inter-Departmental Systems Improvements for Protection of Vulnerable Children and Adults, consisting of Supervisors Spiegel and Jeffries as Co-Chairs. This Committee is reviewing the various system changes that the County has implemented to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and adults under the County's care, as well as receiving regular status reports and updates from Larson LLP which has been retained to conduct an independent analysis of the care, services and placement provided to the 13 Turpin siblings by Riverside County departments.

The County of Riverside is committed to protecting the safety, health and welfare of the most vulnerable in our community, and to safeguard them from harm and exploitation. While our dedicated staff work tirelessly every day to accomplish that mission for those in our care, there have been high profile instances that have spotlighted areas where the County must direct attention and resources to support transformation and enhancement of department efforts including the way in which multiple departments work across the system to create integrated service delivery. The Ad Hoc Committee is working to evaluate our current programs and then make recommendations to the Board on additional system improvements that will further help protect those that we serve.

The following highlight some of the system transformation work that has already been initiated based on past Board direction, as well as system recommendations that are being identified and considered as part of the Ad-Hoc Committee's work efforts.

Integrated Service Delivery System

As part of the FY 21/22 Budget, the Board approved additional investments to develop the County's Integrated Service Delivery System, with the goals of strengthening prevention and early intervention services and improving service experience for those we serve. This effort is being led by the Human Services team in partnership with other County Department stakeholders. An inter-department executive steering committee

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

has been formed to provide direction and oversight for completing the County's integrated system master plan. The redesigned service delivery system will focus on decreasing duplicative intake processes; addressing service gaps and access barriers; and enhancing care coordination.

Care Coordination through Multi-Disciplinary Teams

A collaborative interagency approach is necessary to address the complex needs of vulnerable children, seniors and families that may be served by more than one County department. In December, applying the care coordination model that departments have previously established, we created a multi-department, multi-disciplinary team to foster increased coordination and communication in the ongoing care of the Turpin siblings. We need to broaden the use of multi-disciplinary teams to be able to assess and address care needs in a more holistic fashion. Departments are working to expand formal protocols and agreements so that representatives and experts from various programs work together throughout the course of the case, leading to a better overall service delivery.

Continuous Quality Improvement

The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) launched a Continuous Quality Improvement process under their new leadership in 2020. They have brought on-board outside experts to work with staff to help assess and evaluate their operations and recommend process improvements to their management team. This initiative seeks to use quantitative and qualitative data to develop, evaluate, and refine policies and programs to improve the services and supports to Riverside County's children, seniors and disabled population. The work being done by the Ad-Hoc Committee and the results of the review being conducted by Larson LLP will be important to help guide our continuous quality improvement efforts.

Information Sharing

Recognizing the need for continuous improvement in our inter-departmental collaboration, our leadership team has identified a legislative hurdle that prevents departments from sharing information between the child and adult protective programs. Removal of this barrier can enhance the goal of conducting a comprehensive assessment and delivering coordinated care. To address this, we have partnered with the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) to develop SB 1054 and garnered sponsorship from Senator Ochoa-Bogh who introduced the bill in February, 2022. If

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

passed, the bill would amend existing law to allow for the disclosing of information between county adult protective agencies and county child welfare agencies for the purpose of prevention, intervention, management, or treatment abuse and neglect among vulnerable children and adults.

In addition, the Office of County Counsel has partnered with Foley & Lardner LLP to expedite the development of a comprehensive data sharing agreements among county departments.

Workforce Resources

Our Human Services departments continue to experience challenges in the recruitment and retention of staff, particularly those staff members that provide services to our at-risk children. Although the challenges of recruiting and retaining staff is certainly a growing concern on a County-wide level in this difficult labor market, its impacts are further emphasized in areas where the level of staff continuity and growth through experience can best assist our vulnerable populations. The Executive Office will be working with the Board Ad-Hoc Committee and our Department leadership in bringing forth further recommendations to address these issues as part of the budget process.

Further, we need to explore opportunities to enhance our communications between the many Departments, and external agencies, involved in the delivery of services to our children and adult populations. The Executive Office is reviewing additional staffing resources that may help to strengthen those bonds of internal and external communication, to elevate concerns to our Department leadership teams.

Next Steps

Although much work is already in process to continue to improve on our delivery of services to children and adults, the BOS Ad Hoc Committee, Executive Office, and Department leaders recognize that more must be done. It is critically important that we embrace a culture of continuous improvement, critical inquiry, and willingness to adjust our operations as we encounter challenges to seek to deliver the best service possible to our children and adults. As Larson LLP proceeds with their review, and the BOS Ad Hoc continues to review the various County operations charged with delivery of these services, we will bring forward additional proposals to enhance our service delivery in this critically important area.

Impact on Residents and Businesses

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE,
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Thorough analysis of the policies and practices used across County of Riverside departments when providing care and protective services to vulnerable children and adults within our care will allow for meaningful systems improvements.

Supplemental Comments from Supervisor Jeffries on Status Report on the Activity of the Board Ad Hoc Committee on Inter- Departmental Systems Improvements for Protection of Vulnerable Children and Adults (Item 2.9)

The First District office concurs with the initial report of the Improvements for Protection of Vulnerable Children and Adults. However, the First District office seeks to expand on those comments and offers the following thoughts and concerns with the hope and expectation that deeper dives will continue by the Ad Hoc Committee and County staff.

This has been a frustrating process. Confidentiality laws prohibited and prevented the Board from being aware of many issues within our Social Services system prior to things blowing up in the media, and those confidentiality laws continue to prevent us from presenting any sort of explanation (good or bad) of the County's staff and actions in the Turpin case either to our constituents or the media. While there are definitely more than two sides of the story as far as allegations of neglect by the County in the Turpin case and other prior cases, one thing is clear: We must do a better job of communicating and coordinating across programs and departments and with the policymakers. Confidentiality is of vital importance but cannot be an excuse for allowing problems to develop or for not working collaboratively to find solutions.

The First District raises the following items for further committee discussion, some of which will require changes at the State level, but others that we need to address internally:

1. The caseload of our employees is at bone-crushing levels—average investigations caseload for CPS staff is double the target, and the ongoing services workload is 50% higher than it should be.
2. The level of funding from the State to Riverside County is grotesquely inadequate to meet and comply with State mandates and restrictions.
3. Available housing and treatment facilities are significantly limited, and at times nonexistent.
4. Real or perceived legal barriers (walls) have historically been erected that effectively limit needed coordination of wrap-around services, often to the detriment of the person or child in need of comprehensive services.
5. Historically, there has been very little reporting or accountability to the Executive Office (and to the Board of Supervisors) from these departments. As a result, staffing struggles, supervision/management and coordination issues, and gaps in needed care options only surface after tragic cases.
6. Well-meaning but incredibly burdensome State restrictions that actually work to inhibit or at least complicate the ability of multiple service providers to work together for the good of the individual.
7. Each County service provider has their own legal counsel which appears to be working to protect their county client from possible liability exposure (and related privacy rights), which impacts the delivery of coordinated services.

The efforts described in this Board item and other changes that have been made already should help improve communication and coordination among our case workers and departments, but it must start with changing the culture that has often prioritized keeping problems quiet instead of seeking solutions, and supporting our case workers with the resources and partnerships across departmental lines to be successful.

2.9
3/29/2022