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Monterey County Administrative Office
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The Department of Social Services Performance Measures Strategy Aims for Quality of Life for Residents

For a department such as Social Services, whose services directly affect thousands of county residents every day, performance measures are widely used as a management tool not only to track the way those services are delivered, but also to help staff stay focused and confident about their efforts.

Explained in a presentation made by Department Director Elliott Robinson to the Board of Supervisors recently, Social Services’ performance management strategy has four major components that when woven together, are designed to produce services the community values, that are responsive and efficient and that promote a better quality of life for all our residents.

The following is a breakdown of those components and how they are put into action.

1. Promote an organizational culture of service, performance and integrity
Robinson says this component of performance management is actually less about specific measures and tools and more about mood and focus of the workplace. Some of the methods used by the Department to achieve these results include:

- Setting a mission-driven tone
- Keeping a strong emphasis on core services
- Always working to promote the morale of the women and men who bring services to life
- Incorporating team decision making processes where possible
- Embrace joint labor-management meetings

2. Business process tracking efforts make sure services are responsive to public needs and systems are efficient.

Robinson says the number of households coming to the Department for services has far outpaced increased financing, and as a result, he and staff look for efficiency strategies wherever possible and partner with the State to pursue workload simplification.

“This pressure between households needing service and financing resulted in the establishment of our CB CARE Center (call center) and task-based assignment system for CalFresh and Medi-Cal,” explains Robinson. “You can see on the chart (left) that we are in the red in terms of our service level goal which is to answer all calls within 30 seconds. As a result of healthcare reform and the volume of calls that have resulted from challenges in the State’s computer slowing up eligibility processes, we have not been able to meet that goal.”

Other tracking efforts include:
- Workload and productivity
- Timeliness and accuracy in delivering benefits
- Timeliness of child maltreatment assessments
- Timeliness of IHSS assessments and reassessments

3. Tracking outcomes

Because the Department has programs that are focused on the community and individuals, methods of tracking service outcomes vary. For example, when tracking outcomes for the CalFresh (food benefit) Program, the average number of those receiving CalFresh monthly in Monterey County is compared to the number of potential CalFresh eligible residents to determine how many of those who can receive this benefit are actually getting it, and whether additional outreach is needed.

Other tracking efforts include:

- Work Participation Rates in CalWORKs Employment Services
- Recurrence of Child Maltreatment
- Family Reunification Success Levels
- Foster Care Placement Rates
- Foster Care Placement Stability

4. Planning and ongoing quality improvement

Never stop improving! The Department uses its quality control systems, self-assessment systems and systems improvement processes to work at continuous improvement as well as track needs assessment, demographic data and the ongoing policy landscape. From this effort came department-developed needs assessments such as the Community Action Partnership and Area Agency on Aging Plans, the Homeless Survey and the Health Department’s needs assessments.

Potential Building Acquisition Required Research, ‘Due Diligence’

The Resource Management Agency (RMA) has been keeping county staff informed about the potential acquisition of the former Capital One on Schilling Place in Salinas over the past few months. This issue will be presented to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, August 26th and documents related to the potential acquisition are now available on the RMA webpage for public review.

Preparing this issue for consideration by the Board was an extensive process that included both research and outreach to the public. RMA Director Benny Young explains the background of preparing this issue for final consideration.
Q. Why was a Due Diligence Report required for consideration of this purchase?

This purchase, if completed, would represent a major, long-term capital facilities investment on the part of the County, potentially involving a considerable outlay of taxpayer resources. It was essential that a ‘due diligence’ review be conducted to ascertain whether or not it would represent a sound business decision and provide the decision makers the background needed to make an informed decision.

Q. What RMA staff was involved in the process and what special vendors were needed to complete the task?

The County staff team working on the data assimilation and related analyses included not only the RMA but vital assistance from County Counsel, Auditor-Controller, County Administrative Office, and a number of potentially affected/involved operating departments. Many individual staff members were involved, but key contributors doing the ‘hands on’ work included Director of Public Works Bob Murdoch, Real Estate Services Manager George Salcido, Chief Assistant County Counsel Les Girard, County Debt Manager Ron Holly and Management Specialist, Carlos Urrutia.

Expert assistance was secured to assist with some specialized tasks, including a valuation appraisal, traffic engineering report, an assessment of the architectural/engineering soundness of the facilities as well as legal assistance to assist with the negotiations and with drafting the associated purchase and lease ‘buyout’ agreements.

Q. The report goes into great detail. What are the key components?

Over the past 75 days, staff completed evaluations of: the condition of the structures and property; the value of the land and improvements; alternative purchase financing mechanisms; the likely facility occupancy - preliminary space planning; traffic/access issues; and short and long-term financial analyses. Given the short time available, the reviews were quite thorough and included concerns such as environmental, traffic/access, ADA, seismic, and even conceptual space layouts.

Q. The Due Diligence Report was posted online Monday of this week for community review, earlier than was expected. Why?

There has been a great deal of community interest in this project and the County has held and participated in community forums as well as met with interested citizens, staff and stakeholder groups such as the City of Salinas and the Salinas Chamber of Commerce. A substantial amount of public comment has been received in the course of the due diligence review. County staff made the final report available as soon as it was completed – about a week earlier than would normally be possible through the customary Board agenda development and posting procedures. We felt that might facilitate a better-informed community dialogue leading up to the Board’s planned consideration.