



# County of San Bernardino

## Legislation Text

**File #: 3029, Agenda Item #: 19**

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### REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO AND RECORD OF ACTION

**October 6, 2020**

**FROM**

**DIANE RUNDLES, Director, Human Resources Department**

**SUBJECT**

Emergency Responder and Healthcare Providers Childcare Services Reimbursement Extension

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Authorize extension of reimbursement of up to \$600 for childcare services to County employees who have been identified as emergency responders and healthcare providers covering the initial period of April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 and to now allow reimbursements through December 31, 2020.

(Presenter: Diane Rundles, Director, 387-5570)

**COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**Promote the Countywide Vision.**

**Improve County Government Operations.**

**Operate in a Fiscally-Responsible and Business-Like Manner.**

**Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.**

**Pursue County Goals and Objectives by Working with Other Agencies.**

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

It is not anticipated that this item will require additional Discretionary General Funding. The estimated cost of this action is unknown at this time, as the County does not currently have detail on the number of employees that will qualify for reimbursement. It is anticipated that this action will require the use of the County's CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funds if other federal or state funding does not become available.

On May 19, 2020 (Item No. 106), the Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the reimbursement of up to \$600 childcare services to County employees identified as emergency responders and healthcare providers covering the period of April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020. There have been a total of 87 approved childcare reimbursement requests totaling \$50,781.75 as of pay period 19/2020.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

On March 4, 2020, the State of California declared a state of emergency as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic due to the rising number of confirmed cases and anticipated complications for those infected, including potential deaths. On March 10, 2020, the County Public Health Officer declared a local health emergency to help ensure county government and the public were prepared for the possibility that COVID-19 will appear within the County. On March 10, 2020 (Item No. 75), the Board proclaimed the existence of a local emergency within San Bernardino County resulting from COVID-19.

On March 18, 2020, the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) was signed into law, requiring that effective April 1, 2020, the County provide certain employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19 through December 31, 2020. Under the law, the County could elect to exclude healthcare providers and emergency responders from the application of FFCRA. In order to ensure adequate staffing to respond to the emergency the County elected to exclude employees it identified as healthcare providers and emergency responders from the FFCRA and from the expanded childcare leave provisions of the Act.

Across the nation, schools and day care providers have been closed, resulting in millions of children being home. Emergency responders and healthcare providers are required to remain at work and are excluded from the expanded childcare leave, resulting in additional childcare costs. Various cities, counties, and states have attempted to ease this burden by providing assistance with childcare costs and/or childcare placement services for emergency responders and healthcare providers. Consistent with this approach, on May 19, 2020 agenda (Item #106), the Board approved reimbursement of up to \$600 for the period of April 1, 2020 through June 30, 2020 to assist employees identified as healthcare providers and emergency responders, consistent with U.S Department of Labor definitions, with these additional childcare costs. The processing of such reimbursements has been made according to the expense reimbursement provisions of the applicable Memorandum of Understanding through processes established by the Human Resources Department.

Approval of this item will extend the childcare reimbursement eligibility for emergency responders and healthcare workers from June 30, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

The County has notified the unions who represent employees who may be impacted by these proposed actions and those unions have all expressed support or had no objections to the recommendations.

**PROCUREMENT**

Not applicable.

**REVIEW BY OTHERS**

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Cynthia O'Neill, Supervising Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on September 14, 2020; Labor Relations (Bob Windle, County Labor Relations Chief, 387-3101) on September 14, 2020; County Finance (Jessica Trillo, Administrative Analyst, 387-4222) on September 16, 2020; and County Finance and Administration (Matthew Erickson, County Chief Financial Officer, 387-5423) on September 19, 2020.