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THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS  
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: COMMUNITY SERVICES AGENCY

BOARD AGENDA # \*A-4

Urgent

Routine

AGENDA DATE January 4, 2005

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES  NO

4/5 Vote Required YES  NO

(Information Attached)

SUBJECT:

PROCLAMATION OF FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST RECOGNITION WEEK

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. PROCLAIM THE WEEK OF JANUARY 9, 2005 AS FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST RECOGNITION WEEK.
2. REQUEST THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS PRESENT A RESOLUTION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY WORKERS ASSOCIATION AT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING ON JANUARY 11, 2005.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this agenda item.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2005-4

On motion of Supervisor Simon, Seconded by Supervisor Mayfield

and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Mayfield, Simon, DeMartini and Chairman Grover

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) X Approved as recommended

2) \_\_\_\_\_ Denied

3) \_\_\_\_\_ Approved as amended

4) \_\_\_\_\_ Other:

MOTION:

ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

PROCLAMATION OF FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST RECOGNITION WEEK  
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**DISCUSSION:**

Family Services Specialists provide eligibility and employment services for individuals applying for and receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, Foster Care and General Assistance. Family Services Specialists also write handbooks on policy and procedure provide training and inservice, conduct hearings and special investigations and conduct quality control reviews. In Stanislaus County, over 100,000 residents rely on approximately 400 Family Services Specialists to accurately, efficiently and compassionately determine their eligibility for public assistance and assist them in obtaining gainful employment. In the Fiscal Year 2003/2004, Family Services Specialists and Supervisors were responsible for the accurate issuance of \$34,774,668 in Food Stamp Benefits and approximately \$56,168,600 of Cash Aid Benefits.

The 2003/2004 fiscal year brought many changes for the Family Services Specialists. In April 2004, the C-IV system was implemented. Stanislaus County is part of a four-County Consortium that implemented the automation of the issuance and maintenance of public benefits. In preparing for implementation, the Family Services Specialists overcame many challenges associated with converting to an automated system. They met the challenge of converting 59,496 cases from a manual file to the C-IV system. This meant inputting over 160 data elements, per case, into the C-IV system. The Family Services Specialists continued to provide excellent customer service despite glitches in the system during the beginning phase of implementation. They persevered in ensuring the customers received timely benefits and supportive services when the system was down or slow. In addition, the Family Services Specialists assisted San Bernardino and Riverside Counties as they were "going live" with the C-IV System. They provided 1,592 hours of training and mentoring with San Bernardino County and 1,320 hours with Riverside County.

Fiscal Year 2003/2004 has been a busy year from an automation perspective. All Family Services Specialists and Supervisors participated in the conversion from Food Stamps to an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system. In the last six months staff has been preparing to automate the cash grant to EBT. Systems have been created, data has been tested, and staff and customers are being trained in how to utilize the new Cash EBT system.

Welfare Reform and customer needs continue to provide new opportunities for service delivery by Family Services Specialists and Supervisors, particularly with the movement toward Medi-Cal and Food Stamp outreach. Family Services Specialists are vital to the community's safety net for needy families. These Family Services Specialists continue, on a daily basis, to meet the needs of families who are under stress due to the lack of basic necessities in life, such as shelter, food and health care. Even with the difficult casework assignments in meeting family needs, Stanislaus County Community Services Agency Family Services Specialists have a 95.79% Food Stamp accuracy rate which resulted in Stanislaus County being one of the top California counties in Food Stamp accuracy. The National Food Stamp error rate average is 5.53% compared to the

## PROCLAMATION OF FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST RECOGNITION WEEK

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Stanislaus County rate of 4.21%. Over the last seven years, we continue to be one of the top ten California Counties who have maintained the best Food Stamp accuracy rate. This quality service is due to the work ethic and skills demonstrated consistently by our Family Service Specialists and Supervisors.

Over the past year, the Family Services Specialists involved in the Special Investigations unit (SIU) has done an outstanding job in recalculating benefits on fraudulent cases. In the past 12 months the total overpayments in cash and food stamps computed by the Family Services Specialist in SIU amounted to \$1,126,216.

General Assistance (GA) is a program within the Adult Services Division. The program's main objective is to assist customers obtain Social Security Benefits (SSI). Although it is a relatively small group of people who administer the program and its services, the work is intensive and the results, impressive! The GA team provides guidance, moral support, and professional advocacy services to the customer as they begin Social Security's meticulous application process and arduous eligibility requirements. Once SSI is awarded to the customer, they repay GA for the benefits they received while waiting to receive SSI benefits. During Fiscal Year 03/04, 162 people were assisted in achieving a better life. Almost \$500,000 was obtained through the efforts of the GA team. \$235,000 directly supported customers. The remainder of the money, almost \$250,000, was repaid to the County's General Fund. This allowed the program to continue to help others.

Family Services Specialists and Supervisors in partnership with Child Welfare Services Social workers, and community partners have provided service integration and preventative services to over 400 families. The Family Services Specialists have assessed families, conducted joint visits with social workers and referred families to other community resources.

There are currently 11 Family Services Specialists assigned to assist families in the Childcare program. They serve a total of 1,507 families in Stanislaus County. 2,841 children are receiving childcare services. \$8,394,000 was directly paid to childcare providers for childcare services rendered. This allowed families to work and attend school to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency.

Since January of this year, Family Service Specialists involved in the Welfare-to-Work program have assisted 1,891 customers enter employment. It is estimated that over 225 families will leave the public assistance roles this year due to employment assistance given by the Family Services Specialists. With professionalism, compassion and concern, Family Services Specialists continue to provide quality customer service to the needy families of Stanislaus County and to promote the agency mission of personal responsibility, job readiness and self-sufficiency. Personally they care; professionally they serve.

## PROCLAMATION OF FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST RECOGNITION WEEK

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Over and above regularly assigned duties, Family Services Specialists and Family Services Specialists Supervisors provide leadership and continue to be involved in numerous community activities, some which are mentioned below:

- Participate in Employer Outreach events
- Collaborate with Health Services to provide on-site services
- Work with our Community Partners to develop new job training programs
- Assist in the development of off-site outstations
- Provide assistance at Community Health Fairs
- Participate in Community Job Fairs
- Donate to United Way
- Participate in the American Heart Walk
- Act as Mentors/Readers to children
- Visit nursing homes
- Adopt foster children, families in need and nursing homes at Christmas

These examples demonstrate the commitment that Family Services Specialist staff have in delivering excellent services to the community, in a respectful and responsive manner.

### **POLICY ISSUE:**

Proclaiming the week of January 9, 2005 as Family Services Specialist Recognition Week supports the Board's priority of ensuring a safe, healthy community through efficient government operations.

### **STAFFING IMPACT:**

There is no staffing impact associated with this item.

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Date: January 4, 2005

No. 2005-4

On motion of Supervisor Simon Seconded by Supervisor Mayfield  
and approved by the following vote,  
Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Mayfield, Simon, DeMartini, and Chairman Grover  
Noes: Supervisors: None  
Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None  
Abstaining: Supervisor: None

Item: \*A-4

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED:

WHEREAS, the County of Stanislaus takes great pride in the more than 400 Family Services Specialist staff who provide efficient, legally correct and compassionate customer assistance to over 100,000 County residents and promote parental responsibility, self-sufficiency and family preservation.

WHEREAS, as the Community Services Agency has become a pioneer in technology as the Pilot county that implemented C-IV automation, Electronic Benefit Transfer for Food Stamps, and is developing Electronic Benefit Transfer for cash aid.

WHEREAS, Family Services Specialists serve 1507 families in Stanislaus County with childcare services which allow families to work and attend school to assist them in reaching self-sufficiency.

WHEREAS, Family Services Specialist staff recalculated benefits, on fraudulent cases, totaling \$1,126,216 savings to Stanislaus County

WHEREAS, Family Services Specialist staff continues to maintain one of the best Food Stamp Accuracy Rates in the State of California.

WHEREAS, Family Services Specialist Staff provide guidance, moral support, and professional advocacy services while operating the General Assistance Program and have contributed over \$250,000 to the General Fund of Stanislaus County

WHEREAS, the Family Services Specialists assisted 1891 customers enter employment and provide service integration and preventative services to over 400 families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors does hereby proclaim the week of January 9, 2005 as Family Services Specialist Recognition Week and commend the work of Stanislaus County Family Services Specialists to all members of the community.

ATTEST: CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk  
Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors,  
State of California

Christine Ferraro  
By:

File No.