

Grand Jury Report

RESPONSE FORM

Grand Jury Report Title: Family & Children's Services

Report Dated: 5/19/15

Response Form Submitted By:

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Response MUST be submitted, per Penal Code §933.05, no later than:

8/17/15

I have reviewed the report and submit my responses to the FINDINGS portion of the report as follows:

- I (we) agree with the Findings numbered:
F1
- I (we) disagree wholly or partially with the Findings numbered below, and have ***attached, as required***, a statement specifying any portion of the Finding that are disputed with an explanation of the reasons therefore.
F5, F7, F20, F23, F28

I have reviewed the report and submit my responses to the RECOMMENDATIONS portion of the report as follows:

- The following Recommendation(s) have been implemented and ***attached, as required***, is a summary describing the implemented actions:
R13
- The following Recommendation(s) have not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, ***attached, as required*** is a time frame for implementation:
R1, R3, R5, R9, R10, R12

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The following Recommendation(s) require further analysis, and **attached as required**, is an explanation and the scope and parameters of the planned analysis, and a time frame for the matter to be prepared, discussed and approved by the officer and/or director of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed: (This time frame shall not exceed six (6) months from the date of publication of the Grand Jury Report)

The following Recommendations will NOT be implemented because they are not warranted and/or are not deemed reasonable, **attached, as required** is an explanation therefore:
R2, R11

I have completed the above responses, and have attached, as required the following number of pages to this response form:

Number of Pages attached: 5

I understand that responses to Grand Jury Reports are public records. They will be posted on the Grand Jury website: www.co.mendocino.ca.us/grandjury. The clerk of the responding agency is required to maintain a copy of the response.

I understand that I must submit this signed response form and any attachments as follows:

First Step: E-mail (word documents or scanned pdf file format) to:

- The Grand Jury Foreperson at: grandjury@co.mendocino.ca.us
- The Presiding Judge: grandjury@mendocino.courts.ca.gov

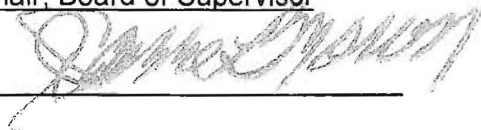
Second Step: Mail all originals to:

Mendocino County Grand Jury
P.O. Box 939
Ukiah, CA 95482

Printed Name: Carre Brown

Title: Chair, Board of Supervisor

Signed: _____



Date: _____

8/7/15

supported by evidence in the record. The performance of Mendocino County FCS is not an embarrassment to County government or the community. The performance of County FCS is higher in some areas and lower in others when compared with other counties.

F7 – A significant number of FCS professional and supervisory staff do not meet State educational standards for their positions and are considered under-qualified by State standards.

Disagree. The Board of Supervisors disagrees that a significant number of FCS staff do not meet State educational standards or that they are under-qualified. The Board of Supervisors incorporates the statement by the HHS Director that employees meet current specifications for their job classifications.

F20 – The County has been aware of its lack of compliance for years.

Disagree in part. It is true that County FCS has been unable to recruit and retain the required number of social workers with an MSW degree, but has achieved compliance by filing a waiver request as noted by the HHS Director.

F23 – Because the January 2015 plan of action does not include any requirements of action from the CEO or the Board of Supervisors, the Grand Jury finds the plan does not address the problems.

Disagree. The plan is approved by the HHS Director and the State. The State does not require that the plan be approved by the Board of Supervisors or the CEO, but has currently achieved compliance by filing a waiver request.

F28 – The problem of ‘train-and-trot’ is real. Within two years of hiring or promotion, one out of four employees has left the job. A loss of 25% of employees, after less than two years of service and training, would not be sustainable by a private agency. This is an unacceptable strain on the HHS budget.

Disagree in part. Employee retention is a real issue, but employees leave County employment for a variety of reasons, including retirement, not completing probation, health and family reasons and more.

That being said, the Board of Supervisors is doing what it can within tight budget limitations to provide incentive pay that should result in less turnover. In its recent contract negotiations with SEIU, County supervisors insisted the 2015-2017 contract allow the County to provide a supplemental retention pay for positions that are most difficult to keep staffed. Social workers are specifically referenced

in this contract provision.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

R1 – Management bring to the attention of the Board of Supervisors the ranking of the County with respect to all measures of FCS performance as compared to the rest of the State. (F2, F3, F5, F6)

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors incorporates the following response from the HHSA Director:

“This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. FCS will work with the Executive Office on the coordination of a presentation to the Board of Supervisors within six months.”

R2 – Management bring to the attention of the Board of Supervisors the consequences of late investigations. (F4)

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors incorporates the H&HSA Director’s response by reference:

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable. The Board of Supervisors is aware of the potential consequences of late investigations but in many instances the investigations are being performed in a timely manner but the data is not being entered into the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System database.

R3 – Management bring to the Board of Supervisors recommendations for correcting the problems listed in the findings. (F1, F2, F4, F6 through F17, F19, F24, F28, F32 through F34, F36 through F39)

This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future regarding valid issues that have been identified. The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors rejects this recommendation to the extent that it implies endorsement of the accusatory statements and value judgements included in several of the 25 findings listed above, 22 of which the Board of Supervisors was not asked to respond to. FCS will work with the Executive Office on the coordination of a presentation to the Board of Supervisors within six months.

R5 – Management report to the Board of Supervisors the consequences and County costs of late Court reports. (F10, F11, F12)

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors incorporates the following response by the HHS Director:

“This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future. HHS presents to the Board of Supervisors throughout the year, this information will be incorporated into a HHS presentation to the Board of Supervisors in the next six months.”

R9 – HHS report to the Board of Supervisors that the County has not been, and currently is not in compliance with the staffing requirements of SWMPP §31-070.1. (F19, F20)

Note: SWMPP 31-070.1 is actually “California Department of Social Services Policy and Procedure Manual, Section 31-070.0 ‘Staff Requirements’”.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors disagrees with the underlying findings, but always welcomes presentations from HHS and, therefore, incorporates the following response from the HHS Director’s:

“This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

HHS presents to the Board of Supervisors throughout the year; this information will be incorporated into a HHS presentation to the Board of Supervisors in the next six months.”

R10 – HHS report to the Board of Supervisors on a fixed schedule (at least twice a year) the compliance status of the County with respect to SWMPP §31-080.1 (staff education ratios.) (F19, F20)

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors incorporates the following response from the HHS Director:

“This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

HHS presents to the Board of Supervisors throughout the year; this information will be incorporated into a HHS presentation to the Board of Supervisors in the next six months.”

R11 – HHS report to the Board of Supervisors on a quarterly basis what is needed in terms of budget and staff to meet the State requirements (SWMPP §31.070.1). (F19)

This recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or reasonable.

Budget information and updates are included in the Executive Office quarterly budget updates to the Board of Supervisors.

R12 – HHS report to the Board of Supervisors the FCS standing in the State with respect to Emergency Response measures. (F2, F8)

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors incorporates the following response by the HHS Director:

“This recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future.

HHS presents to the Board of Supervisors throughout the year, this information will be incorporated into a HHS presentation to the Board of Supervisors in the next six months.”

R13 – The Board of Supervisors supply HHS with the resources necessary to provide adequate services to the children of Mendocino County. F1 through F35)

This Recommendation has been implemented to the extent feasible in light of available budgetary resources and competing funding needs. As stated in the discussion section of this response, the Board of Supervisors has designated an additional \$200,000 for this fiscal year and an equal amount for next fiscal year to assist in retaining critical staff, with the first priority being social workers.