

KERN COUNTY

AGING and ADULT SERVICES

Senior Care Services

SUMMARY:

The Kern County Department of the Aging and Adult Services (Department) administers Federal, State, and local funds to provide services to elderly and disabled adults. The Department's Mission Statement: *To provide services that protect, preserve the dignity and support the independence and safety of older adults and disabled individuals in the community.* Some of the programs and services coordinated through the Department include; In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), abuse prevention, Adult Protective Services (APS), nutrition, homemaker assistance, conservator, disease prevention and health promotion, Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP), as well as substantial information for the elderly and referral assistance to other agencies.

Members of the community calling the 2-1-1 Kern County may be referred to the Department for assistance, and/or other agencies depending on the assistance requested.

The 2022-2023 Kern County Grand Jury (Grand Jury) was not familiar with the services available through the Aging and Adult Department, 2-1-1 Kern County, and/or how to report elder abuse and getting assistance for the elderly and their families. How familiar is the community with these services? That is the question before this Grand Jury.

PURPOSE OF INQUIRY:

Because of the ever-increasing aging population of Kern County, the Grand Jury initiated an investigation into the Kern County Department of Aging and Adult Services and the services that are provided to the elderly. California Penal Code §925 authorizes the Grand Jury to conduct inquiries/investigations into the operations, accounts, and records of county departments.

METHODOLOGY:

The Grand Jury visited the Department, located at 5357 Truxtun Avenue, Bakersfield, and conducted interviews with staff. The Department's budgets, accounts, and statistics were reviewed, on-line research was conducted, and previous Grand Jury Reports served as a starting point for this investigation. The Grand Jury also visited the 2-1-1 Kern County facility, located at 300 19th Street, Bakersfield, and the Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance (GBLA), located at 615 California Avenue, Bakersfield, to determine the assistance available for the elderly and disabled adults.

DISCUSSION OF FACTS:

Who is an elder or dependent adult? An elder is defined as anyone aged 60 and over. A dependent adult is anyone aged 18 to 59 with a physical or mental disability.

The Department provides outreach, information, and education about the services available to seniors and disabled adults by operating information and assistance call centers where seniors are linked to services offered in the community. In addition, hands-on assistance is offered in the completion of applications for services, selection of health plans, and referrals are made for services such as, but not limited to, legal aid.

The Affordable Care Act and recent changes to Medicare was expected to result in a reduced number of HICAP cases from last year, but this did not occur. Demand shifted to the more immediate need for coverage, and more Medicare share-of-cost cases than normal. Outreach and community education presentations are provided throughout the County. In the FY 2020-2021 COVID-19 and limited staff resources prevented the Department from doing outreach events.

The California Department of Aging (CDA) administers programs that serve older adults, adults with disabilities, family caregivers, and residents in long term care facilities throughout the State. These programs are funded through the federal Older Americans Act, the Older Californians Act, and through the Medi-Cal program. The CDA's data as of the 2010 Census: Kern County had a 60+ population of 108,639 and a projected 2030 population to be 205,544. This will be an 89% increase in 20 years. The 85+ population was 8,587 in 2010; projected to be 19,178 in 2030, with a 123% increase. Data from the 2020 Census shows Kern County has a reported population of 909,235. In the 2010 Census, the County had a population of 839,631; this is an increase of nearly 70,000 in ten years.

The Department has posted the 2019-2020 Kern County Grand Jury Report on the lobby's bulletin board for public review. The Department has agreed to consider or has implemented all of the Grand Jury's recommendations. A newsletter was developed to be a network of consortium agencies and to distribute information about aging and adult topics to the public. The Department has sought and utilized new funding sources through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the American Rescue Plan.

Aging and Adult Services Department

The Department administers Federal, State, and local funds to provide services to the aging population. The Department's Mission Statement: *To provide services that protect, preserve the dignity and support the independence and safety of older adults and disabled individuals in the community.* (See Appendix A) (See Glossary for definitions of programs)

Services provided:

- Adult Protective Services (APS)
- In Home Supportive Services (IHSS)
- Information and assistance for the elderly and disabled citizens
 - Family caregiver support
 - Senior law
 - Public Guardian

- Aging Disability Resource Connection
- Area for Aging Adults
- Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)
- Meals for the elderly

Other Programs:

- Alzheimer’s Disease Association of Kern County (family caregiver support)
- Valley Caregivers (family caregiver support)
- 2-1-1 Kern (referrals to the Department)

Summary of Actual expenditure and revenue for the FY 2021-2022: (July 1, 2021, to June 30, 2022), the primary funding is through Federal and State, which provides revenue for senior nutrition, protective services, and supportive services (See Appendix A).

- A. Staffing in FY 2021-2022 funded 222 positions: 147 are permanent and 75 are part-time/seasonal (Extra Help).
- B. Service and supplies expenditures consist of costs for contracted services for APS, supportive services, senior nutrition programs, and California Department of Aging programs. The Department is primarily funded through Federal and State sources of \$21 million that include revenue for senior nutrition, protective services, and support services.
- C. Aging and Adult Services Programs Data:
- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Adult Protective Services cases– Investigated alleged abuses | 5,401 |
| 2. In Home Supportive Services clients | 10,380 |
| 3. Information and Assistance contacts | 18,722 |
| 4. Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program clients | 20,322 |
| ○ Estimated savings for clients: | |
| | \$1,457,704 |
| 5. Meals served | 544,747 |

Adult Protective Services:

Adult Protective Services is a **voluntary** assistance program -- if the client declines, APS will no longer proceed. APS investigates instances of neglect and abuse within State prescribed guidelines and timelines (see below). For those willing to accept services, APS will provide linkage to appropriate resources and follow up/cross-report crimes to local law enforcement.

How to report elder abuse: if there are immediate or life-threatening concerns contact **911** or speak directly to a social worker; toll free 24 hours a day 800-277-7866 or 661-868-1006; or go on-line and submit your concerns at Reporting Abuse/Kern www.kerncounty.com/government/aging-adult-services. To report incidents of elder or

dependent adult abuse that occurred in a licensed facility, contact the Long-Term Care Ombudsman 24-hour crisis line 800-231-4024 or 661-323-7884. Additionally, all long-term care facilities are required to post, in a visible location, the phone number for the local Ombudsman office and the Statewide CRISIS hot line number. The CRISIS line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to receive calls and refer complaints from residents in long-term care facilities to APS. The 2-1-1 Kern is also available to report abuse or to access health and human services concerns. Support and operators are accessible 24 hours a day/365 days per year.

Types of Abuse:

- Physical Abuse - causing pain and/or injury through physical or sexual contact
- Neglect - refusal or failure to provide adequate care, food, shelter, clothing, medicine, and/or medical aids (glasses, dentures, walkers, etc.)
- Financial - illegal or improper use of cash, credit cards, funds, or other assets
- Mental suffering - causing mental anguish through use of threats, intimidation, yelling, etc.
- Isolation/abandonment - willfully left or separated from others
- Self-Neglect - unable to meet one's personal needs for self-care

Signs of abuse are noticeable changes in physical conditions and behavioral patterns such as:

- Unexplained bruises, cuts, or burns
- Increased physical pain
- Dehydration or malnourishment
- Overly medicated without cause
- Unusual confinement
- Lack of cleanliness or grooming
- Fearful to speak in front of caregiver
- Shame, anxiety, embarrassment
- Sudden change in mental status
- Unusual or large bank withdrawals
- Unexpected closing of bank accounts
- Transfer of assets, deeds, trusts

The first contact of a reported abuse is the APS Social Worker. The Department employs 17 to 19 social workers for the entire County. Each worker will handle approximately 25 to 30 abuse cases per month. The County is broken up into districts and local areas of service. Each social worker will be assigned both a local and an outlying district.

The social worker will always make an attempt to see the person face to face to assess the care that is needed. Social workers must "Put Eyes on the Person" to provide the appropriate help. The social worker is not a long-term case management worker; they only work the case until assistance is provided by other agencies. Many resources are available to the social worker to provide food, clothing, and shelter to address immediate needs of

the client. At times the homeless and mental health clients are underserved, and many become repeat clients to APS.

Case management varies within the Department based on the program linked to the client. For example, the In-Home Supportive Services program is designed to help older adults remain safe, active, and independent in the community for as long as possible while the Information and Referral program will assist with planning for their future.

Law enforcement agencies may be called in to assist the social worker while making a home visit. In many cases, referrals of abuse will originate from law enforcement, fire departments, ambulance services, banks (financial fraud), hospitals, hospice care workers, family, and friends.

There is a social worker on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to take after-hour calls, from the emergency number 661-868-1006 or from the 2-1-1 Kern County system. Actions can be immediate if necessary. The social worker will classify cases as to the action needed: immediate, within 24 to 72 hours, or up to 10 days.

State guidelines mandate that referrals to APS must be resolved within ten days of receipt and they must be able to respond to urgent referrals. APS has been able to meet both requirements, even with increasingly complex cases, particularly dealing with financial abuse. The number of APS referrals for FY 2020-2021 was 5,159. APS investigated 4,939 cases.

2-1-1 Kern County

The 2-1-1 Kern County was launched in 2013 and is a program under the control of, and funded through, the Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK), a non-profit organization, provides comprehensive information and referral service that link Kern County residents to community health and services, and support.

Dialing 2-1-1 works a bit like 911. The 2-1-1 call system is a nationwide and Canadian on-line database call center that will refer the caller to other agencies for help. Calls to 2-1-1 are routed to a local calling center that helps match and direct callers to services available within the County.

This is a free, accessible, 3-digit telephone number that links County residents to health and human services and support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Approximately 99% of services offered are free or on a sliding scale based on income. Some of the Kern County services for seniors and dependent adults include links to food, utility assistances, health insurance, clothing, and homeless assistance.

The 2-1-1 Kern County uses approximately 17 operators; the caller is directed to an appropriate person for assistance. The 2-1-1 Kern County utilizes the ability to have operators work from home with proper training, a laptop, and internet service. Operators must have at least a high school diploma and some customer service experience with the ability to talk on the phone, listen, and type at the same time. At peak times it not unusual

to have 100 waiting calls per hour. At the busiest times, an average of over 1,000 calls per day will be handled. The off-peak season and holidays have as few as ten calls per day. The data base system allows all calls (including hang-ups) to be tracked and the capability to have a recorded playback. The Grand Jury's calls to 2-1-1 Kern County on August 9, 10, and 11, 2022, between 9 am and 2 pm had experienced an exceptionally long wait times to speak to an operator. One such call had a 60-minute wait (See Appendix B).

Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, Inc.

The GBLA was established in 1968 as a non-profit organization to provide legal services to the under privileged and low-income members of the community. GBLA's mission is to promote social change and justice by providing high quality legal services to the low-income community.

The Seniors Law Center is an important part of the GBLA and strives to protect the health, independence, and well-being of socially challenged and/or economically disadvantaged seniors. Their staff is approximately 50 employees; 10 licensed attorneys, 5 law school graduates and the rest are paralegal and support staff. Funding for GBLA is through various grants (Federal and State) and other sources along with private donations with a total budget of approximately \$7 million.

To be eligible for services, you must reside in Kern County and be 60 years of age or older. Although the Center does not have income restrictions, priority is given to low-income seniors. The Seniors Law Center is required to establish substantive priorities that ensure preference is given to those seniors in the greatest economic and social need. Priority service areas include consumer law matters, elder abuse and neglect, public benefits, and landlord-tenant issues. Referrals to GBLA comes from many agencies; 2-1-1 Kern County, Aging and Adult Services Department, family caregivers, financial institutions, etc. GBLA may also refer clients back to the original agencies for additional services (See Appendix C).

Kern County Elder News

DEAR Newsletter, (Dependent/Elder Abuse Review), is a monthly newsletter providing information related to the seniors in Kern County. Articles are designed to assist the aging population, programs available, fraud prevention, romance scams, and agencies to contact.

Agency Partners include: Bakersfield Police Department, California Department of Insurance, CSU-Bakersfield, Department of Social Service Licensing, Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance, Independent Living Center of Kern County, Kaiser Permanente, Kern County Behavior Health and Recovery Services, Kern County Coroner's Office, Kern County District Attorney's Office, Kern County District Attorney Victim Services, Kern County Family Law Facilitator, Kern County Public Health, Kern Regional Center, Kern County Sheriff Office, Kern County Veterans Services Department, Social Security Administration, Strata Credit Union, and the California Department of Aging.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The Aging and Adult Services office and facility were clean, well maintained, and the staff was friendly and helpful. This makes for a helping and welcoming environment for clients needing assistance.
- F2. The last Kern County Grand Jury Report (2019-2020) was posted and visible to the public on the Department's lobby bulletin board, projecting an appearance of openness to the Grand Jury recommendations.
- F3. It is a concern that many homeless and mental health cases are repeat clients, thus requiring a need for case management work on an ongoing basis.
- F4. Wait times on the 2-1-1 Kern County call centers may be 30 minutes to an hour, during which clients may get discouraged and hang up.
- F5. With the increase of the aging population in the County, additional funding and staff will be needed to assist the elderly within the next decade.

COMMENTS:

The Grand Jury would like to thank the individuals who provided information for this report. All the staff at the Aging and Adult Services Department, 2-1-1 Kern County, Adult Protection Services, and Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance were very helpful and welcomed the Grand Jury. The Department's offices were clean and very pleasant, with a large variety of informational brochures available to the walk-in clients.

The reporting of elder abuse and elder concerns is a top priority, and it is very important to make sure that all elder adults get the proper assistance. Concerns regarding the aging population are taken very seriously at all levels of government. National, State, local websites and 1-800 hotlines are available for information and assistance, 24/7.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. The Kern County Board of Supervisors (BOS) should work with the Department of Aging and Adult Services to develop strategies to find additional ways to promote the services available through the Department, i.e., local television, newspaper articles, billboards, and buses. This should be completed by July 1, 2023. (Findings 1, 2, 3, and 5)
- R2. The BOS should work with CAPK and GBLA to develop a plan for promoting all the services available to the aging adults including 2-1-1 Kern County throughout

the community. This should be completed by July 1, 2023. (Findings 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

- R3. The BOS should work with the Department and the 2-1-1 Kern County to develop strategic procedures to reduce the call wait-time for those needing assistance. This should be completed by July 1, 2023. (Finding 4)
- R4. The BOS should work with the Department's Director to determine its needs for the next decade, due to the increase of the elderly population projections. This should be completed annually before July 1 of each year. (Finding 5)

NOTES:

- The Kern County Aging and Adult Services Department and the Kern County Board of Supervisors should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.
- The 2-1-1-Kern County and Community Action Partnership of Kern should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.
- The Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance should post a copy of this report where it will be available for public review.
- Persons wishing to receive an email notification of newly released reports may sign up at: www.kerncounty.com/grandjury
- Present and past Kern County Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed on the Kern County Grand Jury website: www.kerncounty.com/grandjury

RESPONSE DEADLINES:

- **REQUIRED WITHIN 90 DAYS:** Kern County Board of Supervisors
- **REQUESTED 90 DAYS:** Kern County Aging and Adult Services Department is invited to respond to this report.
- **REQUESTED 90 DAYS:** 2-1-1 Kern County and GBLA are invited to respond to this report.

RESPONSES ARE REQUIRED PURSUANT TO PENAL CODE §§933(c) AND 933.05 TO:

- **PRESIDING JUDGE
KERN COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 212
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301**

- **FOREPERSON**
KERN COUNTY GRAND JURY
1415 TRUXTUN AVENUE, SUITE 600
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93301

Reports issued by the Grand Jury do not identify individuals interviewed. Penal Code §929 requires that reports of the Grand Jury not contain the name of any person or facts leading to the identity of any person who provides information to the Grand Jury.

GLOSSARY

1. The 2-1-1 System is a special abbreviated telephone number reserved in the North American Numbering Plan (NANP) as an easy-to-remember three-digit code to reach information and referral services to health, human, and social service organizations.
2. Assisted Living Facility (ALF) is a type of long-term care facility that provides housing, meals, and personal care support to a group of full-time residents. Residents at assisted living facilities are distinguished from those at other long-term care facility types—like skilled nursing facilities—in that they **don’t require round-the-clock supervision** by nurses or other medically trained personnel.
3. Adult Protective Services (APS) is to help elder adults (60 years and older) and dependent adults (18-59 who are disabled), when these adults are unable to meet their own needs, or are victims of abuse, neglect or exploitation. County APS agencies investigate reports of abuse of elders and dependent adults who live in private homes, apartments, hotels or hospitals.
4. Area for Aging Adults (AAA) is a public or private non-profit agency, designated by the State to address the needs and concerns of all older persons at the regional and local levels. AAA coordinates and offers services that help older adults remain in their home – if that is their preference – aided by services such as Meals-on-Wheels, homemaker assistance, and whatever else it may take to make independent living a viable option.
5. Community Action Partnership of Kern is a nonprofit foundation that will address underlying causes of poverty, alleviate the affects, and promote self-sufficiency in the community. Funding programs comes from Federal grants, State grants, County funds and other community donations and grants.
6. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act signed into law March 27, 2020, provides over \$2 trillion of economic relief to workers, families, small

businesses, industry sectors, and other levels of government that have been hit hard by the public health crisis created by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19).

7. Digital Divide refers to the gap between demographics and regions that have access to modern information and communications technology and those that don't. Though the term now encompasses the technical and financial ability to utilize available technology—along with access (or a lack of access) to the internet—the gap it refers to is constantly shifting with the development of technology.
8. Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program is a volunteer-supported program that helps Medicare beneficiaries of any age make informed choices and provides advocacy when their health care benefits and rights are threatened or denied.
9. Hospice Care is a special kind of care that focuses on the quality of life for people who are experiencing an advanced, life-limiting illness and their caregivers. Hospice care provides compassionate care for people in the last phases of incurable disease so that they may live as fully and comfortably as possible.
10. In Home Supportive Services will help pay for services provided to the elderly so that they can remain safely in their own home. To be eligible, you must be 65 years of age and over, or disabled, or blind. Disabled children are also potentially eligible for service. IHSS is considered an alternative to out-of-home care, such as nursing homes or board and care facilities. The types of services which can be authorized are housecleaning, meal preparation, laundry, grocery shopping, personal care services (such as bowel and bladder care, bathing, grooming and paramedical services), accompaniment to medical appointments, and protective supervision for the mentally impaired.
11. Long-Term Care Ombudsman is an effective advocate and resource for older adults and people with disabilities who live in nursing homes, assisted living, and other licensed adult care homes. Ombudsmen help residents understand and exercise their rights to good care in an environment that promotes and protects their dignity and quality of life.
12. Medi-Cal is California's Medicaid program. This is a public health insurance program which provides needed health care services for low-income individuals including families with children, seniors, persons with disabilities, foster care, pregnant women, and low-income people with specific diseases such as tuberculosis, breast cancer, or HIV/AIDS. Medi-Cal is financed equally by the state and federal government.
13. Medicare is a U.S. Government program of hospitalization insurance and voluntary medical insurance for persons aged 65 and over and for certain disabled persons under 65 years of age.
14. Public Guardian provides a vital service to persons unable to properly care for themselves or who are unable to manage their finances. The service is provided through a legal process known as conservatorship.

15. Senior Law protects and serves the health, independence, and well-being of the socially and economically needy residents 60 years of age and older by providing free civil legal services.
16. Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) refers to a few different terms, including "convalescent hospitals," "nursing homes," "rehabilitation centers," or "skilled nursing facilities" are used to describe facilities that are formally referred to in California as skilled nursing facilities. A SNF is required to provide 24-hour skilled nursing care, as well as related or rehabilitative services. The typical resident is a person who is chronically ill or recuperating from an illness or surgery and needs regular nursing care and other health related services. Residents in SNFs are under the care of their personal physician or the facilities' medical director. Each resident must have an individual plan of care developed by the physician, resident (or his/her representative) and facility staff. These facilities provide a protective environment with medical and social services for individuals whose care needs cannot be met at home or in a residential care setting.
17. The American Rescue Plan is designed to change the course of the pandemic and deliver immediate and direct relief to families and workers impacted by the COVID-19 crisis through no fault of their own.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Websites visited:

Kern211@capk.org

Kerncounty.com/government/aging-adult-services/health-insurance-counseling

Kerncounty.com/government

https://www.kernsheriff.org/Public_Administrator

<https://www.capk.org/211kern/https://www.kerncounty.com/government/aging-adult-services/services/information-and-referral>

<https://www.icarol.info/ResourceView2.aspx?org=2285andagencynum=5643882https://www.kerncounty.com/government/aging-adult-services>

<https://www.kerncounty.com/government/county-administrative-office/cao/budget-and-finance/county-budget>

<https://www.kerncounty.com/government/board-of-supervisors/boards-commissions-and-committees>

https://aging.ca.gov/Providers_and_Partners/Area_Agencies_on_Aging/

https://aging.ca.gov/Data_and_Reports/

<https://www.gbla.org/>

[CAPK Food Bank](#)

<https://fdocuments.net/document/community-action-partnership-of-kern-board-of-2020-2-7-state-your-name-before.html?page=1>

<https://www.gbla.org/services>

https://aging.ca.gov/About_us

<https://home.treasury.gov/news/featured-stories/fact-sheet-the-american-rescue-plan-will-deliver-immediate-economic-relief-to-families>

<https://eldercare.acl.gov/>

APPENDIX A: Excerpt from County of Kern 2022-2023 Recommended Budget:

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Aging and Adult Services

Aging and Adult Services

Department Head: Jeremy Oliver, Interim

Fund: Aging and Adult Services

Budget Unit: 5610

Function: Public Assistance

Activity: Other Assistance

Description of Major Services

The Department of Aging and Adult Services administers federal, State, and local funds to provide services to elderly and disabled adults. Programs and services coordinated by the department include the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, abuse prevention, nutrition, homemaker, conservator, disease prevention and health promotion, insurance counseling, as well as substantial information and referral assistance.

Public Assistance

Summary of Expenditures and Revenue						
	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22		FY 2022-23		
	Actual	Adopted Budget	Actual	Department Requested	Preliminary Recommended	Recommended
APPROPRIATIONS:						
Salaries and Benefits	\$13,759,154	\$16,332,284	\$15,955,091	\$19,095,413	\$19,095,413	\$19,095,413
Services and Supplies	5,186,147	4,686,469	5,597,712	6,691,516	6,732,778	6,732,778
Other Charges	1,234,426	1,400,969	1,534,650	1,928,935	1,928,935	1,928,935
Capital Assets	131,532	117,552	194,764	0	0	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$20,311,259	\$22,537,274	\$23,282,217	\$27,715,864	\$27,757,126	\$27,757,126
REVENUE:						
Use of Money/Property	\$67,481	\$78,454	(\$3,834)	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000
Intergovernmental	13,953,443	14,475,802	18,542,589	21,031,387	21,031,387	21,031,387
Charges for Services	2,386,214	2,440,172	2,434,702	2,754,102	2,754,102	2,754,102
Miscellaneous	168,323	243,576	319,289	286,501	286,501	413,140
Other Financing Sources:						
General Fund Contribution	660,652	626,898	626,898	753,537	626,898	626,898
Social Services Realignment	789,538	820,896	820,896	820,896	862,158	862,158
2011 Realignment	1,538,513	1,809,780	1,809,780	1,999,441	1,999,441	1,999,441
CARES Act	311,618	0	0	0	0	0
American Rescue Plan Act	0	0	561,933	0	0	0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$19,875,782	\$20,495,578	\$25,112,253	\$27,715,864	\$27,630,487	\$27,757,126
NET FUND COST	\$435,477	\$2,041,696	(\$1,830,036)	\$0	\$126,639	\$0

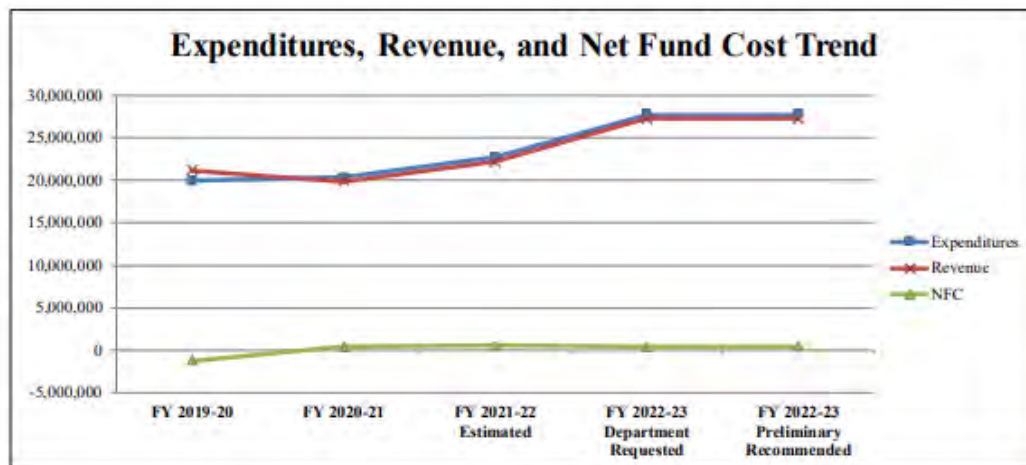
Major Expenditures and Revenue in FY 2022-23 Recommended Budget

Staffing costs of \$19 million fund 237 budgeted positions, of which 201 are permanent positions and 36 are extra-help/temporary positions. Services and Supplies expenditures of approximately \$6.7 million consist of costs for contracted services for adult protective services, supportive services, senior nutrition programs, and California Department of Aging programs. The department is primarily funded through federal and State sources of \$21 million that include revenue for senior nutrition, protective services, and supportive services. Additionally, the department receives approximately \$1.9 million in 2011 Realignment revenue, \$862,158 in 1991 Social Services Realignment, and \$626,898 in General Fund contribution. The department received \$561,933 from American Rescue Plan Act funding in FY 2021-22 for essential employee premium pay, but those funds are no longer available for FY 2022-23.

Budget Changes and Operational Impacts

The recommended budget includes an increase of approximately \$3.1 million in Salaries and Benefits, attributed to the planned filling of current vacancies and the addition of new positions, which are funded with State and federal program revenue. Costs related to Services and Supplies are budgeted to increase by approximately \$1.1 million due to increased funding for Adult Protective Services, as well as cost increases for the Senior Nutrition Program. The IHSS Administration allocation is budgeted to increase by \$205,000; however, the level of administrative funding is still insufficient to fully operate the IHSS program.

The fund balance at June 30, 2022 is \$3.9 million, which will be placed in general designation to mitigate future downturns in revenue and help minimize service level impacts.



Public Assistance

Staffing Changes and Operational Impacts

The recommended budget includes the addition of one (1) Accountant I/II/III position, two (2) Social Services Worker I/II/III positions, one (1) Fiscal Support Specialist positions, one (1) Office Services Coordinator position, and one (1) Office Services Technician position as well as deleting two (2) Fiscal Support Technician positions and one (1) Senior Office Services Specialist position for a net cost of \$369,000. All positions are funded with State and federal program revenue.

The department will hold the following positions vacant and unfunded: one (1) Administrative Coordinator position, two (2) Office Services Technician positions, one (1) Senior Cook position, two (2) Senior Nutrition Site Coordinator positions, and two (2) Food Service Worker positions.

APPENDIX B: Services provided by 2-1-1 Kern County

2-1-1 Kern County provides assistance:

- Housing:
 - Extreme Heat-Cooling Programs
 - Older Adult/Disability Related Supportive Housing and Home Rental Listings
 - Hospice Facilities
 - Senior Housing Information and Referral
 - Home Nursing
 - Centers for Independent Living
 - Skilled Nursing Facilities
 - Supported Living Services for Adults with Disabilities
 - Adult Residential Home Care
 - Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program - LIHEAP
- Advocacy:
 - Senior Corps Volunteer Programs
 - Independent Living Skills Instructions
 - Adult Protective Services
 - Older Americans Act Administration Agencies
- Food Needs:
 - Congregate Meals/Nutrition Sites
 - Senior Centers
- Health Care:
 - Case/Care Management Referrals
 - In-Home Respite Care
 - Home Health Aide Services
 - Geriatric Medicine
 - Medicare
 - Hearing Aid Referrals
 - Hospice Care Referrals
- All resources in the 2-1-1 Kern County database provides services
 - At No Cost
 - At Low Cost
 - On a Sliding Fee Scale
 - Accepts Insurance such as Medi-Cal or Medicare

APPENDIX C: Services provided by GBLA

Areas of Practice:

- Children and Families
 - Guardianship Caregiver Project
 - Domestic Violence Reduction Project
 - Education Law Project
- Civil Rights
 - Advancing Health and Racial Equity Through Legal Strategies Project
 - Fair Housing Law Project
- Health and Public Benefits
 - Kern Health Consumer Center
 - Public Benefits
- Housing and Homelessness
 - Community Homeless Court
 - Equal Access Fund Homelessness Prevention Project
 - Housing and Disability Advocacy Program
 - Mobile Home Advocacy Project
 - Shriver Kern Housing Pilot Project
- Older Adults
 - Grandparent Guardianship Project
 - Kern County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program
 - Seniors Law Center
- Other Services
 - Access to Justice – Rural Project
 - Consumer Law Project
- Volunteer Attorney Program
- Community Homeless Court is a special misdemeanor and traffic court session, held at a local shelter or other community site that removes legal barriers to obtaining and maintaining housing and employment for persons experiencing homelessness.
- In cooperation with the Kern County Bar Association, the Volunteer Attorney Program utilizes volunteer attorneys to promote the delivery of pro bono services to low-income clients. This increases access to the judicial system for the low-income community. This promotes the concept that pro bono service is vital to the professional responsibility of each private attorney, and to the reputation of the profession. Sixteen attorneys are currently available to work alongside or on cases for the GBLA.

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CLERK OF BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
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January 24, 2023

The Honorable J. Eric Bradshaw, Presiding Judge
Kern County Superior Court
1415 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA 93301

Dear Judge Bradshaw:

Transmitted herewith is the Board of Supervisors' response to the 2022-2023 Grand Jury's Final Report titled Kern County Aging and Adult Services-Senior Care Services.

The Board of Supervisors appreciates the Grand Jury's review and input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jeff Flores", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeff Flores, Chair
Kern County Board of Supervisors

JF/EN/COMPL_GJ Aging and Adult A

Attachment

cc: Grand Jury

Kern County Board of Supervisors
Response to Grand Jury Final Report
Kern County Aging and Adult Services-Senior Care Services

Response to Findings F1-F5:

Kern County agrees with the Grand Jury's findings.

Response to Recommendation:

R1: The Kern County Board of Supervisors (BOS) should work with the Department of Aging and Adult Services to develop strategies to find additional ways to promote the services available through the Department, i.e., local television, newspaper articles, billboards, and buses. This should be completed by July 1, 2023.

This recommendation will be implemented. The Board of Supervisors supports the Aging & Adult Services Department's efforts to promote its services throughout the County in all media formats. The department has previously used various funding sources to promote specific programs, such as billboards and bus banners for the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) around the time of Medicare Open enrollment. The County has also highlighted programs through its Countywide Communications Officer and through Board of Supervisors' proclamations, promoting Older Americans Month and Elder Abuse Awareness Month. However, the County will continue to develop new strategies and identify additional avenues to best promote the services provided by the Aging & Adult Services Department.

R2: The BOS should work with CAPK and GBLA to develop a plan for promoting all the services available to the aging and adults including 2-1-1 Kern County throughout the community. This should be completed by July 1, 2023.

This recommendation will be implemented. The Aging & Adult Services department already meets regularly with GBLA, as they are a contracted provider of services through Older Americans Act funding. These meetings include distribution of information that impact services to mutual clients. Although Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK) and Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance (GBLA) are independent of the County and not within the purview of the Board of Supervisors, County staff will reach out to both partner agencies to discuss strategies for promoting services before July 1, 2023. While both agencies actively promote their services independently, the County will continue to develop new strategies and identify additional avenues to best promote the services provided by the Aging & Adult Services Department.

R3: The BOS should work with the Department and the 2-1-1 Kern County to develop strategic procedures to reduce the call wait-time for those needing assistance. This should be completed by July 1, 2023.

This recommendation has been implemented. Although Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK) is the operator of the 2-1-1 system in Kern County and is independent of the County and not within the purview of the Board of Supervisors, representatives from the Aging & Adult Services Department and the County Administrative Office have been in contact with CAPK since receiving the Grand Jury's report. CAPK has acknowledged issues with call center staffing that led to instances of extended wait times. CAPK has already implemented some changes to staff scheduling to better cover peak call times, was actively working to hire additional staff, and will review call center staff job descriptions and compensation to address staffing issues moving forward. CAPK has also agreed to meet with representatives of the County

on a quarterly basis to monitor the 2-1-1 program and explore other potential synergies in providing and promoting services for the senior population.

R4: The BOS should work with the Department's Director to determine its needs for the next decade, due to the increase of the elderly population projections. This should be completed annually before July 1 of each year.

This recommendation has been implemented through the Aging & Adult Services Department's ongoing Area Agency on Aging Area Planning. The plan is submitted in accordance with California Department of Aging (CDA) guidelines and subject to approval by CDA after Board of Supervisors and Commission on Aging review and approval. The most recent plan, which is for a four-year period and updated annually, acknowledges the expected increase in Kern County's elderly population, specifically noting that the number of individuals age 60 and over is expected to increase by 52% between 2020 and 2040. As significant funding for the Aging & Adult Services Department is from State and federal sources, the ability to pre-plan is limited but is addressed annually, with the increasing senior population in mind. The County will continue to work to provide needed services to area seniors, regardless of changing population, for the next decade and beyond.