

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

April 14, 2015

Consolidating the Compton Regional Offices of the Department of Children and Family Services

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) operates regional offices throughout Los Angeles County (County) to accommodate the needs of communities, families and the children they serve. Currently, the Compton DCFS regional offices are located in two different cities and almost eleven miles apart, which inhibit best practice processes and impedes upon the delivery of high quality services. One location known as Compton East is located in the City of Compton at 921 E. Compton Boulevard. The second office, known as Compton West, is located in the City of Hawthorne on 11539 Hawthorne Boulevard.

The Compton East office has been tasked with investigating all emergency response referrals, which include the intake of calls to assess the level of endangerment, abuse and neglect involving children. The Compton East office has a staff of 179 and has an operating cost of \$549,267 annually. The Compton West office is tasked with back end operations, focusing on children who have been detained due to

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allegations of maltreatment, which results in having a case opened and a DCFS worker assigned. The Compton West office currently holds 177 staff and has an operating cost of \$515,676 annually. It has become apparent that the split between these two locations has resulted in bifurcated services causing a great inconvenience to social workers and to the clients they serve. For example, DCFS staff members from the Compton West office (located in Hawthorne) only have clients that reside in Compton and the surrounding communities (i.e. Watts, Paramount, Lynwood and South Los Angeles). Clients and social workers often have to drive outside their service areas to receive resources and support services, such as retrieving bus passes/tokens, submitting fingerprints through Live Scan screenings, attending Child and Family Team meetings, receiving child care assistance, following up on family preservation referrals, etc.

Additionally, the Compton East and West offices are currently being supported by management and supervisors that are responsible for oversight at both locations. This organizational structure creates inconsistencies for issue resolution or updates, leading to strain in effectively tracking concerns. Efficiency is also lost through the inability to readily access important information that exists within a singular office. Managers have little to no knowledge of quality control levels at remote locations, which can breed stress between management and staff, as well as negatively affecting the clients they serve.

Addressing organizational inefficiencies to enhance systemic quality controls should be paramount. The Countywide Strategic Plan Goal of Operational

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Effectiveness/Fiscal Sustainability (Goal 1) directs that the County maximize the effectiveness of processes, structure, operations and strong fiscal management to support timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public services; the Goal of Community Support and Responsiveness (Goal 2) directs that the County enrich lives of Los Angeles County residents by providing enhanced services, and effectively planning and responding to economic, social, and environmental challenges; and the Goal of Integrated Services Delivery (Goal 3) directs that the County maximizes opportunities to measurably improve client and community outcomes and leverage resources through the continuous integration of health, community and public safety services.

Management and service delivery under one roof has the potential for efficient and innovative systemic impact. The elimination of driving between two offices would maximize staff response time to efficiently provide support and ensure convenience for clients. This would also allow for maximum productivity, improved communication, team building, and quality and coordinated child welfare services and provisions.

The County has tremendous leverage in real estate negotiations pertaining to the acquisition and/or lease of buildings for County use. Previous efforts to identify property, whether for sale or lease, in order to consolidate both Compton West and East offices have yielded less than favorable results.

**I THEREFORE, MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

Instruct the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to report back in writing in 30 days on the following:

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1. Provide the Board of Supervisors with a report outlining the net County cost of operating both the DCFS Compton West and East offices.
2. Prepare a feasibility study to determine the benefits and drawbacks of centralizing business support functions for Compton East and West offices, which would include co-located, multi-service resources and the fiscal requirements necessary to lease and/or build-to-suit County-owned space to accommodate for staffing and client supports.
3. Identify and submit office location alternatives, including benefits and drawbacks determining whether the preferred service delivery area of the City of Compton offers maximum opportunities to measurably improve client and community outcomes and leverage resources through the continuous integration of health, community and public safety services.

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