

January 26, 2022

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 22-07**

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide guidance on the disbursement and spending parameters of the \$8,687,314 California Adult Protective Services (APS) has received from the federal Administration for Community Living as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Grants to Enhance Adult Protective Services. The funds are designed to enhance and improve Adult Protective Services by supplementing existing APS programs as well as continuing the efforts bolstered by the earlier grant designed to address COVID-19 demands.



KIM JOHNSON  
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**  
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GAVIN NEWSOM  
GOVERNOR

January 26, 2022

ALL COUNTY LETTER NO. 22-07

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS  
ALL COUNTY ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICE MANAGERS

SUBJECT: **GUIDANCE REGARDING THE DISBURSEMENT OF AMERICAN  
RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021: GRANTS TO ENHANCE ADULT  
PROTECTIVE SERVICES FUNDS TO COUNTY ADULT  
PROTECTIVE SERVICES AGENCIES**

REFERENCE: [Federal Register 2021-11343](#)

The purpose of this All County Letter (ACL) is to provide guidance on the disbursement and spending parameters of the funding opportunity provided by the Administration for Community Living, in accordance with Section 2042(b) of Subtitle B of Title XX of the Social Security Act, otherwise known as the Elder Justice Act, as authorized and funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021. California's Adult Protective Services (APS) program has received \$8,687,314 from the federal administration. Funds will be allocated to counties in a forthcoming County Fiscal Letter (CFL) based on reports received and open cases.

### **Background**

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021: Grants to Enhance Adult Protective Services was established under authority of the Elder Justice Act Section 2042(b) of Title XX of the Social Security Act. In accordance with these statutes, the purpose of this appropriation is to enhance, improve, and expand protective services provided by APS in the investigation and remediation of instances of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The total amount of federal funds available is \$86,060,000, with California's share, based on senior population, being \$8,687,314. The determined spending breakdown is as follows:

- \$4,004,110 will be distributed directly to county APS programs. County allocations will be included in a forthcoming CFL and based on reports received and open cases.

- \$339,547 will be used to provide APS staff in all 58 counties with scholarships to attend the 2021 National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA) conference.
- \$300,000 will be used for the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) to hire a consultant to develop and monitor a three to five-year operational plan for improving and enhancing California's APS system. This operational plan is required by the federal Administration for Community Living and must be submitted within six months of the award date. CDSS will engage county APS and other stakeholders in development of this plan.
- \$4,023,657 will be awarded to the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) to continue and expand the regional two-year pilot stipend and training program for Master of Social Work (MSW) students committed to working within APS programs. The additional funding will expand the program statewide to provide stipends to as many as 254 MSW candidates over the 2022-23 and 2023-24 academic years in exchange for their commitment to work in county-operated APS programs in California following graduation.
- \$20,000 will be used for CDSS to enter into a contract with NAPSA to participate in a national public awareness campaign with state customization. Combining resources with other states, a pair of public service announcements will be produced, as will brochures, a community engagement plan, and other resources designed to increase the public's awareness and understanding of APS' role in the community.

The particulars of the application process were outlined in Federal Register 2021-11343, referenced above. The CDSS has submitted to the federal Administration for Community Living: (1) the required Letter of Assurance, which promises that California will adhere to the restrictions and parameters guiding the receipt and use of the funds, and (2) an initial spending plan that outlines the categories in which California counties will be asked to utilize the grant money.

### **County Appropriation Spending Parameters**

Counties may use these funds to continue activities funded through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021, as directed in [ACL 21-43](#) and [ACL 21-84](#). However, this round of funding may be used for any allowable APS activities, not just those performed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The federal administration also encourages the development and expansion of elder justice networks, improved cooperation and partnerships with tribal adult protective services, improving reporting and intake processes, continued remote work development and technology acquisition, acquiring personal protection equipment, funding for extended case management, and staff hiring.

The allocation may be used to serve any APS client who meets eligibility requirements. This funding must supplement and not supplant existing funding for APS provided by states and local units of government. Funds are available for use between August 1, 2021 and September 30, 2023.

The CDSS will be required to submit semi-annual federal financial reports and annual program reports related to the activities performed. The CDSS will periodically reach out to counties to collect data and other information about how the funds are being spent in order to meet the federal reporting requirements.

### **Spending Categories**

Each county will receive a calculated amount based on their percentage of the state's APS caseload. While maximum flexibility is afforded the counties in determining how they will spend the funds, counties are advised to exercise judgement consistent with the Elder Justice Act Section 2042(b); Section 9301 of the ARPA of 2021; and guidance provided by the federal Administration for Community Living. Examples of how to spend the allocation noted in the Federal Register Notice include:

- Establishing or enhancing the availability for elder shelters and other emergency, short-term housing and accompanying “wrap-around” services;
- Establishing, expanding, or enhancing state-wide and local-level elder justice networks;
- Working with tribal APS efforts;
- Improving or enhancing existing APS processes;
- Improving and supporting remote work;
- Improving data collection and reporting at the case worker, local, and state levels in a manner that is consistent with the National Adult Maltreatment Reporting System;
- Establishing new, or improving existing processes for responding to alleged scams and frauds;
- Community outreach;
- Providing goods and services to APS clients;
- Acquiring personal protection equipment and supplies;
- Paying for extended hours/over-time for staff, hiring temporary staff, and associated personnel costs;
- Training;

- Assisting APS clients secure the least restrictive option for emergency or alternative housing, and with obtaining, providing, or coordinating with care transitions as appropriate.

### **Technology Purchases**

If counties choose to use all or part of their funding allocation to purchase computer hardware, software, or other technology for staff or clients, the following procedures must be followed. The State maintains a zero-dollar threshold for requiring prior written approval for all Electronic Data Processing (EDP) expenditures. To comply with state and federal regulations in the [CDSS Manual of Policies and Procedures Division 28](#), the [Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) Part 95](#), and [2 CFR 200.1](#), CDSS has an already-established process for state review and approval of county EDP expenditures through the submission of Advance Planning Documents (APDs). Pursuant to [ACIN No. I-68-07](#), all EDP expenditures, regardless of cost, require an APD. To determine if a purchase meets the definition of EDP, please refer to the definitions provided in the [Is An APD Necessary Checklist](#). All APD resource documents developed to assist counties in preparing APDs are available on the [Office of Systems Integration's](#) (OSI) website. For an EDP expenditure that will solely benefit APS, the county should complete a Statewide Automated Welfare Systems (SAWS)/Generic APD.

For purchases over \$5,000, counties must complete additional documentation in order to receive federal spending approval. The OSI will provide counties with the required forms once the APD is received.

Counties should identify “APS ARPA” as the benefiting program on all APD documents submitted to OSI for EDP expenditures related to this funding opportunity.

Counties should submit all SAWS/Generic APD documents to OSI at [project.approvals@osi.ca.gov](mailto:project.approvals@osi.ca.gov) for approval before making any EDP expenditures, with a copy to Sudakshina Biswas at [Sudakshina.Biswas@osi.ca.gov](mailto:Sudakshina.Biswas@osi.ca.gov). The OSI staff and APS program staff will work closely with the federal Administration for Community Living to review and approve APDs containing per unit costs of \$5,000 and above. Under these guidelines, EDP expenditures should not be made until the county has received approval from OSI. Counties should anticipate this process taking approximately 30 days unless revisions or additional information are required. Once approval is received, your county may then follow its own procurement policies for the purchases.

### **Spending Plans**

While maximum flexibility has been afforded the counties in determining how they will spend the funds, counties are encouraged to provide CDSS an overview of how they

intend to use the allocation. The spending plans do not need to include the amount committed to the various areas outlined in this ACL, only descriptions of how the funds are being used to bolster APS service areas. Spending plans should be submitted via email to [aps@dss.ca.gov](mailto:aps@dss.ca.gov).

If you have questions regarding this ACL, or the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, please contact CDSS APS at [aps@dss.ca.gov](mailto:aps@dss.ca.gov) or 916-651-5111.

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By:***

LEORA FILOSENA  
Acting Deputy Director  
Adult Programs Division