State Budget Priorities 2025

Alameda County
Social Services Agency

In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 State Budget, Governor Newsom maintains the state commitment to providing services to low- and moderate-income Californians, despite a (FY) 2023-24 revenue shortfall of $37.9 billion. Some budget adjustments include reducing investments temporarily in CalWORKs Expanded Subsidized Employment, CalWORKs Home Visiting, and CalWORKs Mental Health. Budget constraints in the (FY) 2025-26 State Budget are again expected to limit opportunities in seeking new funding and expose gaps in addressing the needs of our most vulnerable community members.

County Sponsored Legislative Proposals

- **Enhancing Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) Letter Requirements:** Alameda County Social Services Agency (ACSSA) is sponsoring legislation that would require employers to provide information on available dislocated worker assistance to employees affected by a mass layoff event under the WARN Act.

Alameda County SSA recommends the following priorities for sustained support:

- **Enhance Support for Public Assistance Benefits:**
    - **Medi-Cal and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)**: The 2024-25 state budget maintains the commitment to expand full-scope Medi-Cal to all individuals, regardless of immigration status. Adequate funding must be provided to ensure that all dependent adults - including those who are newly eligible - have IHSS support. ACSSA urges that the IHSS county administration budget methodology be reassessed to accurately reflect staffing costs and the numbers of persons served.
    - **CalWORKs – Provide Holistic Supports to Families:** ACSSA supports efforts to improve family outcomes through supportive, person-centered, and accountable programming under the newly approved Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) of 2023 pilot.
    - **Food for All:** The expansion of the California Food Assistance Program (CFAP) to undocumented Californians who are not eligible for federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regardless of immigration status limits the expansion to individuals aged 55 or older. More than half of children in undocumented families live in poverty. Support expanding CFAP to include all Californians regardless of immigration status.
- **Child Care Slot Expansion—**Alameda County applauds the continued commitment to create over 200,000 new subsidized child care slots in California by 2028 and supports child care providers in capacity building.
- **Emergency Services and Disaster Response**
  During emergencies, local county governments assist all residents and prioritize the needs of those who do not have the means of assisting themselves, particularly vulnerable older adults, children, and the unhoused. Disaster-related funding relies on existing county department budgets, with delayed or uncertain reimbursement, challenging the capacity of counties to respond to increasingly frequent and severe emergencies. Support dedicated and sustained statewide funding to ensure optimal disaster response.
- **Provide Ongoing Supports for Unhoused Individuals and Families**
  While investments in programs for unhoused people have been considerable, many of the services are funded on a limited basis. Ensure ongoing program funding for individuals, families, youth, and older adults.
- **Invest in Tangible Supports to Strengthen Families and Reduce Child Welfare Involvement**
  Providing families with concrete economic and material supports that help them meet their basic needs has demonstrated effectiveness with reducing risk for child maltreatment and child welfare involvement. Alameda County endorses initiatives such as Family First Prevention Services to divert and assist families outside the foster care system by developing local services and supports for those at risk of entering foster care. Adequate funding for these efforts is needed.

- **Adequately Fund Adult Protective Services (APS) and Provide Housing Crisis Intervention for Older Adults**
  APS services have been expanded to include those who are aged 60 and over while federal standards have been introduced to promote high-quality APS. These efforts are critical to better meet the needs of vulnerable adults earlier but have resulted in an increased number and complexity of reports, including among those who are at risk of losing their housing as a direct result of abuse, neglect and exploitation. With the sunsetting of Home Safe, resources are not available for housing crisis intervention in a more challenging service environment. Adequate funding is needed to ensure necessary staffing, training of APS workers, and housing assistance and resources are available for those in need.

- **Invest in Safety-Net Programs for Older Adults**
  In Alameda County, 18 percent of those aged 65 or older live in poverty. To ensure older adults receive the support needed for safe and healthy living in their communities, it is crucial to continue funding aging services infrastructures including the implementation of the Master Plan on Aging and the Older Californians Act.

- **Support Capacity of Public Guardians/Administrators/Conservators in a Transformed Work Environment**
  With the launch of Care Courts in Alameda County in December 2024 and a new expanded definition of grave disability under SB 43, Public Guardians/Administrators/Conservators are challenged to adapt to a transformed work environment and added workloads. Alameda County supports funding for new treatment facility types, safe and secure housing for residents under conservatorship, and improved workforce capacity to safely and effectively treat and manage the expanded population.

- **Advancing Economic Justice and a Future-Ready Workforce**
  Promote equity, quality jobs, and wealth-building strategies by strengthening workplace protections against discrimination, expanding access to well-paying jobs with benefits, and fostering community ownership and investment opportunities, particularly for women and people of color. Additionally, prepare workers and job seekers for the future by equipping them with adaptable skills, empowering their career autonomy, and addressing workforce challenges in critical sectors to boost economic resiliency and labor market confidence.

- **Support Immigrant Communities**
  Immigrant communities are routinely targeted by harmful cuts to public benefits programs and other punitive policies. Public charge rules are expected to be revisited under the Trump Administration, once again raising concerns among immigrant communities about the impact accessing public services may have on their current or future status. Support investment in humanitarian efforts.

- **Ensure Needed Care and Services for Youth with Complex Needs and Survivors of Human Trafficking**
  Many of our youth with urgent behavioral and mental health needs often do not receive timely care and support from therapeutic placements. Leadership at the state level is needed to ensure that STRTPs accept, up to facility capacity, all foster children and youth with challenging and complex behavioral and mental health care needs referred by Children and Family Service agencies. Additional support is also needed to address the immediate and long-term needs of commercially sexually exploited children (CSEC) and trafficked youth.

- **Foster Care Placements with Relatives**
  Promote the placement of foster children and youth with relatives whenever possible. This may include codifying changes to support relative placements by reducing burdens on caregivers, ensuring adequate funding, and allowing Title IV-E agencies to claim federal financial participation when separate licensing standards for relative and non-relative foster homes are used.

- **Prioritize Investments in the Social Services Workforce**
  Investments are needed to address long-term workforce shortages by increasing compensation, supporting staff mental health, and driving improvements in technology that support staff in providing services to individuals and families.