

# 2019 Invest in San Diego Families Proposed

## Budget Overview and Change Letter Recommendations

**BACKGROUND:** For a generation, San Diego County has under-invested in staffing and services and San Diegans have suffered. After years of organizing and advocacy, we are beginning to be heard. This year's proposed budget has begun to reverse that trend with unprecedented investment in staffing and services because of Invest in San Diego Families advocacy. This investment still is not enough, though, and there is one more opportunity to tell the members of the Board of Supervisors to Invest in San Diego Families before they finalize the budget during the comment period and at the June 13 evening budget hearing.

### **PROTECT CHILDREN**

**Proposed Budget:** Addresses high caseload and underserved children by adding 65 new Child Welfare Services staff members and adds \$6 million for services. The Child and Family Strengthening Advisory board will provide opportunity to reassess and expand services

**ISDF Recommendation:** Invest more in protecting children by increasing and retaining Child Welfare Staff through staff increases and increasing funding for wrap-around services.

### **INCREASE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

**Proposed Budget:** Increase of \$50.3 million in Behavioral Health and 123.5 new added positions including at Edgemoor and the County Psychiatric Hospital. This will add 177 long term beds and expand outpatient and prevention services.

**ISDF Recommendation:** Further Increase Behavioral Health Staff and add more long-term beds to better serve patients and support families. The average wait for psychiatric patients needing long-term beds was more than 16 days last year<sup>1</sup> and this would help alleviate the backlog for patients.

The County is exploring creating a Behavioral Health Hub facility on a County property in the Hillcrest neighborhood of San Diego. The County should advance this project, and include permanent supportive housing and on site-services, which would meet critical needs for patients and create a model to expand to the rest of the County.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH AND EMERGENCY PREVENTION**

**Proposed Budget:** Adds 12 Public Health Nurses and 6.5 support and supervisorial staff to strengthen Public Health Preparedness Response Branch.

**ISDF Recommendation:** Further increase staffing for Public Health nurses. This will allow the County to take action for future emergencies without undermining other core services, eliminate the need to contract out, and ensure that caseload benchmarks for Foster Care and Children's Services (as recommended by the departments of Social Services and Health Care Services) are maintained regularly, and can be maintained during future health crises.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://sdbj.com/SR\\_Health\\_care/](http://sdbj.com/SR_Health_care/)

### **EXPAND THE SAFETY LADDER FOR VULNERABLE SAN DIEGANS**

**Proposed Budget:** Eight full-time employees and \$3.3 million for self-sufficiency services, staff support for the LiveWell Bus to provide greater outreach to community and expands Housing Support, Home Visiting and Housing Disability Programs for CalWorks recipients

**ISDF Recommendation:** Increase enrollment in vital programs such as CalWorks, CalFresh and Medi-Cal by adding outreach staff to increase awareness and eligibility workers to reduce workload and allow sufficient time for successful enrollment. Additionally, expanded hours for Live Well Centers with long wait times and high caseloads.

### **SMART JUSTICE**

**Proposed Budget:** Added one new attorney, four support staff and 12 public defenders to support the Fresh Start program to help reduce felony convictions to misdemeanors, to increase access and opportunity to help find employment, housing or education.

**ISDF Recommendation:** Commission a study to assess the staffing, resources and outreach that the County can do to identify who is eligible for reduced or waived sentences due to recent changes in state law.

### **HOUSING SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE**

**Proposed Budget:** Added \$25 million and 11 staff to support for Innovative Housing Trust fund to support transitional and permanent housing, \$850,000 in Bring Families Home Fund and \$17.2 Million for No Place like Home Fund

**ISDF Recommendations:** Add \$25 million in housing assistance programs including increasing landlord engagement and incentives, ensuring affordable housing units are provided on properties, adding voucher funds and bridge rent payments for families to increase affordability and prevent homelessness.

Include requirements of 0-to-30 percent Area-Median-Income Units for investments from the Innovative Housing Trust Fund

### **SUPPORT IMMIGRANT AND ASYLUM FAMILIES**

**Proposed Budget:** Continued ongoing support to support temporary facilities and services for asylum families and Migrant Crisis Working Group. Added new Refugee Health Coordinator and 2.5 staff in Refugee Services

**ISDF Recommendation:** Open Office of Immigrant Services and identify permanent shelter to support asylum families. Add Public Defender positions that specialize in supporting immigrants.

### **PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT**

**Proposed Budget:** Added \$19 million in grants for Community air Protection Program and \$300,000 for enhanced beach water testing and monitoring, as well as \$7 million for habitat preservation

**ISDF Recommendation:** Add an environmental grant writer to access more resources.

### **CREATE AN OFFICE OF LABOR STANDARDS AND ENFORCEMENT**

**ISDF Recommendation:** The County should create an Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement that would continue ongoing work of ensuring compliance with prevailing wage and investigating Workers' Compensation Insurance Fraud, while also proactively investigating and ensuring compliance with federal and state wage and labor standards.

## **INCREASED BUDGET TRANSPARENCY**

**Current Budget Process:** The board reinstated the Evening Budget Hearing and Supervisor Fletcher hosted two budget forums and a youth forum to increase participation in the budget process.

**ISDF Recommendation:** Adopt participatory budgeting, youth participation and other best practices from around the state and country to increase education and participation in the budget process. Supervisors adopt yearly budget forums in their districts. Create a process for Invest in San Diego Families and other stakeholders to add feedback to the budget before the draft budget is release by the Chief Administrative Officer.