



August 17, 2023

INFORMATION ACTION

SUBJECT: REFUGEE FAMILY SUPPORT

Strategic Priority Area 1: Child Health

Goal: All children thrive by achieving optimal health prenatal through age 5.

Strategic Priority Area II: Child Development

Goal: All children birth through age 5 have high-quality, nurturing environments that ensure their learning readiness.

Strategic Priority Area III: Family Functioning

Goal: All families have the knowledge, skills, and resources to support their children's optimal development.

RECOMMENDATION

First 5 California (F5CA) staff recommends the Commission approve a twelve-month, no cost extension of the Refugee Family Support (RFS) funding from August 31, 2023, to August 31, 2024.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUE

The purpose of this item is to request a twelve-month, no cost extension of the RFS funding.

In October 2021, the Commission approved \$3 million for the RFS to provide emergency support to refugee families with young children ages 0–5 years old, who entered the United States on or after August 1, 2021, and resettled in counties across California.

Six First 5 county commissions (Fresno, Los Angeles, Placer, Sacramento, San Diego, and Santa Clara) have been awarded RFS grants, and implementation started from September 1, 2022. The focus of the RFS grants is to provide systems navigation, emergency childcare, and emergency housing supports to refugees in the six counties.

To provide services to refugee families with children prenatal through age 5, grantees made significant efforts and partnered with various agencies and non-profit organizations within and outside their counties. Together, the 6 grantees partnered with more than 50 different local entities, which included nine other neighboring counties.

Grantees have informed F5CA that they would like to continue their efforts in serving families with their remaining grant dollars in order to maximize the investment approved by the Commission. Additionally, grantees hope to reach out to additional families as there is a greater need for providing these vital services this grant can provide. With a one-year, no-cost extension, grantees will be able to:

- Continue building local relationships to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- Establish systems of support to sustain the services during and beyond the grant period.
- Reach out to additional families to provide the much-needed services this grant provides.
- Continue data collection efforts to inform F5CA staff and the Commission on the efficacy of the RFS investment.

Through implementation, both F5CA and grantees learned building relationships and trust with refugee families takes time and requires trusted messengers to work with families. Grantees continued their outreach efforts and have been able to serve nearly 400 families by the end of March 2023. The process will be more efficient with additional time as grantees will be able to capitalize on the established relationships and systems they have in place using RFS grant funds.

Through this extension, F5CA will have the opportunity to continue grant evaluation to inform the F5CA Commission the effectiveness of this unique investment. This extension will help F5CA to continue data collection and program evaluation; and provide grantees an opportunity to establish relationships with the refugee-serving organizations to continue their work.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS COMMISSION DISCUSSION AND ACTION

In October 2021, F5CA staff originally requested \$10 million over three years to provide targeted, county-level support for childcare, family supports, and resettlement coordination for Afghan and other refugees. The Commission approved up to \$3 million over one year for emergency response funding to support refugee families resettling in counties across California. F5CA staff were instructed to come back to the Commission with a future recommendation for an additional investment to ensure that families needing support can be better served.

FISCAL DETAIL

This is a no-cost extension request. There is no additional fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS

A. Refugee Family Support No-cost Extension PowerPoint