




# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Edward D. Reiskin  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Sara Bedford  
Director, Human Services

**SUBJECT:** Senior Companion Program/Foster  
Grandparent Program (SCP/FGP)  
Renewal Grant Applications FY 2021 -  
2022

**DATE:** May 24, 2021

City Administrator Approval 

Date: Jun 2, 2021

## RECOMMENDATION

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution:**

- 1. Authorizing Agreements With And To Accept And Appropriate Grant Funds From The Corporation For National And Community Services (CNCS) For Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 In Amounts Not To Exceed \$287,126 For The Senior Companion Program And \$29,484 For The Foster Grandparent Program, Respectively;**
- 2. Authorizing The City Administrator To Amend The Above Grant Agreements For And To Accept And Appropriate Additional Grant Funds From CNCS For FY 2021-2022, Within The Grant Terms, Without Returning To Council; And**
- 3. Authorizing A Contribution From The City's General Purpose Fund For Central Services Overhead Charges For FY 2021-2022 In An Estimated Amount Of \$32,941.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The adoption of the proposed resolution will provide low-income seniors, ages 55 and above, with stipend volunteer opportunities to support other seniors and adults with disabilities who are frail, monolingual and socially isolated with companionship, transportation and access to community resources during this COVID-pandemic period. It also provides senior volunteer opportunities to support lower-income children and youth with mentoring and reading assistance. The renewal grants are estimated at \$287,126 for Senior Companions and \$29,484 for Foster Grandparents, for a total of \$316,610. In fiscal year (FY) 2021-2022, fifty-one (51) Senior Companion volunteers will provide 53,244 hours of service, and six (6) Foster Grandparent volunteers will provide 6,264 hours of service. Both grants are funded by the Corporation For National And Community Services-AmeriCorps Seniors (CNCS). The Senior Companions Program (SCP) and Foster Grandparent Program (FGP) provide needed support to both seniors and youth in the community and offer an opportunity for elders to be involved and engaged in these fulfilling volunteer activities.

City Council  
June 15, 2021

## **BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

The SCP and FGP are authorized under the Domestic Volunteer Act of 1973 and are administered by AmeriCorps Seniors, funded through CNCS. The City has been a local sponsor of the programs since the first SCP grant was accepted in 1977, the upcoming FY 2021-22 is the forty-fourth year of operations.

Criminal background checks as specified in 45 Code of Federal Regulations Parts 2510, 2522, 2551, and 2552, are required for all volunteers and staff.

The background checks as mandated by the CNCS in January of 2015, and pursuant to City Council Resolution No. 85366 C.M.S., the Council authorized the City Administrator to conduct and document a National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) that includes fingerprint-based Department of Justice (DOJ) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal history checks on individuals in covered positions such as volunteers and staff who began work on and after April 21, 2011 who have recurring access to vulnerable populations: children 17 years of age or younger and persons age 60 and older, or to individuals with disabilities.

## **ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

The Human Services Department (HSD) provides equal access opportunities to people with disabilities and senior citizens to all programs, services and activities that result in the preservation of dignity, the right to independence, and the ability to live self-directed lives.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, both programs will perform expanded companionship and mentee service activities in FY 2021-22. The SC volunteers will pick-up and drop-off food to program clients, and coordinate taxi rides with family caregivers and adult/elderly residents to medical appointments and/or grocery shopping. The SCP and Taxi Up & Go (TUGO) program provide bi-annual reports to Rides for Seniors & Persons with Disabilities (RSPD), which supports upwards of fifty-one (51) SCP volunteers and six (6) FGP volunteers with taxi scrip to assist their clients and family members during this pandemic period.

Under the guidance of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), State of California, Alameda County and City of Oakland COVID-19 operational safety procedures, the SCP volunteers assist frail, monolingual and socially isolated elders with assistance to doctor appointments, grocery shopping, and general companionship. Foster Grandparents provide mentoring and academic tutoring to Pre-K and Kindergarten-12<sup>th</sup> grade-aged children and youth who can benefit from added support and connection to an additional caring adult.

Both programs serve a dual function in that the elderly clients and youth benefit from the assistance and the volunteers gain a sense of accomplishment, civic responsibility and community connectivity. Taxi Up & Go (TUGO) is an extended service performed by SCP volunteers in partnership with RSPD, combining paratransit vouchers with clients and/or family caregivers in need of these added supports and subsidies.

Measure B/BB supports two (2) additional volunteers in the Taxi-Up & GO project. The City of Oakland General Purpose Fund supports staff, volunteers and community recognition activities.

The City of Oakland's SCP and FGP must meet the following guidelines and performance objectives as required by all grantees funded by the CNCS/AmeriCorps Seniors: Companions and Grandparents must be age 55 and above, have completed forty hours of pre-service training, and qualify as low-income to receive a monthly stipend. Certified SCP and FGP participants must volunteer 15 to 20 hours weekly and serve up to 1,044 hours annually. Program-wide Senior Companions must complete 53,244 hours of service and Foster Grandparents must complete 6,264 hours of service. All volunteers and staff with recurring contact with vulnerable and disabled residents must undergo background checks, fingerprinting and review by the DOJ and FBI prior to pre-service training, to protect the clients they serve. Program volunteers are also required to have liability and accident coverage provided by CIMA Volunteer Insurance. All volunteers are required to be certified annually to start or maintain their participation.

Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents contribute a combined 59,508 hours of volunteer service annually. The Senior Companions assist upwards of 200 unduplicated clients who are frail, monolingual adults and/or elderly. Foster Grandparents tutor and mentor 100 children and youth.

SCP and FGP Volunteers are placed at the following public and private community-based station sites: Life Elder Care, East Oakland Health Center, Westlake Christian Terrace, Allen Temple Arms, Family Bridges, St. Mary's Community Center, Posada De Colores, Multipurpose Senior Services Program, Sojourner Truth Manor, deFremery Parks & Recreation Center, Centro Infantil De La Raza, Oakland Head Start, Oakland Unified School District, Libraries, Studio One Art Center and Safe Walk to School.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The grant monies provide for the volunteer support expenditures including fingerprinting, stipends, liability insurance, appreciation and recognition of volunteers, uniform identification badges and other allowable expenses. There are no income requirements for the clients served by the volunteers. As required by the CNCS, 80 percent of the grant funds go directly to support low-income eligible volunteers. Grant funds are contingent upon the number of volunteer placements and hours of service annually.

These funds will be delineated in the Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent project cost centers for FY 2021-2022 as follows:

- Grant funds from the CNCS in the amount of \$ 287,126 in the Federal Action Agency Fund (2120), Senior Companion Program Organization (75241), and FY21-22 SCP/Federal Project (1005614).
- Grant funds from the CNCS in the amount of \$ 29,484 in the Federal Action Agency Fund (2120), Senior Companion Program Organization (75241), and FGP/Federal Project (1005618).

- The General Purpose funds will provide \$31,068 in Fund (1010), for Federal Match, Project (1005616) fundraising, administrative and other volunteer programs costs associated with the Senior Companion and \$ 2,736 in Fund (1010) for the Federal Match, Project (1005620) associated with the Foster Grandparent program which is included in the Mayor's proposed FY 2021-2023 Budget pending City Council adoption.

Based on the federal administrative cost caps and level of required funding to support the programs, HSD is requesting, as it has in prior years, a contribution from the General Purpose Fund to cover overhead charges associated with this grant in an estimated amount of \$32,941.00.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

SCP and FGP volunteers will perform service activities under a COVID memorandum of program guidance. They are assigned and supervised in community-based programs. The programs include public and private organizations that work with Oakland residents and their families.

### **COORDINATION**

The HSD Fiscal section, Office of the City Attorney and Budget Bureau were consulted in the preparation of this report and resolution.

### **PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

Pre-COVID pandemic, SCP and FGP volunteers exceeded the number of assisted clients, totaling 400 volunteers across all program units. Volunteer's service activities included companionship, mentorship and taxi-scrip assistance. During this period, the grant funded sixty-five (65) Senior Companions and eight (8) Foster Grandparent volunteers. Volunteers and clients served by the program come from all seven (7) Council Districts, with the highest proportion of both volunteers and clients from Districts 2 and 6.

The program assessment process does not include demographic data for minors participating in the Foster Grandparents Program. In compliance with CNCS confidentiality requirements, the demographics of children and youth are not collected.

Follow-up assessment of volunteers who sheltered-in-place and received temporary allowance COVID stipends for FY 2020-21 will be evaluated to determine the impact on the client, volunteer and station sites. SCP volunteers received training on how to conduct check-in calls with their assigned clients and shared resources, including COVID-19 safety information. In addition, volunteers assisted their clients by providing taxi-scrip/vouchers to family caregivers via the Taxi-Up and Go project. These and other non-in-home visits and resources provided clients with a sense of being connected to the community during this pandemic period. Chinese and Vietnamese clients maintained their connections to the community through check-in calls received monthly from their Senior Companion. Volunteers translated resource materials and/or

connected with family members on behalf of their clients. The SCP addresses access and equity disparities among mono-lingual seniors by matching them with bi-lingual companions. Additional outreach and recruitment are required priorities to ensure a more equitable balance throughout both programs. Having bi-lingual volunteers serving both programs has helped to increase the participation of volunteers in the SCP.

To establish stronger partnerships with translation assistance, both programs will broaden the recruitment plans to include diverse community- and faith-based programs, and public agencies.

**Tables 1 and 2** reflect race and age demographics of the program volunteers, many of whom are over 80 years-old and more likely to end up in a nursing facility without the program.

**Table 1:** Program Volunteers by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percent
African American	28.2 %
Chinese	28.8 %
Vietnamese	33.3 %
Filipino	9.1 %
Declined	.6 %
Total	100.0 %

**Table 2:** Program Volunteers by Age

Age	Age Group	Percent
55-59	3	4.5 %
60-69	18	27.3 %
70-79	24	36.4 %
80-84	15	22.7 %
85-Over	6	9.1 %
Total	66	100.0 %

## **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** Fixed-income senior volunteers receive non-taxable stipends. SCP clients receive no-cost assistance associated with aging, isolation, and limited supports that will help to prevent the high cost of institutionalization. In alignment with Oakland Promise, the Program improves socialization and reading skills among participating at-risk youth/children, and supports school attendance.

**Environmental:** This report has no environmental opportunities or impact.

**Race & Equity:** Through an extensive network of community-based programs, senior volunteers perform civic engagement interventions that make their neighborhoods stronger by

helping frail and isolated elders, children and youth that are at-risk and have special needs with social, educational and health-related activities.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Authorizing The City Administrator To:

1. Authorizing Agreements With And To Accept And Appropriate Grant Funds From The Corporation For National And Community Services (CNCS) For Fiscal Year (FY) 2021-2022 In Amounts Not To Exceed \$287,126 For The Senior Companion Program And \$29,484 For The Foster Grandparent Program, Respectively; And
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For questions regarding this report, please contact Scott Means, Aging and Adult Senior Services Manager, at (510) 238-6137.

Respectfully submitted,



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