



AGENDA REPORT

TO: The Honorable City Council

FROM: Jestin D. Johnson
City Administrator

SUBJECT: Senior Companion Program/Foster
Grandparent Program (SCP/FGP)
Renewal Grant Applications FY 24-25

DATE: June 16, 2025

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution:

- 1. Accepting, Appropriating, And Authorizing Agreements For Receipt Of Grant Funds From The Corporation For National And Community Services (CNCS-AmeriCorps Seniors) For Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25 In Amounts Not To Exceed \$343,037 For The Senior Companion Program And \$41,323 For The Foster Grandparent Program;**
- 2. Authorizing Contributions From The General Purpose Fund In The Estimated Amount Of \$31,810 For Central Services Overhead Charges And In the Estimated Amount Of \$68,869 (added Grantee share from SCP and FGP) to Meet the Required Minimum of 10% Local Match Funds For FY 2024-25; And**
- 3. Authorizing The City Administrator To Accept And Appropriate Additional Grant Funds From CNCS That Become Available For The Same Purposes Within FY 2024-25**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The adoption of the proposed resolution will enable the implementation of the Senior Companion Program (SCP) in Oakland to 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, provide senior volunteer opportunities to support lower income children and youth with mentoring, reading assistance, and school readiness approaches.

The renewal grants are estimated at: \$343,037 for SCP and \$41,323 for FGP for a total of \$384,360. Forty (40) SCP volunteers will provide over 50,000 hours of service, and seven (7) FGP volunteers will provide over 6,000 hours of service during the FY. Both grants are funded by

the CNCS-AmeriCorps Seniors. The 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.

REASON FOR URGENCY

Timely approval is essential to avoid disruption to volunteer programming for seniors and youth in Oakland. Delays in accepting the grants or securing the local match could jeopardize program continuity, reduce available volunteer service hours, and risk noncompliance with federal grant timelines. Immediate action ensures the City maintains access to the federal funding to support critical community-based services.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

Fiscal year (FY) 2024-2025 marks the forty-eighth year the City of Oakland has sponsored the SCP and FGP. The programs are authorized under the Domestic Volunteer Act of 1973, and federal funding comes from the CNCS-AmeriCorps Seniors.

Since 1965, the FGP has been providing one-on-one mentoring, nurturing, and support to children with special or exceptional needs, or who are in circumstances that limit their academic, social, or emotional development.

Since 1974, the SCP has been making a difference in the lives of Oakland seniors by providing assistance and friendship to older adults who have difficulty with daily living tasks, such as shopping or paying bills, and those who need companionship to combat social isolation and loneliness. SCP volunteers help these individuals retain their dignity and remain independent in their homes rather than having to move to more costly institutional care.

As required by CNCS-AmeriCorps Seniors, all volunteers and employees working in the SCP and the FGP undergo a criminal history background check. The City is prohibited from hiring employees and training volunteers before they have been approved for service. City Council [Resolution No. 85366 C.M.S.](#) also authorized the City Administrator to conduct and document a National Service Criminal History Check for program participants, a review that includes Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation criminal history checks for volunteers and staff who work with vulnerable populations, including participants under the age of 17, persons aged 60 and older, and individuals with disabilities.

ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

The City's Human Services Department, division of Aging and Adult Services, provides **holistic community supportive services** through interventions that prevent the institutionalization and isolation of older adults. Participants of the SCP and FGP experience **culturally responsive** services and activities that result in empowerment, independence, safety, and the ability to live self-directed lives.

SCP volunteers support independent living by assisting frail, monolingual, and socially isolated elders to access doctor appointments and grocery shopping, while also providing social companionship. FGP volunteers provide mentoring and academic tutoring to Pre-K and K-12 children and youth who 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 while the volunteers gain a sense of accomplishment, civic responsibility, and community connectivity.

The City's Taxi Up & Go, a program of the Oakland Paratransit for the Elderly and Disabled (OPED) effectively extends the reach of SCP services by providing taxi vouchers free of charge to SCP clients who need door-through-door rides assisted by a companion. OPED also provides free taxi vouchers to SCP and FGP volunteers who need transportation support to work with their clients. Alameda County Measure BB provides the funding for Taxi Up and Go and the OPED Taxi Voucher program.

The City of Oakland's SCP and FGP volunteers must meet the following guidelines and performance objectives as required in the City's standard agreement with CNCS-AmeriCorps Seniors:

- Be at least 55 years old;
- Undergo Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation background checks;
- Complete twenty hours of pre-service training;
- Qualify as low-income.

Once certified, SCP and FGP participants must volunteer 5 to 20 hours weekly and may serve up to 1,044 hours annually. All volunteers are required to be certified annually. The City of Oakland General Purpose Fund supports staff, volunteers, and community recognition activities.

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 CNCS-AmeriCorps Seniors, 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 annual hours of service.

These funds will be delineated in the Senior Companion and Foster Grandparent project cost centers for FY 2024-2025 as follows:

- Grant funds from the CNCS-AmeriCorps Seniors in the amount of \$343,037 in the Federal Action Agency Fund (2120), Senior Companion Program Organization (75241), SCP FY24-25 FED Project (1006729), and Empowering Seniors with Disability Program (YS14).
- Grant funds from the CNCS-AmeriCorps Seniors in the amount of \$41,323 in the Federal Action Agency Fund (2120), Foster Grandparent Program Organization (75241), FGP

FY24-25 FED Project (1006731), and Empowering Seniors with Disability Program (YS14).

- The following funds will provide for Federal Match and for fundraising, administrative and other volunteer programs costs associated with the SCP: \$41,300 in the General Purpose Fund (1010), Project (1006730), Senior Companion Program Organization (75241), and Empowering Seniors with Disability Program (YS14); \$27,569 in the General Purpose Fund (1010) for the Federal Match Project (1006732) Senior Companion Program Organization (75241), and Empowering Seniors with Disability Program (YS14); and \$232,786 in the General Purpose Fund (1010) for the DP750 Administrative Project (1000017) in Senior Companion Program Organization (75241), and Empowering Seniors with Disability Program (YS14), which is included in the Mayor's Proposed FY 2024-2025 Budget pending City Council adoption.

Based on the federal administrative cost caps and level of required program funding, the Human Services Department (HSD) will require, as it has in prior years, a contribution from the City of Oakland General Purpose Fund in the combined estimated amount of \$68,869 to meet the minimum 10% match requirement, and a from the General Purpose Fund for Central Services Overhead Charges in the estimated amount of \$31,810 for FY 2024-25. These amounts are included in the proposed 2024-2025 budget.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

SCP and FGP volunteers are assigned and supervised in community-based programs. The programs include public and private organizations that work with Oakland residents and their families. SCP/FGP is in the process of re-establishing community-based volunteer stations with the City of Oakland Senior Centers and the sites with the Oakland Parks Recreation and Youth Development (OPRYD) Department. SCP/FGP have existing and continuing partnerships with the following agencies: Family Bridges, Vietnamese Community Development Incorporated, South Berkeley Senior Center, Alameda Care Alliance, Fruitvale/San Antonio Senior Center, MSSP, Sister Thea Bowman Senior Community, DeFermery Recreation Center, and 150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza.

COORDINATION

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

PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

Volunteers provided service activities that included companionship, mentorship, taxi-scrip assistance, and escorted transportation support. During the last FY 2023-2024, the grant funded thirty-eight SCP and four FGP volunteers. Volunteers and clients served by the programs come from all seven Council Districts. In 2024-2025, the goal of SCP/FGP is to increase the number of

volunteers and raise awareness of the programs through reinstated partnerships with OPRYD sites and the City of Oakland Senior Centers.

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

The SCP addresses access and equity disparities among monolingual seniors by matching them companions that speak the same language. The program made significant progress by improving targeted cultural and language gaps by recruiting a bilingual Vietnamese staff and securing translation assistance based on volunteer input.

Table 1 reflects the racial profile of SCP volunteers, and **Table 2** shows client participation by Volunteer Stations.

Table 1: Program Volunteers by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percent
African American	14
Chinese	11
Vietnamese	18
Filipino	1
Other	3
Total	47

Table 2: Historical Participant Stations

STN #	NAME	# OF CLIENTS
1	VCDI	41
2	Family Bridges	29
3	Linkages/MSSP	1
4	San Antonio-Fruitvale Senior Center	12
5	Sister Thea Bowman Senior Housing	1
6	South Berkeley Senior Center	5
7	150/Office	17
8	Bancroft Senior Homes	3
9	Alameda Care Alliance	1

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, which has an economic impact.

Environmental: This report has no environmental opportunities or impact.

Race & Equity: Older adults in the city of Oakland, including people facing race, age, disability, gender, and other disparities, are provided with the services and resources they need to experience overall well-being and lead full lives. They feel safe, healthy, and have a sense of belonging.

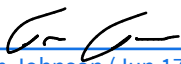
ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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For questions regarding this report, please contact ANA BAGTAS, Aging and Adult Senior Services Manager, at (510) 238-6794.

Respectfully submitted,


Jestin Johnson (Jun 17, 2025 17:38 PDT)
JESTIN D. JOHNSON
City Administrator

Prepared by:
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Aging & Adult Services Division

City Council
July 1, 2025