

CITY OF OAKLAND

# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Jestin D. Johnson  
City Administrator


**FROM:** LaTonda Simmons  
Assistant City Administrator

**SUBJECT:** Information & Assistance (I&A)  
Program Grant FY 2024-25

**DATE:** November 22, 2024

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City Administrator Approval

  
Jestin Johnson (Dec 6, 2024 06:04 PST)

Date: Dec 6, 2024

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## RECOMMENDATION

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

- 1. Accepting, Appropriating, And Authorizing An Agreement For Receipt Of Grant Funds In An Amount Not To Exceed \$156,803 From The Alameda County Social Services Agency For Continued Operation Of The Information And Assistance (I&A) Program For Oakland Seniors For Fiscal Year (FY) 2024-25; And**
- 2. Authorizing The City Administrator To Accept And Appropriate Any Additional Funds From Alameda County Social Services Agency For The I&A Program Within FY 2024-25; And**
- 3. Authorizing A Contribution From The General Purpose Fund for \$41,935 in matching funds and an Amount Equivalent To The Central Services Overhead Charges In An Estimated Amount Of \$30,506 For FY 2024-25**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The acceptance of this grant from Alameda County will allow the Human Services Department to provide Information and Assistance services, sustaining a program that supports the needs of Oakland's most vulnerable older residents.

According to the statistics gathered by the Census Bureau between 2017-2021 as part of their 5-Year Community Survey, more than 30 percent of Oakland residents over the age of 65 live alone. Studies have found that individuals of any age who live alone are at higher risk of developing behavioral conditions such as depression, dementia, and hoarding. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one out of three adults aged 65 and older will experience a fall each year; injuries from falls are a leading cause of, death, and hospital admissions for seniors

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who live alone. Key community support programs can help seniors identify and access the services they need in order to continue to live independently.

This funding will address the needs of Oakland's most vulnerable seniors, including monolingual and low-income seniors living alone, enabling them to access available resources to remain safely and independently in their homes.

### **REASON FOR URGENCY**

The Information and Assistance grant is a reimbursement model. The Human Services Department typically brings this request to the council in July, but due to staffing transitions, it was missed. We need to accept and appropriate this grant so we can submit our requisitions to the County for Q1 reimbursements.

### **BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

The City of Oakland has been a municipal advocate for low-income, diverse residents since the 1960s, when a federal Community Action Agency (CAA) office was established in Oakland to provide services designed to eradicate poverty. The first of four community senior centers at the Veterans Memorial Building was established in 1985, following the City Council's adoption of the first "Comprehensive Plan for Seniors."

In August of 2023, the City of Oakland signed a three-year agreement to receive funding from the County of Alameda County to provide Information and Assistance Services for Fiscal Year 2023-2026. The compensation shall not exceed \$460,000 for the three fiscal years.

In July of 2023, the City Council authorized the Alameda County Information and Assistance grant. [Resolution No. 89850](#) authorized the City Administrator to accept and appropriate a grant amount not to exceed \$100,000 for Fiscal Year 2023-24. In addition, \$30,624 in central services overhead charges were offset by a general fund contribution. Previous authorizations of this grant have been in accordance with its same basic purpose.

### **ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

For more than twenty years, the Human Services Department Division of Aging and Adult Services has received funding from Alameda County to provide Information and Assistance (I&A) Program services to senior residents.

I&A outreach ensures that Oakland seniors continue to access information about federal, state, and local programs that meet their individual needs. The Human Services Department I&A staff assist seniors in applying for senior programs offered through the City of Oakland, including the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP), Senior Companion caregiver support, ASSETS senior employment, and various Paratransit services.

The Oakland Senior Centers are able to receive direct, in-person access to these critical services, and I&A staff participate in outreach activities at other local agencies. In FY 2023-24, Oakland I&A staff provided information, referrals, and follow-ups to more than 4,000 local seniors.

The I&A program serves primarily low-income Oakland residents aged 60 and older. Each year, I&A staff provide information about housing, health care options, transportation, utility discounts, nutrition programs, and other programs to more than 4,000 seniors, the majority of whom live in the City of Oakland. Information and Assistance (I&A) services are currently available at three of the four Oakland senior centers; ensuring that seniors have access to critical support services in their neighborhood.

The City of Oakland will continue to use the grant funding to pay for staff, materials, and classes in order to ensure that the most relevant information is shared with seniors. This information may include discounts available to seniors who need transportation services, food assistance, respite, housing assistance, adult day care programs, utility payment, adaptive devices, home repairs, and other basic necessities that will allow them to live independently in Oakland. Staff will continue to document all contacts and referrals, as required by the County of Alameda.

The Council's approval of funding for essential support services for seniors aligns with the Citywide priorities of **holistic community safety** and the promotion of **housing, economic, and cultural security**. The I&A program addresses critical health and safety issues, including social isolation, fall prevention, and overall quality of life improvement, while simultaneously alleviating pressure on emergency services. By bridging service gaps, the program fosters independence and contributes to inclusive community development. The program promotes cultural security, a vital aspect of community well-being, by enabling seniors to remain in their homes and neighborhoods, thereby preserving their cultural practices, languages, and traditions while accessing necessary support services.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This agreement is funded by Alameda County. Funding has been appropriated to the Human Services Department of the County of Alameda and is included in the adopted FY2024-25 budget: County of Alameda: Grants Fund (2160), Outreach Program Organization (75251), Inform and Assistance FY24-25 Project (1006723), Empowering Seniors and People with Disabilities Program (YS14). The total grant budget is \$198,738 with \$156,803 coming from the County. The City is matching \$41,934 to meet the matching requirement of 10% of the total budget. Expenses include the costs of three TPT 50 percent I&A caseworkers, training, transportation, and materials. HSD is requesting, as it has in prior years, a contribution from a general purpose fund in an amount equivalent to Central Services Overhead in an estimated amount of \$30,506.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

No outreach was deemed necessary for the proposed policy action beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures.

## **COORDINATION**

The Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Bureau have each been consulted in the development of this report and resolution.

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

The City of Oakland Aging and Adult Services Division has been the sub-grantee, through the Alameda County Area Agency on Aging, for the federal Community Based Services Information and Assistance program. The I&A program provides direct counseling services to seniors and their families, supporting their independence by providing information and assistance to programs and benefits.

The Information and Assistance funding has provided an effective Oakland program hosted in City senior centers for 20 years. Performance is reviewed by Alameda County on a quarterly basis, and at no time during the extended annual contracting period has the City been found to be out of compliance with the requirements of the contract. The current contract requires that the I&A outreach specialists provide 4,899 information and assistance services to eligible older adults.

Performance measurements, including the number of clients served and the type of services provided, are monitored by Alameda County.

I&A staff are expected to attend meetings and events to remain informed and up-to-date on benefits and services for seniors such as Medicare, MediCal, housing support, transportation, and other programs.

An internal peer review process is conducted bi-monthly and reported to the California State Department of Aging. An external Utilization Review is conducted biennially by the California State Department of Aging.

Informal feedback from clients in the form of phone calls, thank you cards, or letters expressing satisfaction with the service is tracked.

## **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

***Economic:*** The grants for items and services provided to Oakland residents will be used to pay Oakland based business operators and vendors. HSD will continue to invest in the Oakland community by purchasing services and equipment for eligible seniors from Oakland based businesses.

***Environmental:*** In the past, the I&A grant has coordinated with the County Area Agency on Aging and the Alameda County Community Food Bank to distribute nutritional vouchers for fresh produce from Farmers' Markets in Oakland. The program provides seniors with access to information about Oakland recycling, utility, and other environmental support programs.

**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 and healthy and have a sense of belonging.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution:

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

Respectfully submitted,



[LaTonda Simmons \(Dec 4, 2024 10:47 PST\)](#)

LATONDA SIMMONS

Assistant City Administrator

Prepared by:

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Aging & Adult Services Division