



WORKING TOGETHER FOR OUR COMMUNITY

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Lori A. Medina, Director

June 20, 2023

The Honorable Stephanie E. Hulse
Judge of the Superior Court
c/o Office of the County Counsel
Attention: Sandra Ontiveros
168 W. Alisal Street, 3rd Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Dear Honorable Judge Hulse:

The County of Monterey, Department of Social Services (DSS) has received and reviewed the 2022-2023 Monterey County Civil Grand Jury Final report, "Public Guardian, The Final Helping Hand: A Mandate to Care." DSS would like to thank The Civil Grand Jury for its thoughtful and thorough review and recommendations as it relates to the Interface between The Public Guardian, a Bureau located in the County of Monterey's Health Department and Adult Protective Services (APS) located with the County of Monterey's Department of Social Services. Specifically, as it relates to Finding 1 (F1) and Recommendation 1 (R1) of this report.

F1 of the Report reads, "Adult Protective Services does not have sufficient access to professional Capacity Determinations for potentially-eligible clients to be referred to the Public Guardian."

DSS Response to Finding 1:

We agree that APS needs a consistent physician or psychologist to provide capacity determinations, particularly in-person and in client homes. Capacity determinations are needed to pursue conservatorships, as a last resort for clients who are no longer able to take care of themselves or arrange for their own care. Finding a licensed professional is critical at this time because the current neuropsychologist will be retiring this year.

R1 of the Report is that Adult and Aging Services engage a licensed professional to provide all necessary Capacity Declarations for Adult Protective Services' clients and/or collaborate with existing professional resources in other County Departments to fill this need by December 31, 2023.

DSS Response to Recommendation 1:

DSS/APS agrees with Recommendation 1. DSS/APS will pursue engaging with and procuring a qualified licensed provider to provide the necessary and complete Capacity Declarations by December 31, 2023.

Thank you again for your report and recommendations that will help us better serve our vulnerable seniors and people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lori A. Medina".

Lori A. Medina, MSW
Director
County of Monterey Department of Social Services