

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
AND JANICE HAHN**

NOVEMBER 13, 2018

Relates to S-1
EVALUATING THE CSEC FIRST RESPONDER PROTOCOL

The First Responder Protocol (FRP) was formed as a result of a motion approved by the Board of Supervisors (Board) in September 2013. The motion sought to mobilize a multi-agency response model that would create a comprehensive and coordinated strategy to be followed when responding to calls or incidents involving suspected or identified commercially sexually exploited children or youth (CSEC/Y). Under the FRP, instead of detaining the young person, law enforcement officers transport him or her to a safe place and alert representatives of the Departments of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Probation, and Health Services and a community-based advocacy group to respond within 90 minutes and provide intensive engagement and specialized services within 72 hours. The FRP uses a victim-centered, strengths-based approach that reflects Los Angeles County's (County) commitment to treating CSEC/Y as victims of child abuse and human trafficking, rather than criminalizing them as delinquents.

The FRP was piloted with the County Sheriff's Department's (Sheriff) Compton and Century stations and the Long Beach Police Department from August 14, 2014 to July 31, 2015. Since then, it has expanded to include all Sheriff's Department stations and all Los Angeles Police Department area stations. Representatives from multiple jurisdictions, including the Counties of San Diego and Alameda, and the states of Alabama, Texas, and

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Washington have met with FRP personnel to learn how to implement the FRP model in their respective jurisdictions.

During the first four years of the FRP, 361 young people were recovered. Sadly, nearly a quarter of them were recovered more than once and 20 percent of those recovered were arrested for prostitution after turning 18. Of those recovered, 85 percent were known to DCFS because of a prior allegation of maltreatment made to the child protection hotline; 60 percent of these allegations referenced sexual abuse. African-American youth comprised an astonishing 71 percent of those recovered, while only comprising nine percent of the County's overall youth population.

The FRP has yielded important information about the youth who were recovered, due in no small part to the rigorous tracking of data that the involved departments have conducted. However, as the FRP enters into its fifth year, an external analysis could prove valuable in helping the County interpret the data gathered in order to support the FRP's success as it expands to all 88 cities in the County. Moreover, a longitudinal study, in partnership with the community-based advocacy organization that remains engaged with youth years after their recovery, could yield answers to the most pressing questions that remain unanswered: What leads a young person to return to a trafficker? How can the County increase a young person's protective factors? And how can the County better prevent these youth from being exploited in the first place? The County's ongoing shift toward treating violence as a public health epidemic should be reflected in the evaluation and study.

An external evaluation and longitudinal study of the FRP will help maintain consistency in practice and fidelity to the model as it is scaled up. This could also lead to improved outcomes for the CSEC/Y population. Resources are available through the County's Healthier Communities, Stronger Families, Thriving Children (HST) funds, and the State's SB 794 and SB 855 funds.

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WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS direct the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the departments involved with the First Responder Protocol (FRP), to:

1. Identify one or more local research institutions to conduct an evaluation of the FRP and a longitudinal study of those recovered, using a public health framework; and
2. Provide recommendations on budget, timeline, and scope of work related to entering into contracts with proposed institutions in the next CSEC Integrated Leadership Team (ILT) regular written report to the Board.

(EW)