

A TOOL TO DEVELOP THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF YOUR MEASURE

RATIONALE FOR MEASURE

Most legislative measures include a set of “findings” or initial statements about the need and the history that led to the legislation.

TITLE OF ORDINANCE

If you name your ordinance, the name will likely be used in many places (media, your literature, election debates) when people refer to it. It should absolutely include the word “child,”

PURPOSE AND GOALS

This can be a compelling statement of general principles, as well as overall goals to improve the well-being of children. This can include a commitment to prevention, civic participation, best practices, the need for collaboration, accountability, etc.

FUND

- Name of fund to be established in addition to naming the ordinance, e.g. Solano Fund for Children and Youth. Giving the fund a name serves many purposes, including accounting purposes once the measure passes.
- Funding mechanism – e.g. type of tax, fee, carve-out
- Amount of funding
- Duration of fund – when it will sunset, or whether it will be permanent
- Assurance that unspent funds can be carried over from year to year

SERVICES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

- List the specific services that can be funded, including very short definitions
- Ages of children and youth that can be served – include a definition of children’s services, e.g. “when services are specifically for children, as opposed to when children are served incidentally or part of a larger population that includes adults”
- Definitions of allowable services to parents and families – if you want to be able to provide parenting and family support services; avoid allowing funding for general adult services
- List of services that cannot be funded – e.g. law enforcement, mandated matching funds that would be spent regardless of new money, capital expenses, etc. – name expenses that could occur that are not consistent with goals of fund
- Agencies eligible to apply for funds – location, non-profits and public agencies, other specifications - some have tried a specific percent for non-profits, which can be controversial with city employee unions or public officials that want to protect city or county departments

PREVENT SUPPLANTING EXISTING FUNDING WITH NEW FUNDS

- Requirement that current levels of funding for children’s services be maintained. This can be labeled a “baseline budget” and can be calculated by a budget office or controller after the measure passes. Details of a method to implement this are in the San Francisco Children and Youth Fund legislation. www.fundingthenextgeneration.org/resources

- Strong statement about goal of funding new services, and not using funds to supplant local discretionary funding and existing services.

OVERSIGHT

- Body that will oversee fund – new or existing
- Power of body – continuum of advisory to decision-making
- Appointment power to oversight body – administrator, legislative body, other – or some combination
- Number of seats, terms, reimbursements, conflict-of-interest requirements
- Composition and background requirements for members – e.g. areas of expertise, consumers, youth parents, geographic diversity
- Functions and responsibilities
- Staffing
- Requirements about public meetings, communication and transparency

ADMINISTRATION

- Entity in government that will administer the Fund or be responsible for determining what entity will administer the Fund. Could have an intermediary organization (new or existing) that will be contracted by government to administer the Fund if your city or county officials and attorneys will allow
- One option: Creation of an “office for children and/or youth” as part of the funding measure, which then requires a section addressing the organizational structure, governance, cost, goals and staffing. Note: We recommend against this unless you think that this is a necessary part of the measure. The public generally does not like creating new arms of the bureaucracy, and a new department is something you can negotiate outside the electoral process with elected officials and administrators.
- Contracting process – funding cycle, selection process
- Requirements about data collection
- Cap on administrative costs – may or may not be included, some have put a cap of 10%
- Role of City Council or Board of Supervisors in final oversight and approval of funding

PLANNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Requirement regarding evaluation of services funded and overall functioning and outcome of the funding process
- Strategy for determining what needs should be prioritized – e.g. required needs assessment, including communication to public, civic participation, review process, approval process
- Strategy for determining what specific services should be funded – e.g. mandating a services allocation plan, including definition of plan, review and approval process of plan.
- Strategy for ensuring public involvement in planning and oversight
- Policy regarding annual or bi-annual written public report on the Fund

DETAILS OF TAX OR OTHER FEE OR CARVE-OUT

- SEVERABILITY – if one section is invalid, does not invalidate whole measure



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