

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: 6 September 2005

SUBJECT: Additional clerical employee for DSS and Legal

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

This is to request an additional entry-level clerical position. The proposed employee would be an employee of the Department of Social Services ("DSS"), but would be posted to work with and as a part of (and by supervised by) the legal department, devoting 100% of their time to DSS matters.

Through early 2005, many clerical tasks in DSS cases, particularly juvenile services cases, have been performed by the office of the Clerk of Superior Court. These tasks (including but not limited to the photocopying and service of court orders on attorneys and parties, tracking and reporting service of process) have not had specific statutory mandates as to *who* is required to perform them, only that they are required under the law to be performed. The Administrative Office of the Courts has encouraged our Clerk of Court's office to no longer perform many of these tasks, instead focusing their efforts on only those duties required by statute. These tasks have fallen to the legal department, severely overtaxing the time of legal support staff with jobs that require a lower level of training than they possess.

The most efficient way (in total cost and in work-flow) to accomplish these tasks is this arrangement, where the employee is an employee of DSS working under supervision of the legal department. As an employee of DSS doing work exclusively for DSS, the employment costs of this employee would be reimbursable to the County on the same basis as other DSS employees. (All remaining employment costs for this employee for FY 2005-2006 would be covered by lapsed salary, so that no budget amendment is required.)

The tasks to be performed by the proposed employee were not contemplated as required of County government when your budget was created, since they were and always had been performed by another agency. However, as that agency will no longer perform these services, and as these services are required (that is, *someone* must do them, as the failure to have many of these services done in a timely fashion is grounds for an appeal (significantly delaying permanence for juveniles in DSS custody)), there is no real alternative to the County performing these tasks.

In summary, this would be (1) an entry-level clerical position, (2) employed by DSS, (3) working as a part of the legal department.

COUNTY MANAGER RECOMMENDATION/BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

The County manager supports this proposal.

County staff will be present and prepared if requested to give further information on this matter.