



To: Commissioners, First 5 Ventura County  
From: Sam McCoy, Director of Program and Evaluation  
Date: May 20, 2021

**Re: Recommendation to select Social Solutions Global (SSG) Apricot 360 software system for Commission's program management, case management, and evaluation efforts.**

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### **Background**

The California Children and Families First Act requires outcome-based accountability and evaluation from local commissions. Since 2013, the Commission has used a web-based program management and database software developed by Persimmony International Inc. to track participant demographics, services, and outcomes as part of standard data collection, contract management, program monitoring and evaluation processes to complete state and local reporting requirements.

Over the past 7 years, Commission staff have continued to monitor developments in online database technology for opportunities to streamline data collection, improve workflows for staff with client management and referral functionality and provide greater evaluation and data analytic tools. In light of product advancements and significant organizational changes stemming from directly implementing the Neighborhoods for Learning initiative, staff developed a Request for Proposals to assess available systems and options for a new database vendor.

In March 2021, an RFP for database vendors was publicly released with distribution through e-mail, social media, a legal notice posted in the newspaper, and the bidding opportunity posted on the Commission's website. Four proposals were received within the required timeline. The Commission's procurement procedures for selecting vendors call for 2 staff members and at least 1 external reviewer with expertise in the subject matter. Proposals were independently reviewed and rated by 4 staff members and 1 external community member without a conflict of interest. A review committee met in April to discuss the proposals and formulate a funding recommendation for the Commission.

The review panel considered each proposal based on score, completeness of the proposal, expertise, experience, comprehensive product capabilities and organizational approaches to carrying out the scope of work and staff training. Ultimately, the review committee unanimously selected Social Solutions Global (SSG) for the Apricot 360 online database. In addition to contracting with 8 First 5 Commissions, SSG has provided services to over 3,000 health and human services agencies and completed over 25,000 implementations for large complex projects including the California Dept of Corrections, California Dept of Health and California Dept of Social Services.

Staff anticipate significant enhancements in functionality in terms of end user experience, referral tracking, family engagement, and system output/reporting. The proposed contract would

be for up to \$10,000 for initial development, technical support, and data migration in FY 20-21 and up to \$60,000 for FY 21-22, which represents a 29% decrease from the current allocation of \$85,000.

### **Recommendation**

The recommended action would select Social Solutions Global (SSG) as the new data management vendor for the Commission's program management, case management, and evaluation efforts. This action would also grant authority to the Executive Director to enter into a contract with SSG, beginning June 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 for up to \$70,000 for initial development, technical support, data migration and annual licensing fees, subject to annual renewal for FY 22-24.