

**Side Letter of Agreement  
Between the  
Service Employees International Union, Local 521  
and Tulare County**


Representatives from the Health & Human Services Agency (HHS) and the Human Resources & Development Department met with representatives from the Service Employees International Union, Local 521 (SEIU), concerning the HHS partnering with the Sheriff's Office for the provision of mental health field support services (crisis evaluations) to community members that are in a mental health crises during a law enforcement encounter.

Licensed Social Workers will be utilized to provide immediate assistance to a community member that is experiencing a mental health crises during a law enforcement encounter. Due to their specialized training and licensure, they will be able to assist a Sheriff's Deputy in safely and effectively de-escalating a mental health crises, recommending a safety plan, and providing referrals that offer the appropriate level of care, thus possibly avoiding unnecessary incarceration and hospitalization.

Licensed Social Workers will be eligible to volunteer for this special duty assignment, which shall be subject to an internal selection process in the department. Employees selected will receive specialized training for this duty assignment as they will be riding with a Sheriff's Deputy during their shift and responding with the Sheriff's Deputy to law enforcement calls with a mental health crisis component. Should there not be enough volunteers selected to cover this new duty assignment, the HHS will open an outside recruitment to staff this assignment. It is anticipated that four (4) employees will be needed to staff this program.

The work hours for these assignments are anticipated to be day shifts during the week and week-end, and eventually to include afternoon and night shifts. It is anticipated that this will be a 4-6 month assignment so that other clinicians that are interested will have an opportunity to participate in the program. This is a Pilot Program expected to last for twelve (12) months from the Board of Supervisor approval, however, it can be discontinued at any time at the discretion of the County.

Employees selected for this assignment shall receive a six (6) percent special duty pay based on scheduled hours.

  
For SEIU

11/9/2021  
Date

  
For Tulare County

11/9/2021  
Date