



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: *December 9, 2025*

DATE: Thursday, December 4, 2025
TO: Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Ryan Gustafson, Agency Director, Human Services Agency
(775) 785-8600, rgustafson@washoecounty.gov
THROUGH: Kate Thomas, County Manager
SUBJECT: Recommendation to approve the purchase and/or use of prepaid cards/gift cards to be utilized as an option for resource needs and/or incentives for individuals, clients, participants, children, and families who interact with the Human Services Agency retroactive beginning September 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026. (All Commission Districts.) **FOR POSSIBLE ACTION**

SUMMARY

Recommendation to approve the purchase and/or use of prepaid cards/gift cards to be utilized as an option for resource needs and/or incentives for individuals, clients, participants, children, and families who interact with the Human Services Agency retroactive beginning September 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Vulnerable Populations.

PREVIOUS ACTION

No previous action.

BACKGROUND

When certain eligibility requirements are met, the Human Services Agency (HSA) provides resource assistance to individuals and families in need. These resources may be needed to support someone fleeing domestic violence, experiencing homelessness, or pending approval for other similar benefits. The assistance aids in preventing the need to bring the adult, child, or family into more costly forms of agency care. Examples of assistance include, but are not limited to resources such as groceries, diapers, clothing, bedding, phone minutes, car seats, meal cards, etc. In some cases, agency staff will complete the purchase of needed items and coordinate the distribution to the individual, family, or child. Alternatively, there are cases where the most cost-effective approach is to provide a prepaid/gift card rather than sending agency staff to make the purchase. The agency also uses prepaid/gift cards to incentivize participation in regional data collection activities in specialized populations, such as the point in time homeless count.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

County policy states that the purchase of these prepaid cards/gift cards require the approval of the Board of County Commissioners. Bringing each individual prepaid/gift card purchase before the Board would render the assistance process inefficient and ineffective; therefore, HSA is seeking blanket authority to purchase prepaid cards/gift cards both individually and in bulk, as needed, to maintain an inventory of resources sufficient to support the vulnerable populations encountered by the agency.

For all prepaid cards/gift cards, HSA complies with agency policies and procedures regarding eligibility, accounting and any other relevant policies. HSA has, or will have, written procedures in place on the awarding of gift cards and the monthly inventory of the purchased cards.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no additional fiscal impact with this approval as funding for prepaid/gift cards already exists within the HSA budget in funds 221, 223, 225 and 228.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation to approve the purchase and/or use of prepaid cards/gift cards to be utilized as an option for resource needs and/or incentives for individuals, clients, participants, children, and families who interact with the Human Services Agency retroactive beginning September 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be:

"Recommendation to approve the purchase and/or use of prepaid cards/gift cards to be utilized as an option for resource needs and/or incentives for individuals, clients, participants, children, and families who interact with the Human Services Agency retroactive beginning September 1, 2025 and ending June 30, 2026."