



IMPERIAL COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE PRESS RELEASE

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Paula Llanas Appointed as Director of Imperial County of Social Services

EL CENTRO, CA – On Tuesday, August 23, 2022, the Imperial County Board of Supervisors announced the appointment of Paula Llanas as the new Director of the Imperial County Department of Social Services (ICDSS).

“Ms. Llanas has consistently demonstrated her ability to be an effective and valuable leader and is another example of the County’s commitment to fostering and empowering our talent from within our organization into positions of leadership,” stated Chairman of the Board, Jesus Eduardo Escobar. “The Board has the utmost confidence that Ms. Llanas will work diligently on behalf of the ICDSS staff and all those they proudly serve, and we are proud to appoint another woman into a position of power.”

Ms. Llanas began her career with ICDSS in 2005 as a Social Worker and worked in various capacities within the department including Social Worker Supervisor, Program Manager, Deputy Director, and Assistant Director. Throughout her 17-year career, she has built strong partnerships at a local, state, federal, and international level to best serve the public and staff. During her tenure, she directed and implemented various specialized programs, including working with International Social Service, U.S. Consulate, Desarrollo Internacional de la Familia (DIF), and Instituto Nacional de Migración on repatriation processes for children and adults; and Letters Rogatory, an international legal process with the judicial system in Mexico. She has also led the Drug Endangered Children Program (DEC), alongside the Narcotics Task Force, to develop coordinated responses to address substance abuse affecting children and families to leverage resources and provide drug endangered children opportunities to live in safe and nurturing environments.

In her most recent capacity as Assistant Director, Llanas provided executive leadership to programs within the department, such as the Imperial County Continuum of Care; CalWORKs; Cal-Fresh; Medical, Children, and Family Services; Administration, Aging, and Disability Services Divisions; and the Family Justice Center. Under her direct leadership, the Continuum of Care has successfully secured over \$25 million in grant funding to eradicate homelessness in the region, address the underlying causes, and lessen the negative impact of homelessness on individuals, families, and the community. As a result of these efforts, over 2,500 households in 2021 received assistance such as rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention measures. In addition, Llanas worked with local agencies to develop and launch the Emergency Hosing Voucher program that, to date, has issued 156 vouchers to local individuals and families.

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Upon her appointment, Llanas stated, “It is a privilege to serve the Department and the people of Imperial County in this capacity, and I am honored that the Board has placed their trust in me to lead a department that has helped me gain a deep knowledge of the needs of our community. Throughout my career, I have seen and appreciate our staff’s incredible commitment to the community we serve. I look forward to leading ICDSS as we continue to care and advocate for our residents.”

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Llanas obtained her Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Master of Social Work (MSW) degrees through San Diego State University (SDSU). She has also served as a Graduate School Coordinator for the SDSU MSW program and was recognized as the Field Instructor of the Year in 2016. Llanas is a lifelong Imperial County resident.

The ICDSS is the second largest County agency comprised of over 500 staff members across Imperial County and operates under the policy direction of the Board of Supervisors, California Department of Social Services, and California Department of Health Care Services. It is responsible for planning, implementing, operating, and monitoring social services programs that protect children and adults from abuse or neglect, enable the frail and disabled to remain in their homes, move eligible individuals and families from dependency to self-sufficiency, and provide public assistance benefits for eligible recipients. Approximately 60% of Imperial County residents receive assistance from ICDSS. For more information, visit <https://www.imperialcountysocialservices.org/>.

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