



For Immediate Release

August 1, 2024

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Supervisor Steve Ding supports Measure placed on November Ballot

Ballot Measure would require drug testing and treatment as a condition of receiving Government Aid

Stockton, CA - New, synthetic opioids like Fentanyl have hit San Joaquin County – like counties across this country – hard. The current drug epidemic is unlike anything the County has seen before.

This Measure approved by the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors today would require males under the age of 65 without dependent children who are reasonably believed to be abusing or dependent on illegal drugs to undergo a professional evaluation for substance abuse. A recipient who is determined to need treatment for substance abuse shall be referred to a treatment program and shall be required, in order to continue to receive General Assistance, to participate in the treatment program upon referral at no charge to the individual.

“This is the first step to begin the process to get those with addiction and mental illness the help they need and get them off the street. The band aid approach is not working. It’s time to get serious about addiction and mental illness. The safety of our community is our number one priority,” said Supervisor Steve Ding. “If San Joaquin County spent between \$131.8M and \$160.2M on homelessness according to a report prepared by the Center for Business and Policy Research at the University of the Pacific, \$15,000 - \$30,000 for treatment services per client to address addiction and mental illness is a drop in the bucket.” The monthly General Assistance caseload projected for 2024-2025 is 412 individuals per month, and Human Services Agency staff estimates that 5-10 individuals may qualify for the substance use counseling program per month.

In today’s challenging economic environment, it is crucial that we safeguard public resources and ensure that assistance programs are used effectively to support those who truly need help and provide a pathway to recovery and personal growth. This is a small step towards accountability.

We urge citizens to support this measure for the betterment of our community and the responsible management of public resources.

You can read the full text of the measure [here](#).

San Joaquin County Supervisor Steve Ding represents District 4 which includes the communities of Lodi, Woodbridge, Thornton, Linden, Lockeford, Clements, Acampo, Morada and East Stockton.

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