



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FRESNO COUNTY APPOINTS SANJA KOVACEVIC BUGAY TO DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

FRESNO, CA – The Fresno County Board of Supervisors appointed Sanja Kovacevic Bugay as the director of the Department of Social Services.

Bugay brings over 20 years of experience in Social Services and has been the Human Services Agency (HSA) director at Kings County since September 2015. During her leadership at Kings County HSA, she led the redesign of Child Welfare Services, adopting the principles of Safety Organized Practice, restructured Emergency Response, and improved the approach to placement services. The redesign resulted in a reduction of foster care placement cases and eliminated the backlog in emergency response. Additionally, she led the Kings County Whole Person Care Pilot which brought enhanced case management to address high emergency room utilization and jail recidivism rates.

She serves on the Executive Committee of the California Welfare Director's Association (CWDA), the Governor's Child Welfare Council, and as the Kings County First Five Commissioner. She also chairs the Kings County Homelessness Collaborative and recently served on the County Medical Services Program (CMSP) Governing Board for three years.

Prior to her leadership role in Kings County, Bugay worked in the Department of Social Services (DSS) at the County of Fresno in administrative and fiscal roles. She served for three years as a Deputy Director, leading over 600 staff and overseeing the implementation of the Affordable Care Act and the DSS Service Center, which transitioned the service delivery model and improved the speed and accuracy of services to Med-Cal and CalFresh clients.

She has a bachelor's degree in Agricultural and Managerial Economics from University of California, Davis, and a Master of Business Administration from California State University, Fresno. She is married and has two daughters.

"Sanja's previous experience working in Fresno County, coupled with the innovative work she has done at Kings County, make her the right choice to navigate our Department of Social Services in the years ahead. We are thrilled to have her return to the Fresno County family," stated County Administrative Officer Paul Nerland.