

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: November 7, 2022

To: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Shakita LaGrant-McClain, Director, Department of Health and Human Services

Subject: Report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, requesting authorization to enter into a 2023 fee-for-service contract with First Transit, Inc. from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 at a cost of \$1,510,940

File Type: Action Report

REQUEST

The Director of the Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services is requesting authorization to enter into a 2023 fee-for-service contract with First Transit, Inc. from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 at a cost of \$1,510,940 for providing specialized transportation services to older adult residents of Milwaukee County.

POLICY

Per Wisconsin Statutes, the Director of DHHS is requesting authorization to execute this fee for services contract.

Wisconsin State Statutes:	59.52(31)
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BACKGROUND

Access to services for older adults begins with access to transportation. For many older adult residents of Milwaukee County, transportation becomes a barrier to aging in place due to lack of access to a personal vehicle, loss of driving privileges, limited public transportation options, mobility challenges, and limited income.

First Transit, Inc has served Milwaukee County's older adult residents as the Older Adult Transportation Services (OATS) specialized transportation provider since January 2021. As the OATS provider, First Transit, Inc. assures riders of door through door transportation for adult residents of Milwaukee County 60 years of age and older that do not have access to alternative transportation.

Rides can be scheduled for:

- Non-emergency medical transportation for healthcare, dental, and therapeutic appointments (which include dialysis and mental health services)
- Nutrition access, including rides to grocery stores, Senior Dining Program meal sites, Senior Stock-box distribution sites, and rides to farmers markets
- Rides to County-supported senior centers that directly provide social support services including evidence-based programs
- To additional service sites including legal services and mental health resources
- Polling and early voting sites during elections, and voting rights access services
- Civic and cultural destinations within Milwaukee County, including: Milwaukee County Zoo, Milwaukee Public Museum, Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory, Boerner Botanical Gardens, Recreation Facilities
- Special destinations as designated during public emergencies including heating and cooling shelters

Rides provided through this contract are funded by Wis. Stat. §85.21 specialized transportation aid, federal Older Americans Act funds, and the Basic County Allocation fund. Non-emergency medical transportation rides funded with 85.21 funds will require a \$4.00 co-pay in 2023, increased from \$3.00 in 2022. Although non-medical rides are provided for free, as mandated by the Older Americans Act, riders are given the opportunity to support this program through donations.

With the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic still lingering in the community, 2022 brought exciting service expansions. First, beginning in January 2022, civic and cultural destinations were included in response to feedback received during the 2022 Area Aging Plan process. Second, beginning in April 2022, group grocery rides from senior housing sites throughout the County were restarted, after having taken a pause to protect drivers and riders during the pandemic. Group grocery rides provide a vital service for senior housing residents, and also promote efficiency within the OATS contract.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This item is aligned to the goals in the Milwaukee County Strategic Plan as this contract focuses on delivering services based on the resolution of health disparities and upstream social determinants of health that puts participants and the community at the center by offering services in a manner that promotes dignity and builds trust between residents and the County.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors authorize the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, or her designee, to enter into a fee-for-service contract with First Transit, Inc. from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023 at a cost of \$1,510,940.

FISCAL EFFECT

Funding for this service has been included in the DHHS 2023 Budget.

TERMS

This contract is effective starting January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

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PREPARED BY:

Carrie Koss Vallejo, Program and Planning Coordinator, DHHS Aging and Disabilities Services

APPROVED BY:

Shakita LaGrant-McClain
Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director

ATTACHMENTS:

None

cc: County Executive David Crowley
Sup. Liz Sumner, Chair, Finance Committee
Sup. Shawn Rolland, Chair, Health Equity, Human Needs, and Strategic Planning
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County
Steve Cady, Research Director, Comptroller's Office
Lottie Maxwell-Mitchell, Fiscal & Management Analyst, DAS