

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: November 14, 2025

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

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

Subject: A report from the Executive Director, Department of Health and Human Services, requesting authorization to enter into a 2026 purchase of service contract with Milwaukee Community Crossroads (formerly Milwaukee Christian Center) for the Credible Messenger Program

File Type: Action File

REQUEST

The Executive Director of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is requesting authorization to execute a 2026 purchase of service contract for the Children, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) area within DHHS.

POLICY

Per Wisconsin Statutes, the Executive Director of the Department of Health and Human Services is requesting authorization to execute these contracts consistent with Milwaukee County procurement standards.

Wisconsin State Statutes:	59.52(31)
Milwaukee County General Ordinances	Ch. 32.40

BACKGROUND

Since 1970, DHHS has supported a social service delivery system comprised of both directly provided and purchased services. DHHS has partnerships with community members and partners that have allowed DHHS to cooperate and collaborate with various community stakeholders. These partnerships further the opportunities for community participation in responding to a youth's behaviors and needs, as well as community safety and are in alignment with the development of the youth justice continuum of care. These collaborations also support DHHS's mission and vision for all kids and families across Milwaukee County.

This file only includes the 2026 service contract that DHHS listed in the 2026 Adopted Budget under a vendor's former name. DHHS is seeking authorization for the following 2026 contract

for CYFS:

- **\$350,000 to Milwaukee Community Crossroads (formerly Milwaukee Christian Center) for the Milwaukee County Credible Messenger Program:** The Milwaukee County Credible Messenger Program is designed to engage youth, families, and individuals in Milwaukee County in various settings and outreach activities community wide. The goals of Credible Messenger's transformative mentoring are to provide prevention and intervention with youth, keeping youth from either entering the youth justice system or going deeper into involvement with the youth justice system. The focus of the outreach efforts will be to provide information, resources, and build social connectivity that supports the mission and purpose of the Credible Messenger Program. The program will serve justice involved youth and youth who are referred from local law enforcement as an alternative to justice involvement and preventative measure.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The CYFS is recommending contracts that support the ongoing development of community-based programming for children, youth and their families served across CYFS and ensures a racial equity lens is utilized in all program and contract decisions. The CYFS programs enhance the quality of life for youth and their families in Milwaukee County. There are ongoing efforts to reform the youth justice system in Milwaukee County to build upon the community continuum of care, individualize all case planning and services for youth in the community whenever possible and break down the silos in the system across all entities. The CYFS is committed to transition youth out of correctional placements and back to Milwaukee by leveraging resources for the zero-youth corrections plan to better support young people and their families.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors authorize the Executive Director, Department of Health and Human Services, or her designee, to execute a purchase of service contract in a total amount of \$350,000 for the services identified in the accompanying resolution. The effective date of the contract would be the period of January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026.

FISCAL EFFECT

The 2026 DHHS Budget includes funding for all community programs in the CYFS.

TERMS

The purchase of service contract would be effective January 1, 2026, to December 31, 2026.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Executive Director
Kelly Pethke, CYFS Administrator
Clare O'Brien, DHHS Budget & Policy Director

PREPARED BY:

Kelly Pethke, CYFS Administrator

APPROVED BY:

Shakita LaGrant-McClain

Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director

ATTACHMENTS:

None

cc: County Executive David Crowley
Hon. Carl Ashley, Chief Judge
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office