COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: 4/22/2026

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

From: Isaac Rowlett, Strategy Director, Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance

Subject: Update on healthcare contract and benefit actions

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

From the Office of the County Executive, providing an informational report on actions taken surrounding healthcare contracts and benefits.

BACKGROUND

The Milwaukee County Board requested updates on the status of contracts, procedures and outcomes surrounding healthcare and benefits.

Since February 2026, the administration has taken the following steps to improve processes and activities related to Milwaukee County benefits:

1. Reviewed all contracts managed by HR Benefits division to catalogue and review for compliance
2. Engaged with existing contracted consultants to acquire documentation, ensure organizational awareness and track milestone status
3. Reviewed and revised employee job descriptions to determine missing skillsets or capacity gaps and identified opportunities for additional expectations related to collaboration
4. Revising the contracting Administrative Manual of Operating Procedure (AMOP) 15.01 to reflect any updated processes or omissions and more clearly define roles and expectations for collaboration and connection with impacted departments.
5. Gathered information about the largest contracts across every cabinet department
6. Engaged with responsible departments on pathways to create a dashboard to track largest organizational contracts per File 26-297.

Contracted Consultants

Staff from the Office of the County Executive and Office of Corporation Counsel have met regularly with corresponding representatives from Willis Towers Watson to ensure continuity of deliverables and assess existing procedures. The administration is working with Willis Towers Watson as contracted (see file 25-570) to improve alignment with standard county procurement practices. Additionally, both parties are reviewing schedules for better alignment regarding deliverables that are necessary for budget deliberation.

Contract Review

Staff from the Office of the County Executive and Office of Corporation Counsel have similarly worked with representatives from Willis Towers Watson to review Milwaukee County's healthcare and related contracts to confirm compliance with current contracting practices and to negotiate inclusion of Milwaukee County's standard contract language and terms. These negotiations remain ongoing with respect to an agreement with United Healthcare concerning Milwaukee County's Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan as well an unrelated agreement with Prudential concerning services it provides administering Milwaukee County's Family and Medical Leave program. It is anticipated these negotiations will conclude during the second quarter of this year.

Job Description & Collaboration

The administration has reviewed the existing JEQ for the Total Rewards Manager and revised clarity on responsibility for fiscal performance and budget management as well as the expectation of coordination with other departments. The recruitment for the vacant Director of Total Rewards was opened on March 11, 2026, and closed on March 27, 2026. Subsequent hiring activities are in progress.

An interdepartmental work group has been created to promote communication between different departments who are involved in Milwaukee County healthcare benefits. The workgroup will include members from the Department of Human Resources, Office of Strategy, Budget & Performance, Office of Corporation Counsel, Office of the Comptroller and Office of the County Executive. It is expected that the first meeting will take place in early May.

AMOP Revision & Training

Staff from DAS, OCC, SBP & Comptroller collaborated to rewrite AMOP 15.01: Procurement and Contracting (this is a new title). The rewritten AMOP includes drafts of updated appendices and new appendices. The rewritten AMOP has been submitted for review by the AMOP Committee in late April (2026). The new AMOP includes greater

detail regarding specific roles and responsibilities, which were agreed to by all staff departments that collaborated on the AMOP. The AMOP also provides clear directions to department personnel on the contact information for questions.

As part of the updated AMOP rollout, DAS will work with HR to ensure annual training requirements are assigned to all contract management personnel, contract signers, and level approvers, including departmental leadership, based on lists created and maintained by the Office of the Comptroller. Further, DAS will continue to promote the Procurement resources available on County Connect and through the Infor financial system. DAS will also continue to promote open office hours for contracting support for all departments and will continue regular meetings between DAS Procurement staff and customer departments.

Contract Reporting

In March 2026 the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors approved File #26-297 requesting countywide collaboration in developing a plan to implement a public facing dashboard of all contracts subject to county board approval. While this work is in its early exploratory stages, it supports improving visibility into contract status, timelines, and procedures. Should a dashboard ultimately be pursued, further work would be required to ensure that data for all Board-approved contracts, including benefits contracts, is consistently captured and consolidated in one reliable location.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

1B: Create and nurture an inclusive culture across county government
2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity
2B: Break down silos across county government to maximize access and quality of services offered.
3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities
3B: Enhance the County’s fiscal health and sustainability

FISCAL EFFECT

The report is informational only and there is no fiscal impact.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Jeremy Lucas Jeremy.Lucas@milwaukeecountywi.gov
Aaron Hertzberg Aaron.Hertzberg@milwaukeecountywi.gov
Bill Davidson William.Davidson@milwaukeecountywi.gov
Isaac Rowlett Isaac.Rowlett@milwaukeecountywi.gov
Amy Turim Amy.Turim@milwaukeecountywi.gov

PREPARED BY:
Jeremy Lucas, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of County Executive David Crowley

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk