
**MILWAUKEE COUNTY
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: October 9, 2014

TO: Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chair, Judiciary, Safety, and General Services

FROM: James Sullivan, Director, Child Support Services

SUBJECT: Informational Report, from the Director of the Department of Child Support Services, highlighting the progress towards implementation of our Department's portion of the Innovation Fund.



JOHN P. HAYES CENTER • CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES

Milwaukee County

JAMES SULLIVAN • Director

JANET NELSON
Legal Counsel Administrator

AGNES MARCINOWSKI
Operations Manager

JETAUNNE RICHARDSON
Program Manager

LAMAR JACKSON
Fiscal & Budget Manager

October 9, 2014

Child Support Services Innovation Grant report

Milwaukee County Child Support Services has utilized the \$187,000 in Innovation Grant funding, approved by the Milwaukee County Board in April of this year to address outdated computer call management software issues, improve customer service, and avoid future system replacement expenses. Child Support currently uses a call center management software program known as Apropos to manage calls coming in to the Child Support call center. Apropos is over a decade old, and is prone to system crashes. CSS pays \$80,000 a year for a service contract to maintain the Apropos system. The problem that the County Board addressed in making the Innovation Fund Grant was to avoid the expensive and imminent costs of replacing Apropos, possibly on short notice.

Child Support is in need of 2 things, performance based consulting services, and a call center solution. The Innovation Grant has enabled us to address both issues. The Wisconsin Child Support Trust Fund, which is effectively the bank and distribution network for all child support payments in the state of Wisconsin, is run by Xerox Corporation. The Trust Fund is already running a Child Support Call Center of their own, where they are currently answering calls for 6 other Wisconsin counties. That call center is located in Milwaukee County, on Edgerton Avenue, near the airport. Milwaukee County CSS proposes to have the Trust Fund take over the call center function from Milwaukee County, in exchange for which, Xerox will provide the performance based consulting services that we also need.

We expect this relationship to have significant benefits for Milwaukee County and for the Child Support participants that we serve. Cost savings are realized over time, because Xerox handling the call center function costs significantly less than handling the call center in-house. CSS also will no longer have to pay the \$80,000 per year service contract to deal with Apropos' frequent crashes, and we avoid the eventual million dollar replacement cost of the system. Customer service will improve, because calls are answered by trained Child Support experts at the Wisconsin Child Support Trust Fund, and because the service contract requires that Milwaukee County will retain control of training and be able to customize the handling of Milwaukee County calls. Calls will be answered faster, improving customer service for participants. Currently, Apropos will mandatorily shunt calls into a call back queue after 10 minutes on hold. When calls are answered at the Trust Fund, they are answered after no more than 3 minutes on hold, and there is no mandatory shift to the call back queue. Department wide performance

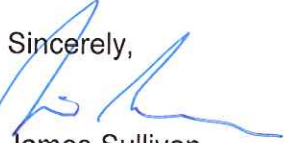
The Department of Child Support Services, through the utilization of community resources, promotes family stability, creating a better quality of life for the children of Milwaukee County.

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will improve, because Milwaukee County CSS will be utilizing on site work flow analysis and consulting services performed by Xerox in conjunction with the shift of call center services. These consulting services are a key part of the strategic growth plan for CSS over the next several years. The fact that the Innovation Grant has enabled us to obtain these consulting services in conjunction with a call center solution to replace the aging Apropos system, and at no additional cost, is an outstanding opportunity.

Because Child Support is federally funded under Section IVD of the Social Security Act, dollars invested in the Child Support program are matched by the Federal Government at a 2:1 rate. Thus, the dollar impact of these Innovation Grant Funds invested in the Child Support program are tripled. The \$187,000 Innovation Grant has \$561,000 in buying power. Those funds cover the first year of handling Milwaukee County calls from the Trust Fund, the first year of a 3 year contract, with 2 two year extensions by consent of the parties with a 5% rate increase built in. That contract has been referred by the Board to the Budget and Finance committee, with approval anticipated in November.

This Innovation Grant will allow us to save the county significant amounts of money, avoid even more future expense, improve customer service, and improve our own performance, which helps to secure future funding and continuance of service. And, because it's child support, there is a 3 fold leveraging of the grant dollars. On behalf of CSS and the 126,000 cases that we serve, thank you for this opportunity. I would be pleased to answer any further questions you may have if I have not been able to sufficiently address an issue here.

Sincerely,


James Sullivan
Director, Child Support Services