

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
**INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION**

DATE: 5/20/2020  
TO: Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, County Board of Supervisors  
FROM: Christine Westrich, Director, Office of Emergency Management  
SUBJECT: From the Director of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), requesting retroactive authorization to receive one (1) portable morgue container donated by Froedtert Lutheran Hospital, Inc., in order to provide refrigerated surge storage for decedents.

**REQUEST**

From the Director of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), requesting retroactive authorization to receive one (1) portable morgue container donated by Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital, Inc., in order to provide refrigerated surge storage for decedents.

**BACKGROUND**

Wisconsin State Statute 323.15 stipulates the ongoing duties of the head of emergency management to include directing and coordinating emergency management activities throughout the county during a state of emergency.

The Office of Emergency Management was offered ownership of Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital, Inc., portable morgue unit that has been in storage at the Milwaukee Mitchell International Airport for approximately five years and OEM will maintain this unit and coordinate its use for additional decedent storage with the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office.

The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a global pandemic on March 11th and by May 19th, Milwaukee County experienced 240 deaths due to COVID-19 with the first fatality occurring on March 19th.

At the date of this writing, stay at home orders have been lifted by the majority of municipalities within the borders of the county and the projections of the spread of the disease are widely variable.

The Democratic National Convention (DNC) has not been declared virtual and is to occur in Milwaukee from August 17-August 21, 2020, where thousands of people from around the Country are expected to attend. The Department of Homeland Security has deemed this convention to be of international significance as a National Special Security Event.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The portable morgue unit will not have a fiscal impact on OEM and initial maintenance is being provided by the Milwaukee County Department of Transportation Fleet Management Division at \$250 annually and fuel costs will be charged to the Medical

Examiner at \$1.28 per gallon (approximately \$6,500 per year based on daily usage 24 hours a day, a worst-case scenario).

If the unit is in operation for an extended period of time, reimbursement monies in 2020 are available through the federal CARES relief act and 2021 monies may be available through federal and state government disaster relief funds.

#### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors authorizes the Office of Emergency Management to take ownership of a single (1) portable morgue container from Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital, Inc. at no capital cost to Milwaukee County, effective February 20th, 2020.



Christine Westrich  
Director, Office of Emergency Management

Attachments: RESOLUTION  
FISCAL NOTE

CC: County Executive David Crowley  
Chairwoman Marcelia Nicholson, County Board of Supervisors  
Chairman Jason Haas, Committee on Finance & Audit  
Finance & Audit Committee Members  
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, Office of the County Executive  
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors  
Joseph Lamers, Director, DAS-Performance, Strategy and Budget (DAS-PSB)  
Lindsey Peterson, Fiscal and Management Analyst, DAS-PSB  
Steve Cady, Research & Policy Director, Office of the Comptroller  
Janelle Jensen, Committee Clerk  
Shanin Brown, Committee Coordinator, Finance & Audit Committee