

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: September 9, 2021

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

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

Subject: An informational report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, regarding the implementation of a Secured Residential Care Center for Children and Youth (SRCCCY) under Wisconsin Act 185

File Type: Information

REQUEST

This informational report is intended to update the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors on the implementation of a Secured Residential Care Center for Children and Youth (SRCCCY) in Milwaukee County.

POLICY

In March 2018, the Wisconsin State Legislature adopted Act 185 paving the way for the development of local alternatives to Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake. Act 185 directs the closure of Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake for use as youth correctional facilities by July 1, 2021 and authorizes County-operated Secured Residential Care Centers for Children and Youth (SRCCCYs). Under Act 185, the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) maintains supervision over youth with adult court sentences and youth in the Serious Juvenile Offender Program (SJOP) within Type 1 facilities, but the supervision of youth under other correctional placements would be transferred to the counties.

Wisconsin State Statutes:	Ch. 938
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BACKGROUND

Per Act 185, the State is to fund 95 percent of the design and construction of SRCCCYs with counties contributing the remaining 5 percent. To qualify for the funds, counties were required to submit a grant application to a state grant committee. Milwaukee County submitted an initial application along with subsequent revisions and ultimately, received a \$15.2 million grant award which was short of the funding needed to modify the detention center at the Vel R. Phillips Youth and Family Justice Center as an SRCCCY.

In July 2020, DHHS received a communication from the DOC requesting that Milwaukee County accept the \$15.2 million grant award. In response, County Executive David Crowley and the DHHS Director submitted a letter to the DOC requesting deferral of the grant award. The reasons for the deferral included the uncertainty around the State's plans for its Type 1 facilities and additional operating support for the SRCCCY.

Latest Update

On July 8, 2021, Governor Evers signed the 2021–2023 State Budget that excluded his previous youth justice reform proposals and raised the daily rate for youth correctional placements at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake school from the previous rate of \$615 to \$1,154 per day. The plan for the development of a state-run Type I facility to be constructed near Milwaukee remains uncertain, but local legislators have expressed their support. It has been proposed that the funds awarded to counties for building local SRCCCYs could be repurposed to pay for the facility if counties continue to defer the funds.

Next Steps

The County Executive's Office, DHHS, and Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS) will continue to explore the implications of the state budget and review the decision to defer Act 185 grant funds. Efforts to develop local options to expand program capacity and resources to support youth transitioning from the State facilities will be ongoing. The Milwaukee County Act 185 Steering Committee will meet in September to review the merits of deferring the grant award versus acceptance of the award in support of funding the original plan (with some modifications) for the development of a local SRCCCY as part of a renovation at the detention center.

DHHS will continue to update the County Board on any future changes.

Related File No's:	21-29, 20-21, 19-23, 18-924
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ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

DHHS continues to work toward transitioning youth out of Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake Schools. DYFS has been leveraging its resources toward the ongoing development of community-based programming for justice-involved youth and their families through innovative initiatives, all of which support the zero-youth corrections plan. All of these initiatives are occurring in the Milwaukee community and are focused not only on the youth but also their families. This programming meets the youth where they are in unique ways that are individualized to their needs.

FISCAL EFFECT

This report is informational and there is no fiscal effect.

TERMS

N/A

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director
Mark Mertens, DYFS Administrator

PREPARED BY:

Mark Mertens, DYFS Administrator

APPROVED BY:

Shakita LaGrant-McClain
Shakita LaGrant-McClain, DHHS Director

ATTACHMENTS:

None

cc: County Executive David Crowley
Hon. Mary E. Triggiano, Chief Judge
Sup. Jason Haas, Chair, Finance Committee
Sup. Felesia Martin, Chair, Health Equity, Human Needs, & Strategic Planning Committee
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Steve Cady, Research Director, Comptroller's Office
Pam Matthews, Fiscal & Management Analyst, DAS
Lottie Maxwell-Mitchell, Research & Policy Analyst, Comptroller's Office