



Milwaukee County

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

633 W. Wisconsin Ave., Suite 700
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Date: December 2, 2021

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

From: Christopher McGowan, Deputy Director, Office of Emergency Management

Subject: From the Deputy Director, Office of Emergency Management, providing an Informational Report documenting the county's COVID-19 pandemic response.

File Type: Informational Report

REQUEST

To provide the Health Equity, Human Needs and Strategic Planning Committee with an informational report regarding the documenting of the county's COVID-19 pandemic response.

BACKGROUND

Due to the unprecedented events surrounding the various stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to embark on an effort to capture as much information as possible about the response, protection, mitigation, policies, and outcomes that we experienced. Over the course of the last twenty-two months Milwaukee County has partnered with multiple federal, state and local agencies, healthcare centers, public health organizations, businesses, and various other agencies and organizations to limit the effect of COVID-19 to our citizens and community. With such a wide variety of agencies and organizations, working in a multitude of different workstreams, it has been difficult to fully evaluate the performance and the effect of these efforts.

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has retained Epicenter Innovation, LLC to perform a comprehensive after-action review (AAR). The AAR is intended to take a third-party view of the efforts within Milwaukee County, compile and evaluate the data, and make recommendations used for future pandemic planning and training. OEM will be working directly with Epicenter to connect with as many individuals and agencies that had a role during the pandemic as possible. The after-action review project will take place in four phases.

Phase 1- Interviews

Phase 1 will consist of three events occurring simultaneously. The first is the development of a digital survey and distribution. This survey will go out to agencies and individuals that had a role in the pandemic response. The second event is a data capture. Epicenter will operate a repository of digital information to be sorted through and evaluated to shape other phases of the AAR. Some of the information to be captured during this portion will be emails, plans, situation reports, previous AARs, media briefings, etc. The third event will be initial interviews of the participating individuals and agencies, i.e., County Executive and staff, OEM, City and local public health, UEOC partners, etc.

Phase 2- Research and Facilitation

During this phase, Epicenter will sort through the data collected and begin evaluating the findings in order to drive more specific interviews and information requests. Additional interviews will likely be held during this period, but the context of these interviews will be more directly guided by some of the findings in the evaluation process.

Phase 3-Reporting

During the reporting phase, Epicenter will develop the final after-action review with recommendations, present the findings to Milwaukee County OEM, County Executive and Board of Supervisors, as well as the Intergovernmental Cooperation Council and any other partners. The final AAR document detailing lessons learned will be used to develop an exercise and evaluation program in accordance with FEMA Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) recommendations. HSEEP documents will guide recommendations and training development for the final phase of the project.

Phase 4- Improvement Planning

In this final phase, Epicenter will work with OEM to develop a roadmap for improvement planning, future training and exercise development, and policy guidance.

CONCLUSION

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic there was not a solid pandemic plan within OEM, nor had the community experienced an event of this magnitude. The Emergency Management Division, within OEM will be using the lessons learned, and recommendations from the after-action review to guide a more cohesive and coordinated pandemic plan, to be better prepared for similar event moving forward. OEM also intends to use the guidance in the final document to build upon the partnerships created during the pandemic and remain engaged with these agencies to continue to work in similar workstreams for the benefit of the community.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is informational at the request of the Committee Chair/Vice-Chair, Supervisors Martin and Rolland. No recommended Board action at this time.

Related File No's:	Not Applicable
Associated File No's (Including Transfer Packets):	Not Applicable
Previous Action Date(s):	Not Applicable

FISCAL EFFECT

Costs for contracting Epicenter to perform the work describes above, will be funded through OEM pandemic response funds set aside specifically for COVID emergency response.



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VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

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