

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

DATE: March 11, 2020

TO: Supervisor Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Mary Jo Meyers, Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Prepared by Shakita LaGrant, Assistant Administrator, Disabilities Services Division

SUBJECT: **Report from the Director, Department of Health and Human Services, requesting authorization to amend 2020 Disabilities Services Division purchase of service contracts with Birth to 3 agencies**

Issue

The Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), is requesting authorization for DHHS to amend 2020 purchase of service (POS) contracts with the Birth to 3 provider agencies within the Disabilities Services Division (DSD).

Background and Rationale

The Birth to 3 Program is an entitlement and provides critical early intervention services to children age zero to three years who demonstrate developmental delays. Provided services are critical to the identification of early intervention strategies that can assist children to reach their maximum potential and actively participate in their communities. Services delivered by this program are provided by contracted community-based agencies that have significant expertise in this area.

Birth to 3 services continue to be invaluable to families who have a child with a developmental delay. Provider agencies are key partners in the process through the delivery of effective early intervention services in partnership with families and Milwaukee County.

Program Budget

The program reflects a total budget of about \$5.4 million for 2020. The 2020 Birth to 3 Program budget is supported by a variety of revenue sources: tax levy, Potawatomi, Basic County Allocation (BCA) as well as State funding.

State and federal funding has remained stagnant for the last several years, yet the cost to operate the program continues to increase. And Birth to 3 provider agencies generally incur costs that exceed their contract amounts due to the increased demand for services and are not fully reimbursed due to budget limitations. For this reason, counties across the State have advocated

for additional funding to sustain and maintain the Birth to 3 Program. Counties were finally successful and the 2019-2021 biennial budget now includes \$1,125,000 in additional funding. At this time, it's not clear if this funding will continue in future budgets.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) allocated the funding based on the recommendation from the Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA) which considered the average enrollment of children in the Birth to 3 Program by county from 2015 to 2017 compared to the overall county/statewide Birth to 3 population. Over this period, the average enrollment was 12,442 statewide and in Milwaukee County it was 2,786. After adjusting for overall Birth to 3 population figures, Milwaukee County will receive one-time funding of \$362,509 to be allocated to our provider agencies.

Although the funding was authorized in the budget as of July 1, 2019, the allocation was not determined until recently. As a result, counties are receiving 18 months of funding (July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020) in calendar year 2020. DHHS allocated the additional funding to providers utilizing the same percentage basis of the providers' 2020 base contracts.

Agency	2020 Contract	2020 Recommended Amendment	Adjusted 2020 Contract
Curative	\$2,079,218	\$166,754	\$2,245,972
Milwaukee Center for Independence	\$517,241	\$39,876	\$557,117
Penfield	\$1,382,394	\$112,378	\$1,494,772
St. Francis	\$546,253	\$43,501	\$589,754
Total	\$4,525,106	\$362,509	\$4,887,615

It should be noted that agencies must continue to maintain compliance with federal indicators to keep pace with the high number of new referrals. In addition, DSD will conduct ongoing monitoring of agency performance on quality Birth to 3 measures including the annual parental survey and family outcomes.

Racial Equity Impact

The demographic data provided by the State of Wisconsin indicates that the percentage of people of color served by the Birth to 3 Program in Wisconsin is disproportionately low (less than 20 percent). As part of its 2020 operating plan, DSD's goal is to increase enrollment of referrals and point of contact by at least 10 percent.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the County Board of Supervisors authorize the Director, DHHS, or her designee, to increase 2020 purchase of service contracts in the amounts specified in the above table and detailed on the attached resolution.

Fiscal Effect

Funding for these POS contract amendments is being included in an amendment to the 2020 contract with the State of Wisconsin for Social Services and Community Programs. There is no additional tax levy impact associated with this request. A fiscal note form is attached.



Mary Jo Meyers, Director
Department of Health and Human Services

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