

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

File 22-848

Date: June 24, 2022

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

From: Genaro Baez, Director HR Operations/TA/L&D, Dept. of Human Resources
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services

Subject: Request for an appropriation transfer of \$150,000 for costs associated with an employee recruitment and retention marketing campaign to address critical staffing needs.

File Type: Action Report

REQUEST

The Department of Human Resources and Department of Administrative Services request that this action is referred to the Committee on Finance for consideration of a \$150,000 fund transfer from contingency to pay for a marketing campaign to attract and retain employees.

POLICY

Wisconsin State Statutes:	N/A
Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	N/A
Specific Adopted Budget:	N/A
Specific Adopted Budget Amendment:	N/A
Specific Adopted Capital Project:	N/A

BACKGROUND

Related File No's:	N/A
Associated File No's (Including Transfer Packets):	N/A
Previous Action Date(s):	N/A

Milwaukee County is currently facing a staffing crisis across many departments. The pandemic, aging workforce, inflationary environment and competitive job market have had severe impacts. Across the County, 19% of all positions are vacant. Some critical function areas are facing staffing vacancies in excess of 20%, including the Departments of Administrative Services, Airport, Sheriff's Office and House of Corrections. The Departments of Health and Human Services, Human Resources, IMSD and the Comptroller's office all have vacancies in excess of 15%.

While some vacancy and turn-over is anticipated, the current vacancy levels put considerable stress on the remaining 81% of employee helping to conduct the County's business. It's critical that Milwaukee County address the growing vacancy issues to ensure it can continue to meet the statutory obligations and service needs of our community.

Many posted positions have been difficult to fill with qualified candidates. Many posted positions have attracted limited or unqualified interest. Several positions, including key leadership positions within Departments have had candidates backout of offers.

Internally, employees have also struggled through the last couple of years. As has often been cited in national media, stress, burnout and mental health are key concerns.

When asked, employees often cite "pride in working for [Milwaukee County]" as a key benefit of their employment. In the County's 2020 employee engagement survey (the most recent available), employees rate "pride in working for [Milwaukee County]" 4.02 out of 5. This is among the highest scores for all categories. In follow up conversations, employees, often cite public service, impact in the community and the County's vision as being driving factors for their interest in working for Milwaukee County.

The Campaign

The campaign will be built around Milwaukee County's Vision to become the healthiest county in Wisconsin by achieving racial equity. Milwaukee County is a purpose driven organization that seeks to attract and retain "Changemakers" that are invested in realizing our vision and having a meaningful impact in our community. The campaign would be coordinated by the Department of Human Resources and marketing and communications staff in the Office of Strategy, Budget and Performance and various County departments.

Internally, the campaign will seek to highlight employees, outline opportunities for career paths within Milwaukee County, express appreciation for commitments to vision, and demonstrate the value and pride of public service.

The \$150,000 funding is intended to be a one-time allocation to address critical staffing vacancies within Milwaukee County. It should be noted that staffing shortfalls have helped to create budget surpluses, but many Departments continue to struggle to provide essential functions, maintain core services while positions remain unfilled. Surpluses from vacancies could help to fund a campaign to help fill those positions that remain vacant. Funding is anticipated to be spent as follows:

- a. Brand development, refinement, and content production: \$25,000 (contracted support for enhanced brand material beyond staff capabilities including video production)
- b. Brand distribution: \$100,000 (this could include, but would not be limited to: social media ads; paid job postings; search targeting; radio/app ads; billboards; bus ads; print materials (via HOC); video media, etc.)

- c. Special Events & Merchandise: \$25,000 (ensure presences at major hiring events, with the necessary resources, supplies and merchandise to attract job seekers)

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

Milwaukee County's vision can be a recruitment tool to attract and retain talent!

The effort looks to leverage the County's strategic plan to help attract and retain talent. By marketing Milwaukee County as a purpose drive organization, staff hopes to attract and retain talent that will (1A) reflect the full diversity of Milwaukee County, (1B) create and nurture an inclusive culture and (2B) maximize the quality of services offered.

Staff further notes that the ability to deliver on our strategic plan will require a fully staffed organization. On-going vacancies negatively impact our ability to provide core services let alone plan for and advance strategic goals.

FISCAL EFFECT

This is a one-time request for \$150,000 to address critical staffing vacancies throughout Milwaukee County. Contracts and spending will be utilized in a not-to-exceed fashion to remain within budget. No additional or out-year requests are anticipated at this time.

TERMS

There is no specified term related to this action request.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Margo Franklin, Aaron Hertzberg, Genaro Baez, Joe Lamers

PREPARED BY:

Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services

APPROVED BY:

Margo Franklin, Chief Human Resources Office

Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Service

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution
Fiscal Note

cc: Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Executive's Office
Supervisor Willie Johnson Jr., Chair, Committee on Personnel
Supervisor Elizabeth Sumner, Chair, Committee on Finance
Joe Lamers, Director, Office of Strategy, Budget, and Performance
Margo Franklin, Chief Human Resources Officer, Department of Human Resources
Aaron Hertzberg, Director, Department of Administrative Services
Scott Manske, Comptroller, Office of the Comptroller
Steve Cady, Research & Policy Director, Office of the Comptroller
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk