

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-Office Communication

Date: October 5, 2022

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

From: George Christenson, Clerk of Circuit Court

Subject: Request to waive MCCGO 56.30 (8) and (9) to pay for professional services rendered before a contract was signed

File Type: Action Report

REQUEST

The Director of the Clerk of Circuit Courts department is requesting permission to waive MCCGO 56.30 (8) and (9) to pay for professional services rendered by Contexture for eviction diversion consulting work.

POLICY

Wisconsin State Statutes:	Wis. Stat. §59.17
Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	Chapter 56.30 (8) and (9)
Specific Adopted Budget:	
Specific Adopted Budget Amendment:	
Specific Adopted Capital Project:	

BACKGROUND

Milwaukee County's Court has been convening the Housing Consortium for over two years in an effort to improve the handling of evictions in Milwaukee. The Consortium is composed of judges, commissioners, and clerks from the court system, landlord representatives, legal service providers, rental assistance providers, and local funding partners.

In the 2022 Combined Courts Budget, Chief Judge Triggiano requested and received funding for one additional commissioner and three additional clerks who work with the Small Claims Court, through which evictions are processed in Milwaukee County. Milwaukee County also launched a "right to counsel" initiative in the fall of 2021. The increase in staff capacity represented a shift toward problem-solving and collaboration to improve the eviction process and increase housing stability in our community.

To further these efforts, the Chief Judge and Clerk of Circuit Court applied and received a grant application to the National Center for State Courts to fund a Court Coordinator

(Eviction Diversion) to facilitate continued progress. The grant is a two-year award in the amount of \$242,287. Through File 22-753, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors approved the Combined Court Operations request in May 2022 to accept the grant award and create the Court Coordinator position.

As part of the Eviction Diversion grant application and budget, \$46,800 was allocated for project-based facilitation activities that would be completed throughout the two-year grant cycle. These project facilitation activities, which were coordinated by a consulting company (Contexture), began in June 2022.

Since June 2022, the Clerk of Circuit Court Office has been working on executing a professional services contract with Contexture to coordinate these project facilitation activities. The Clerk’s Office has submitted contract materials through docusign; however, a contract has not yet been approved.

Section 56.30(9) of the Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances (MCCGO) requires that a written contract be signed and executed before an outside party performs professional services in an amount greater than \$2,000. MCCGO Section 56.30(8) states that the Comptroller shall deny payment for professional services if the conditions of Chapter 56 have not been met. To facilitate payment for the work that Contexture has already completed, the Clerk of Circuit Court is thereby requesting permission to waive MCCGO 56.30 (8) and (9) to pay for professional services rendered by Contexture for its eviction diversion facilitation work.

Related File No’s:	File 22-753
Associated File No’s (Including Transfer Packets):	File 21-920, File 22-699
Previous Action Date(s):	7-25-2022

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

This action aligns to strategic plan objective 3A. The Eviction Diversion grant and its funded activities are an effort by the Courts to invest upstream to address the root causes of health disparities; namely, to invest in activities that aim to better support those individuals who are facing eviction, and also to invest in outreach activities with stakeholders who can help people remain in their homes.

FISCAL EFFECT

The Milwaukee County Clerk of Circuit Courts 2022 adopted budget includes adequate funding to make this change, and there is no net fiscal effect on the department’s budget if this change is approved.

TERMS

None

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

George Christenson, Clerk of Circuit Court
Jon Janowski, Senior Administrator, Clerk of Circuit Court
Donya Saffold, Senior Financial Manager, Clerk of Circuit Court

PREPARED BY:

Jon Janowski, Senior Administrator, Clerk of Circuit Court

APPROVED BY:

George Christenson, Clerk of Circuit Court

ATTACHMENTS:

Fiscal Note
Resolution

cc: County Executive David Crowley
Liz Sumner, Chair, Finance Committee
Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
Steve Cady, Research and Policy Director – Comptroller's Office
Janelle Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk
Amy McKinney, Budget and Management Analyst, DAS-PSB