

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
Inter-Office Communication

**DATE:** May 4, 2023

**TO:** Shawn Rolland, Co-Chair, Ricardo Diaz, Co-Chair,  
Milwaukee County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Task Force

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

**SUBJECT:** ARPA Project Recommendation

**REQUEST**

Requesting recommendation of the following expense for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding consideration totaling \$500,000 for the Medicaid Re-Enrollment Support project. The request intends to repurpose funding originally allocated to the Milwaukee Premium Assistance Program (MPAP). While the Milwaukee Premium Assistance Program project is not moving forward, the proposed Medicaid Re-Enrollment Support project is designed to address needs that MPAP planned to address.

**POLICY**

Milwaukee County Board file 21-555: "A resolution to create a Task Force to review and recommend funding allocations to the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors for monies received by the County in the Federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021"

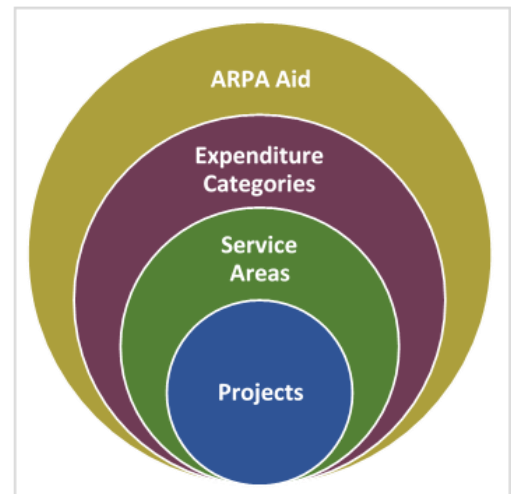
**BACKGROUND**

Milwaukee County received \$183 million between 2021-24 in federal ARPA aid. These funds are intended to allow flexibility for jurisdictions to meet local needs and fund local solutions to support families, small businesses, impacted industries, essential workers and the communities disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

**FUNDING RECOMMENDATION**

The Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) recommends the following project receive ARPA funding.

**Diagram A: Illustration of Terms**



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**Project Name:** Medicaid Re-Enrollment Support

**Overview of the project:**

The goal of the Medicaid Re-Enrollment Support project is to support Milwaukee County residents at risk of losing health insurance coverage in re-enrolling in Medicaid or finding alternative coverage during the Medicaid unwinding period (June 2023 – May 2024).

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected the health of Milwaukee County residents across a number of health indicators. To counteract this anticipated issue, the Federal government in 2020 created a program that has allowed Medicaid enrollees to be continuously enrolled without the need to re-enroll annually. The continuous re-enrollment is ending this summer with the end of the COVID-19 Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE) in spring 2023.

More than 400,000 Milwaukee County residents are enrolled in Medicaid, comprising over 44% of the population as of February 2023. All of these residents are at risk of losing health insurance coverage if they do not or are unable to re-enroll in Medicaid. Up to a quarter of those residents (90,000+) may no longer be eligible for Medicaid and will require sourcing alternative insurance. The State will begin to require renewal of residents starting in June 2023, with residents required to renew during one of the specified months between June 2034 and May 2024.

The reason this one-time event is particularly precarious is that: (a) many of these residents have not needed to re-enroll in 3 years and may not be aware that it's required nor how to do so, (b) the number of residents that will require renewal and support in doing so is significantly higher than typical processes, (c) there will likely be a lot of confusion about when and how to re-enroll. The result may be that vulnerable residents may discover they no longer have insurance at the moment they have a medical need, or a resident may not seek out health care services because of the confusion of this Medicaid unwinding.

This issue is likely to affect Milwaukee County's residents who identify as Black or Hispanic the most, given what data tells us about who is currently enrolled in Medicaid. The top zip codes of current enrollees include: 53218, 53209, 53216, 53206, as well as 53215, 53204, 53221.

The total funding amount requested is \$500,000. Given that the Medicaid unwinding period runs between June 2023 and May 2024, spending is projected to take place in a linear fashion during that time period.

The project's funding is allocated across several categories of intervention - \$100,000 to increase awareness of the issue that builds on tactics funded by other entities, \$300,000 to fund entities or contractors to provide direct support to residents to re-enroll or find alternative health insurance; \$40,000 to provide trainings to staff and other community organizations on how to help residents re-enroll. Finally, included is \$35,000 for a variety of materials, and \$25,000 for DHHS's administrative support of this work.

The Department has been in partnership discussions the County's Office of Emergency Management, municipal health departments, the Milwaukee Health Care Partnership (MHCP) and Milwaukee Enrollment Network (MKEN), Covering Wisconsin, and the State's Milwaukee Enrollment Services (MILES).

Supporting this project aligns with the County's vision of achieving racial equity and health by ensuring vulnerable residents continue to maintain health insurance coverage; it also reinforces the No Wrong Door philosophy by placing re-enrollment resources at locations where residents seek help.

#### **Budget Request:**

<b>Expense Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
<b>Awareness Campaign</b>	Partnering with Inpower and other communications firms to expand the reach of a variety of social, text, TV/radio, and physical campaigns to raise awareness of need to re-enroll in Medicaid throughout the year	\$100,000
<b>Agencies Targeting Aging and Disabilities Populations</b>	Partnering with known agencies that today work directly with older residents or residents with different abilities that have a track record of being able to add capacity quickly in the field	\$150,000
<b>Limited Term Contractors</b>	Partnering with a contracted agency to bring on several limited-term contractors who may reside within County facilities and help residents who come to our programs to re-enroll in Medicaid or explore alternative health insurance	\$150,000

<b>Training of Staff and other Providers</b>	Training to DHHS staff, contracted staff, and community partners in helping residents re-enroll in Medicaid, understand alternative options if no longer eligible for Medicaid; the County intends to partner with Covering Wisconsin non-profit for a part of this effort	\$40,000
<b>Materials and Technology</b>	Funding for flyers, posters, and other physical materials to improve awareness; technology to support staff's ability to help residents re-enroll in Medicaid in the field	\$35,000
<b>Administrative Support</b>	Staff time to oversee the implementation of this project, to coordinate and adapt tactics over time	\$25,000
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

**Budget by Fiscal Year:**

<b>FY 2023</b>	<b>FY2024</b>	<b>FY 2025</b>	<b>FY 2026</b>	<b>Total</b>
\$300,000	\$200,000	\$	\$	\$

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**RECOMMENDATION**

Approve the recommendation of prioritized project totaling \$500,000, from funds originally allocated for the Milwaukee Premium Assistance Program.

**PREPARED BY:**

Steve Gorodetskiy, Strategic Initiatives Director, Department of Health and Human Services

**ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Describe how the item aligns to the objectives in the strategic plan:

3A: Invest “upstream” to address root causes of health disparities

3C: Dismantle barriers to diverse and inclusive communities

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A: Medicaid Re-Enrollment Support Proposal