

**COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE**  
Inter-Office Communication

**DATE:** November 13, 2020

**TO:** Marcelia Nicholson, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Jon Janowski, Interim Executive Director, Department on Aging

**SUBJECT:** **Report from the Interim Executive Director, Department on Aging, requesting authorization to extend existing contracts with D&S Food Services, Inc. and Aramark Correctional Services, LLC for the period of January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 to provide food services for Milwaukee County's Senior Meal Program serving eligible seniors age 60 and older**

**Background**

The Milwaukee County Senior Meal Program began in 1972 and is administered through the Milwaukee County Department on Aging (MCDA). The nutrition program is funded with federal Older Americans Act funds, participant contributions, and other revenues. The purpose of the program is to sustain the independence and well-being of seniors by preventing costly health problems related to nutrition and social isolation. Nutrition is part of a comprehensive network of aging services provided by MCDA for an increasing population of older adults. From January to September 2020, the home-delivered meals program (Meals on Wheels) served 2,222 individuals. The congregate meal program served 3,070 unduplicated clients while it was operating from January-March, and the home delivered carry-out meals that have been operating to during the COVID-19 pandemic have served 3,008 unduplicated clients through September.

The existing catering contracts with D&S Food Services, Inc. and Aramark were the result of a Request for Proposals (RFP) process that MCDA coordinated in 2017. The RFP geographically divided the county into two service areas (Zone One and Zone Two), each containing about one-half of existing congregate meal sites and one-half of the home-delivered meal dispatch sites. After the review process was completed, Aramark was selected to serve Zone One and D&S Food Services was selected to serve Zone Two.

Aramark Correctional Services LLC is a national company with headquarters in Philadelphia. They have a long-standing partnership with Milwaukee County dating back almost 20 years. During that time, the County's partnership with Aramark has expanded from managing food service at the House of Correction and Jail to providing commissary service to those facilities and providing food service at the detention center located at the Vel R. Phillips Youth and Family Justice Center and the Behavioral Health Division. Aramark uses its production center at the House of Correction to produce the meals under this contract. The facility is a state-of-the-art facility with full cook/chill capability. It also has a complete bakery with the capability of producing multiple items, including fresh-baked bread.

D&S Food Services is a locally-owned company headquartered in Menomonee Falls. The company has provided food services and food service contract management since 1958. D&S has been a successful partner with MCDA’s Senior Meal Program for 17 years and has a proven track record of successfully delivering high quality meals that produce a high degree of satisfaction among participating seniors.

On November 2, 2017, the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors approved File 17-596 which authorized MCDA to enter into a three-year contract with both Aramark and D&S Food Services with an option for two, one-year extensions. The Department’s existing three-year contract with both catering entities expires on December 31, 2020.

**Program Budget**

The Department on Aging awards funds to provider agencies based on allowable costs, availability of federal, state and local funds, anticipated usage by older persons, and changing service needs. The Department receives Older Americans Act funds to pay for the food provided by these catering entities.

As part of these contract extensions, the Department proposes to provide a 1% increase in the per-meal reimbursement rate for both caterers. The Department recognizes that the cost of food increased 1.9% in 2019, and this year the cost of food has increased 2.5%-3.5%<sup>1</sup>.

Milwaukee County’s Senior Dining Program continues to provide healthy meals specifically developed for senior’s nutritional needs at a cost of under \$6.00 per meal. Increasing the rate per meal by 1 percent does not match the increase in cost of food to the caterers, but it will help the caterers to continue to prepare healthy, delicious meals that are appealing to senior diners in the face of rising costs.

The Department’s proposed increase would change the price per meal for the caterers as follows:

Caterer	Current price per meal	With 1% increase
Aramark	\$4.86	\$4.91
D&S	\$5.14	\$5.19

**Racial Equity Impact**

The Department on Aging has reviewed programs through the racial equity framework and found that in 2019, just under half (44%) of the older adults served through the Senior Dining Program were people of color. Early data suggests that the percentage of people of color using this program has

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<sup>1</sup> “Changes in Consumer Food Price Indexes, 2018 through 2021”. USDA Economic Research Services. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/DataFiles/50673/CPIforecast.xlsx?v=3030.8> Accessed 10/16/2020.

increased in the past year to the point where now almost half (48%) of current diners are people of color.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors authorize the Interim Executive Director of the Department on Aging to enter into a one-year contract extension with Aramark Correctional Services, LLC not to exceed \$1,610,944, and D&S Food Services, Inc not to exceed \$1,896,202 for the period January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021.

**Fiscal Impact**

Funding for this contract extension will have no direct impact on the County and will not require additional tax levy. Sufficient funds have been allocated to the Department on Aging through the Older Americans Act which will allow the Department to fully reimburse each caterer for all meals.

A fiscal note form is attached.

If you have questions, please contact me at 414-379-3569.



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Jon Janowski, Interim Executive Director  
Milwaukee County Department on Aging

cc:

- County Executive David Crowley
- Sup. Jason Haas, Chair, Finance Committee
- Sup. Supreme Moore-Omokunde, Chair, Health & Human Needs Committee
- Mary Jo Meyers, Chief of Staff, County Executive's Office
- Julie Landry, DAS Director
- Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
- Steve Cady, Research Director, Comptroller's Office
- Pam Matthews, Fiscal & Management Analyst, DAS
- Lottie Maxwell-Mitchell, Research & Policy Analyst, Comptroller's Office
- Mary Proctor Brown, Budget Manager, Department on Aging
- Matt Fortman, Fiscal Administrator DHHS