



Legislation Text

File #: 2449-2019, **Version:** 1

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this ordinance is to authorize Columbus City Council to enter into a grant agreement with Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus in support of the Help Understanding Barriers (HUB) diversion program in the City Attorney's Office. City Attorney Zach Klein established this pilot diversion program in May 2019 to start identifying the root causes of crime and address those causes by connecting those accused to community services and treatment.

As part of the program, the City Attorney's office begins with an internal review of the cases to determine eligibility for the program. A trained community health worker from a local provider administers a 36 question screening tool to address social determinants barriers and provide linkage to resources to address needs. This confidential information is stored in a HIPAA compliant database managed by the Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus. The community health worker keeps the defendant on the health worker's caseload throughout the diversion process to assist with any outstanding issues.

Upon successful completion of the program, prosecutors ask the court to dismiss the criminal case and agree to have the record sealed. The City Attorney piloted the program with petty theft charges only. As of today, twenty people have entered the program and many more who have future court dates have been screened in as potentially eligible. The City Attorney's office is addressing needs including: food, employment, car repairs, and furniture assistance. The City Attorney's office is working with the Franklin County Public Defender, Franklin County Municipal Court, Franklin County Clerk of Courts, and several social service agencies to effectuate the program.

The grant agreement between Columbus City Council and Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus will serve to add supplemental funds to the diversion program. The agreement will expressly prohibit the sharing of personal or mental health information of those individuals participating in the diversion program.

EMERGENCY DESIGNATION: Emergency action is requested to ensure that Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus has the funds necessary to assist those already in the diversion program, to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Columbus.

FISCAL IMPACT: Total appropriation is \$25,000.00 and is available in the 2019 budget within the Neighborhood Initiative subfund, Fund 1000-100018.

To authorize Columbus City Council to enter into a grant agreement with Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus in support of the Help Understanding Barriers (HUB) diversion program in the City Attorney's Office; to authorize an appropriation and expenditure of \$25,000.00 within the Neighborhood Initiative subfund, and to declare an emergency. (\$25,000.00)

WHEREAS, Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein initiated the Help Understanding Barriers (HUB) diversion pilot

program in May 2019; and,

WHEREAS, the HUB diversion program was created to start identifying the root causes of crime and address those causes by connecting those accused to community services and treatment ; and,

WHEREAS, upon successful completion of the program, prosecutors ask the court to dismiss the criminal case and agree to have the record sealed, allowing low-level offenders the opportunity for new start; and,

WHEREAS, \$25,000.00 is available in the Neighborhood Initiative subfund for appropriation to provide for this need; and,

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of Columbus City Council, in that it is necessary to provide funds to ensure that Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus has the funds necessary to assist those already in the diversion program for the immediate preservation of the public health, peace, property, safety, and welfare; now, therefore

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That Columbus City Council is hereby authorized to enter into a grant agreement with Healthcare Collaborative of Greater Columbus in support of the Help Understanding Barriers (HUB) diversion program in the City Attorney's Office.

SECTION 2. That the City Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to appropriate \$25,000.00 in the Neighborhood Initiative subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018, to Columbus City Council, per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. That the expenditure of \$25,000.00, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby authorized in the Neighborhood Initiative subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018, per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 4. That the funds necessary to carry out the purpose of this ordinance are hereby deemed appropriated, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

SECTION 5. That for reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.