



## Legislation Text

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**File #: 2303-2020, Version: 1**

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This ordinance authorizes Columbus City Council to enter into grant agreements with Columbus Urban League and Catholic Social Services in support of the Right to Recover program.

According to a July study on the impact of COVID-19 in major US cities, more than half of residents report experiencing serious financial problems, especially Black and Latinx individuals. Additionally, the infection rate in Columbus has consistently been around four times as high for Hispanic residents and twice as high for Black residents when compared to white residents. These statistics are illustrative of the fact that the industries that disproportionately employ workers of color are also the most likely to require in-person work and are least likely to offer paid time off or pay wages that provide their employees with the resources needed to sustain a period of unpaid leave. This creates an impossible situation for these workers should they contract COVID-19. Indeed, Columbus Public Health (CPH) has reported anecdotes from both its own testing sites and those of other partners that economically vulnerable and symptomatic residents are either unwilling to be tested (for fear of a positive diagnosis necessitating isolation) or have stated their economic need and intention to return to work despite receiving a positive diagnosis. This, obviously, increases the likelihood for spread among employees, customers, and the broader community.

The Right to Recover program will offer residents the financial resources they need to take time off of work, isolate, and recover in order to return to the workforce and mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19. Right to Recover will provide means-tested income replacement for approximately two weeks to those with a positive diagnosis.

Fiscal Impact: Funding is available within the CARES Act fund.

Emergency action is requested in order to avoid any delay in providing the resources necessary to initiate Right to Recover for those afflicted with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis.

To authorize Columbus City Council to enter into grant agreements with Columbus Urban League and Catholic Social Services in support of the Right to Recover initiative; to authorize a transfer of appropriations and an expenditure within the CARES Act fund; and to declare an emergency. (\$1,210,000.00)

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an infection rate among the Latinx and Black populations in Columbus that far exceeds the infection rate for white residents ; and

**WHEREAS**, in major US cities, more than half of residents report experiencing serious financial problems, especially Black and Latinx individuals, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, the low-wage industries that disproportionately employ workers of color are also the most likely to require in-person work and are least likely to offer paid time off or pay wages that provide their employees with the resources needed to sustain a period of unpaid leave; and

**WHEREAS**, Columbus Public Health (CPH) has reported anecdotes from both its own testing sites and those of other partners that symptomatic residents are either unwilling to be tested (for fear of a positive diagnosis necessitating isolation) or have stated their economic need to return to work despite receiving a positive diagnosis; and

**WHEREAS**, by offering income replacement, the Right to Recover program will offer residents the financial resources

they need to take time off of work, isolate, and recover in order to return to the workforce and mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS**, expenditure of CARES Act funding to in support of Right to Recover is necessary to address the spread of the virus within workplaces and by those who face challenges with quarantining following a positive diagnosis; and

**WHEREAS**, such expenditure of funds has not been previously accounted for in the 2020 Budget; and

**WHEREAS**, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the City in that it is immediately necessary to authorize City Council to enter into grant agreements to avoid any delay in providing the resources necessary to initiate Right to Recover for those afflicted with a positive COVID-19 diagnosis, for the preservation of the public health, 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 grant agreements with social service agencies in support of Right to Recover as follows :

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Columbus Urban League	\$605,000.00
Catholic Social Services	\$605,000.00

**SECTION 2.** That the Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to transfer appropriations within the CARES Act fund, fund 2207, subfund 220702, per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 3.** That per the action authorized in Section 1 of this ordinance, the expenditure of \$1,210,000.00 within the CARES Act fund, fund 2207, subfund 220702, is hereby authorized per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

**SECTION 4.** Funds are hereby deemed appropriated and expenditures and transfers authorized to carry out the purposes of this ordinance, and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

**SECTION 5.** That the City Auditor is authorized to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all contracts or contract modifications associated with this ordinance.

**SECTION 6.** That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this Ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.