



Legislation Text

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BACKGROUND:

The City of Columbus, Columbus Public Health, receives funding for the Ending the HIV Epidemic grant program from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The purpose of the grant program is to focus resources in jurisdictions with substantial HIV burden to implement strategies, interventions, approaches, and core medical and support services to reduce new HIV infections in the United States. The overarching goal for this initiative is to reduce new HIV infections in the United States to less than 3,000 per year by 2030.

HRSA has tasked CPH to improve the efficiency of the reallocation of federal funds as necessary in order to minimize unused funds to the greatest extent possible and to maximize the available services and avoid potential penalties as future carryover funds may not be permitted by HRSA. For this reason, it is necessary to authorize the Board of Health to accept any additional awards for the Ending the HIV Epidemic grant program; to authorize the appropriation of any additional awards for the Ending the HIV Epidemic grant program; and to authorize the City Auditor to transfer appropriations between object classes for the Ending the HIV Epidemic grant program.

This ordinance authorizes the Board of Health to enter into and, if needed, modify contracts with the following vendors to provide delivery of Ending the HIV Epidemic services including, but not limited to Health Education/Risk Reduction (Peer Navigation), Outpatient Ambulatory (Rapid Initiation of Antiretroviral Therapy) and EHE (Health Insurance Navigation), to achieve viral suppression for individuals living with HIV. The term of the contract with each qualified vendor is March 1, 2022, through February 28, 2023, with funding based on vendor estimates of annual funding requirements for allowable services.

AIDS Healthcare Foundation: \$96,746.00
Equitas Health: \$321,764.00

Under the terms of the grant, funds must be used during the grant period or they are forfeited and CPH may be subject to penalties related to future grant funding. Previously, CPH has reallocated unused funds from vendors through appropriate contract modifications. These modifications oftentimes required additional legislation. Most recently, toward the goals of minimizing unused funds, maximizing available services, and avoiding funding penalties, HRSA has tasked CPH with improving the process by which unused funds are reallocated. Therefore, this ordinance authorizes the Board of Health to enter into initial contracts with qualified vendors, modify those contracts if portions of previously appropriated and encumbered funds are unused, and reallocate unused funds by entering into contracts with newly identified and qualified vendors without the need for additional legislation. As such, this ordinance requests a waiver of the competitive bidding provisions of City Code Chapter 329.

This ordinance is submitted as an emergency in order to ensure that quality medical care continues to be available to eligible persons living with HIV/AIDS and to ensure timely payment to providers.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Contracts will be entered into by Columbus Public Health with vendors who meet federal requirements related to services allowable under the Ryan White Part A HIV Care Grant Program as well as comply with the RFQ and City bidding

processes. This ordinance will authorize one ACPO in the amount of \$418,510.00 to encumber funds using available grant appropriations for contracts with vendors.

To authorize the Board of Health to enter into initial contracts with qualified vendors for the Ending the HIV Epidemic Grant Program for the provision of services allowable under the grant for persons with HIV or AIDS in central Ohio; to authorize the Board of Health to modify those contracts if portions of previously appropriated and encumbered funds are unused, and reallocate unused funds by entering into contracts with newly identified and qualified vendors pursuant to federal requirements; to authorize the expenditure of \$418,510.00 from the Health Department Grants Fund to pay the costs thereof; to waive competitive bidding of City Code Chapter 329; and to declare an emergency.

WHEREAS, the city receives funding totaling \$1,000,000 for the Ending the HIV Epidemic Grant Program (the Grant) from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which requires Columbus Public Health (CPH) to assure quality medical care to eligible persons living with HIV or AIDS in Central Ohio; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to allow the Board of Health to enter into contracts for services; and,

WHEREAS, \$418,510.00 in additional funds are needed for Ending the HIV Epidemic services including, but not limited to Health Education/Risk Reduction (Peer Navigation), EHE (Health Insurance Navigation), Outpatient Ambulatory (Rapid Initiation of Antiretroviral Therapy) and any other service allowable under the Grant for a sum total of contracts not to exceed \$418,510.00; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Health will enter into initial contracts with AIDS Healthcare Foundation and Equitas Health who will provide various HIV-related services to meet all grant deliverables required by the Grant; and

WHEREAS, HRSA has tasked CPH to improve the efficiency of the reallocation of grant funds as necessary to minimize unused funds, maximize available services, and avoid funding penalties; and,

WHEREAS, it may be necessary to allow the Board of Health to enter into and modify contracts with vendors that are identified by CPH as qualified to provide the required services and meet federal requirements for the Grant; and,

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Board of Health to reallocate appropriated and encumbered unused funds by modifying existing contracts or entering into additional contracts with vendors that are newly identified by CPH as qualified to provide the required services and that meet federal requirements for this grant funding without the need for additional legislation; and, without the need for additional legislation; and,

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the city to waive the competitive bidding provisions of City Code Chapter 329; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operations of Board of Health in that it is immediately necessary to enter into contracts in order to continue services without interruption 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 the Board of Health is hereby authorized to enter into contracts for a total amount not to exceed \$418,510.00 for HIV-related services to persons with HIV or AIDS in central Ohio, for the period of March 1, 2022 through February 28, 2023 with the following:

AIDS Healthcare Foundation: \$96,746.00

Equitas Health: \$321,764.00

Total: \$418,510.00

SECTION 2. That the Board of Health is hereby authorized to modify those contracts if portions of previously appropriated and encumbered funds are unused, and reallocate unused funds and enter into contracts with additional vendors that are newly identified by Columbus Public Health as qualified to provide the required services and that meet the federal grant requirements without the need for additional legislation, for services allowable under the Ending the HIV Epidemic Grant Program from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration.

SECTION 3. That to pay the cost of said contracts, the expenditure of \$418,510.00, or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized from the Health Department Grants Fund, Fund No. 2251, object class 03 per the attached accounting document.

SECTION 4. That Council finds it in the City's best interest to waive the competitive bidding provisions of City Code Chapter 329 to enter into these contracts.

SECTION 5. That for 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 passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.