



Legislation Text

File #: 0783-2023, **Version:** 1

Background: In 2004, the Columbus City Auditor was authorized to establish the City Attorney Mediation Fund. The fund was entirely funded from amounts returned from Capital University upon relinquishing its administrative responsibilities for a contract (ord. 617-97) between them and the City Attorney's Office, funded by City Attorney General Fund dollars, for mediation services within the Night Prosecutor Program. The purpose of the fund was to pay contract expenses of mediators in the Night Prosecutor Program (ord. 0539-2004). The Night Prosecutor Program has since ceased operations and the Mediation Fund has a balance of \$46,209.20.

While the Night Prosecutor Program has since ceased operations, the City Attorney initiated the Misdemeanor Diversion program in 2019. Through this program, individuals summoned to court for non-violent, victimless crimes are eligible for diversion. If individuals opt to participate, they work with prosecutors, defense counsel and Health Impact Ohio Community Health Workers to develop diversion case plans tailored to their individual needs. Health workers use a validated social determinants of health screen to determine challenge areas and develop diversion conditions. These conditions are designed to address the issues motivating criminal behavior and prevent future involvement with the justice system i.e. issues related to basic needs (lack of housing or food), physical health, mental health, substance use, lack of employment and/or child care. Plans are signed by the participant, attorney/Public Defender and City Prosecutor. Once plans are signed by all parties, Community Health Workers work alongside diversion participants to help them achieve required conditions. If participants successfully achieve diversion conditions within six months, the case is dismissed. If participants are unsuccessful, a plea is entered and the case moves forward as normal.

Health Impact Ohio Community Health Workers use the nationally endorsed Pathways Community HUB care coordination case management tool to document and track progress on the case plan conditions. Once conditions are achieved, Health Impact Ohio bills Medicaid for completed services.

Since the program's inception, we are seeing a higher portion of participants who are **not eligible** for Medicaid benefits. In these cases, there is not a payer for diversion case management services. Health Impact Ohio is currently in discussions with private insurers to cover community case management in the future. However, in the meantime, the City Attorney seeks authorization to transfer the balance of the Mediation Fund back to the City Attorney General Fund and enter into a 3-year, \$46,209.20 service contract with Health Impact Ohio to cover reimbursement payments for guided case management services for non-Medicaid eligible individuals participating in the Misdemeanor Diversion program.

Emergency Action:

Emergency action is requested. Without access to these funds, the diversion program does not have sufficient budget allocation to support Health Impact Ohio reimbursement payments for non-Medicaid eligible participants. Services could be delayed until funds are encumbered.

Fiscal Impact: Funds for this service contract are available in Mediation Fund 2296. Funds to be transferred from Fund 2296 to the City Attorney General Fund 1000 Subfund 100010 and then appropriated for expenditure.

Contract Compliance: Access Health Columbus (DBA Health Impact Ohio), FID - xx-xxxxxxx, CC - 008966, EBO Exp 4/21/2025.

To authorize the transfer of \$46,209.20 from the City Attorney Mediation Fund to the City Attorney General Fund; to authorize the City Attorney to enter into contract with Access Health Columbus, dba Health Impact Ohio, for guided case

management services for the City Attorney's Misdemeanor Diversion Program; to authorize the expenditure of \$46,209.20; and to declare an emergency. (\$46,209.20)

WHEREAS, the Columbus City Auditor was authorized to establish the City Attorney Mediation Fund with City Attorney General Fund dollars for the purpose of paying contract expenses for mediators in the Night Prosecutor Program (ord. 0539-2004); and

WHEREAS, the Night Prosecutor Program has since ceased operations and the Mediation Fund has a balance of \$46,209.20; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to transfer the balance of the Mediation Fund back to the City Attorney General Fund; and

WHEREAS, the City Attorney seeks authorization to enter into a 3-year, \$46,209.20 service contract with Health Impact Ohio to support guided case management services for the City Attorney's Misdemeanor Diversion Program; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the City Attorney's Office in that it is in the best interest of the City to authorize the City Attorney to transfer funds and encumber contract expenses ensuring Misdemeanor Diversion services continue uninterrupted. Without access to these funds, the diversion program does not have sufficient budget allocation to support Health Impact Ohio reimbursement payments for non-Medicaid eligible participants. Services could be delayed until funds are encumbered.

NOW, THEREFORE,

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

SECTION 1. That an appropriation of \$46,209.20 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized to Fund 2296, the City Attorney Mediation Fund.

SECTION 2. That the transfer of \$46,209.20 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized from Fund 2296, the City Attorney Mediation Fund to the City Attorney General Fund per the account codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. That the transfer of \$46,209.20 or so much thereof as may be needed, is hereby authorized within the General Fund from Object Class 10 to Object Class 03.

SECTION 4. That the City Attorney is authorized to enter into a 3-year, \$46,209.20 service contract with Health Impact Ohio to support guided case management services for the City Attorney's Misdemeanor Diversion Program.

Section 5. That for the purposes stated in Section 2, the expenditure of \$46,209.20 or so much thereof as may be necessary, be and is hereby authorized in Fund 1000, per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

Section 6. Funds are hereby deemed appropriated and expenditures authorized to carry out the purposes of this ordinance and the City Auditor shall establish such accounting codes as necessary.

Section 7. The City Auditor is authorized to establish such accounting codes as necessary, to make any accounting changes to revise the funding source for all agreements, contracts, or modifications associated with this ordinance.

Section 8. 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 passage and approval by the

Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.