



Office of Community Involvement



Department of County Human Services CBAC

TO: Chair Deborah Kafoury and Board of County Commissioners 3 pages

FROM: Department of County Human Services Community Budget Advisory Committee

DATE: April 29, 2022

SUBJECT: DCHS Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This letter represents the Department of County Human Services Community Budget Advisory Committee's (CBAC) recommendations regarding the pending FY 2022-2023 budget. Our recommendations for the Chair's executive budget focus on communities who had the least access to resources prior to the pandemic that are at higher risk of adverse health and economic impacts during the pandemic, and those who face disproportionate challenges in recovering from those impacts.

Our CBAC consists of members who take civic participation and equity work very seriously, which is why we strove to make recommendations to maximize benefit to citizens of the County--particularly its most vulnerable residents, while considering local budget realities and global health and economic uncertainties. We made sure to adhere to the following guiding principles while making our recommendations:

DCHS CBAC Guiding Principles:

- Inclusively and intentionally leading with race through the application of the equity and empowerment lens
- Prioritize stable housing
- Consider impact to vulnerable populations
- Protect match/leverage dollars
- Protect programs and/or services not provided in another venue/mission
- Consider outcome or success of program in decision making

PROCESS

The DCHS CBAC met every month year round during this budget cycle to hear from County staff and discuss budget priorities. We began the process by reviewing the Multnomah County Budget Process; the FY23 financial and 5-year General Fund forecasts, and the roles CBACs play in the county budget process. All meetings were attended by DCHS Director Mohammad Bader and/or DCHS Deputy Director Lee Girard, and Finance Manager Senior Robert Stoll, who

Department of County Human Services CBAC

provided overviews, context, and support. Also included were Equity and Inclusion Manager, Dr. Carlos Richard to join our meetings on a regular basis to enhance our equity discussions as a group.

To inform our budget recommendations, the DCHS CBAC heard presentations from each division in the Department including the newest division, Preschool for All and the Food Justice! project. DCHS Division Directors attended meetings and presented overviews to their divisions, the services they provide and how their programs are funded in regards to CGF and other funds. Each Division spent considerable time outlining the services provided with County funding, including changes to operating models and need in the community as a result of COVID-19 and beyond. We continue to be impressed with the level of scrutiny and review that program offers went through to prioritize equity and empowerment in the decision-making process. Similar to last year, the DCHS CBAC was intentional in allowing committee members more time to consider and debate budget recommendations than in previous years; this included gathering supporting information earlier and scheduling consecutive meetings during the decision making process.

The DCHS CBAC feels that DCHS is doing an admirable job of prioritizing add requests to the Chair that are critical human service programs. Department staff provided thorough program details and were very responsive to requests for further information, and clear rationale was given for all proposed budget changes. Further, the CBAC members are continuously examining how to be more efficient with the information we receive and request from DCHS, including how we digest this information and strengthening the link between the presentations we've received throughout the year and our ultimate budget recommendations. As a result, the CBAC worked internally to create a DCHS CBAC calendar to help guide priorities for each month and we updated our guiding principles to reflect the most current budget climate.

EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES

The committee formed its recommendations under a second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, and its effects on County citizens and programs needed to aid those disproportionately affected were heavy factors in our decision making. We also focused on supporting programs which provide aid to immigrants and refugees, those affected by domestic violence, the housing crisis, and communities of color who experience inequalities in economic opportunities, housing, health care, the justice system, and other areas.

BUDGET FEEDBACK

The CBAC believes that DCHS provides a critical safety net through the provision of essential services in our community. We believe that a strengthened social safety net is the foundation of recovery for the populations that DCHS serves, particularly given the pre-existing vulnerabilities of these populations.

Members: Kali Glenn-Haley (Co-chair), Nyla Moore (Co-Chair), Mariel St.Savage, April Ybarra Black, Jeff Scroggin, Ashley Hess, Mark Sturbois **Staff:** Mohammad Bader, Robert Stoll, Lee Girard, Dr. Carlos Richard, Tahira Rivera

Department of County Human Services CBAC

Our recommendations for DCHS and the County's budget overall is to focus on observation of process, opinions and ideas facing the community. One aspect of this is to consider other ways that budget feedback can be gathered, particularly from the people who are targeted by Multnomah County's services in a more inclusive way than the current CBAC structure. An example of this could include focus group discussions with County grantees; a newsletter, email address, or Whatsapp number that participants can provide feedback to; presentations to neighborhood institutions/community group/business/SUN schools, etc. Ideally, the County could also solicit feedback from community members who don't participate in the County's programs, to understand barriers to access and awareness of the County's services. Other suggestions are providing tours of the different programs throughout the year to have more engagement from those who are served and staff who provide the services in DCHS.

PROGRAM OFFER RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated previously, the DCHS CBAC recognizes the essential services that the County provides as a social safety net for the County's vulnerable residents, particularly in light of the impact of COVID-19 and the inequalities resulting from oppressive systems, both historic and contemporary. We, the DCHS CBAC, feel the obligation to highlight the need for **ALL** DCHS services to continue support and services via the additions requests put forth as well as the importance of vital services the department renders to the community.

Accordingly, our specific recommendations are as follows, in priority order:

1. 25138B - YFS Youth Stability & Homelessness Prevention Services - \$600,000 (New Ongoing)
2. 25050B - YFS Gateway Center - \$227,120; 2.0 FTE (New Ongoing)
3. 25049B - YFS Sexual Assault Services - \$424,780; 1.0 FTE (New Ongoing)
4. 25145B - YFS SUN Community Schools - \$1,995,000 (New Ongoing)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Committee would like to give special thanks to the DCHS staff who provided their time and information to us to better understand the programs, with special recognition of Tahira Rivera for the expert guidance provided to the committee. Also, our committee Co-chairs, Kali Glenn-Hayley and Nyla Moore, who do a fantastic job at facilitating our meetings and strive to create a collaborative environment every month.

Members: Kali Glenn-Haley (Co-chair), Nyla Moore (Co-Chair), Mariel St.Savage, April Ybarra Black, Jeff Scroggin, Ashley Hess, Mark Sturbois **Staff:** Mohammad Bader, Robert Stoll, Lee Girard, Dr. Carlos Richard, Tahira Rivera