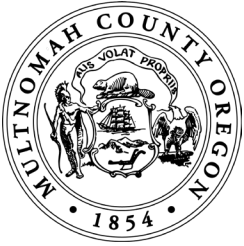




Chair's Executive Budget for FY 2022

April 22, 2021





Deborah Kafoury

Multnomah County Chair

April 22, 2021

Multnomah County Executive Budget Message

The 2022 Multnomah County Executive Budget was created in the continuing wake of the most tumultuous and trying years that the County, and our community, has ever faced. The challenges that we confronted together have never been more acute than they are right now — exacerbated and deepened by a public health emergency.

However, as I reflect on how much the world has changed since I released last year's Executive Budget, I am awestruck by the way that Multnomah County employees, our programs and partners have stepped up to tackle challenges that have been as urgent as they were daunting. Over the last year, Multnomah County has led our region's public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic, earnestly engaged in dismantling systemic racism and racial injustices, worked to ensure the health and safety of our unhoused neighbors, provided physical and behavioral health services, and even held three fair and secure elections.

And we did all of that while building and adopting new ways of working and delivering our services; responding to new and unforeseen needs emerging out of the pandemic; and continuing to listen to, and partner with, the community to an extent we hadn't before in order to meet the growing needs of residents in effective and equitable ways.

Last year's Executive Budget was created just as the County was beginning to understand the full extent of the pandemic, while staring down a \$58 million General Fund deficit. Working with department leaders, we built a budget that prioritized the preservation of essential services to the fullest extent possible, while funding responses to new needs created by the crisis.

At the outset of this year's executive budgeting process, we again anticipated that we would not have enough money to continue our core services and safety net programs. The County's most recent economic forecast showed a narrowing of our deficit, but still required \$2.5 million in reductions to balance the General Fund budget. This did not, however, account for the nearly \$120 million the County expended over the past year as part of our COVID-19 response.

Thankfully, the federal government recently passed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). This legislation includes a direct allocation of funds to Multnomah County — \$157.6 million to be spent by 2024 — as well as opportunities to access other specific programmatic resources to respond to the pandemic. The County's initial allocation for FY 2022 is \$78.8 million. These resources will greatly bolster our ability to respond to and recover from this public health emergency, address the impacts of COVID-19, and help offset reductions in revenue where feasible. A COVID-19 American Rescue Plan Act addendum is attached to the digital version of the Executive Budget message and lays out my priorities, values and investments.

The 2022 Executive Budget is built to address Multnomah County's highest priorities in the wake of a pandemic that will continue to have significant, long-lasting implications for the health, safety and stability of our community.

It meets that goal in two ways. Our first, and most immediate, priority is to maintain the County's public health infrastructure that provides a foundation for a healthier community for all of our residents. Public health has never been more important to keeping our community safe, and ensuring that our disease prevention strategies are kept intact will be critical to avoiding excess disease and death. Secondly, as we head into a year during which we know the need for County services will remain at an all-time high, this Executive Budget upholds and strengthens core services that our community members depend on.

But the events of the last year have also carried Multnomah County to a profoundly different place than where we were this time last year. After enduring a year of crises — and with a steadily increasing defense against the virus thanks to the ongoing rollout of COVID-19 vaccines — our community and our organization stand at a pivotal juncture. Our recovery can bring about the emergence of a stronger, more just and equitable community that doesn't just reflect the wounds, but also the lessons and resilience, gathered from a painful season.

We have the opportunity to leverage the scope of, and our approach to, the County's work into an inflection point, and I believe that now is the time to aggressively pursue solutions that can eliminate disparities in our community.

The Executive Budget provides a pathway beyond meeting our most immediate needs; it also lays the foundation for building up the kind of county that will serve our residents for decades to come. One of the most significant ways that this budget does that is by investing in the initial implementation stages of three voter-approved ballot measures — addressing early childhood education, homelessness and our library system — that can change the lives of thousands of community members.

Additionally, this budget continues to commit dollars for essential capital infrastructure projects. This budget invests \$23.5 million towards the next phase of the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project, which aims to replace the current span with a seismically resilient one. Constructing a bridge built to withstand a major seismic event will support our region's ability to provide rapid and reliable emergency responses in the aftermath of the next Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. I have also directed an additional \$7.3 million to the County's new Behavioral Health Resource Center (BHRC), which is key to our rapidly transforming homelessness response system. Once open, the BHRC will bring life-saving supports to people experiencing chronic homelessness in the downtown core, including a day center, a safe 24-hour shelter, behavioral health treatment and transitional housing.

This budget also makes strategic investments that will help Multnomah County continually transform the way that we do our work to ensure that our services reach the community and meet their needs in more equitable ways. As we work to foster community healing, recovery and restoration from the impacts of the pandemic over the coming years, we have the responsibility to sustain, and lean further into, deliberate strategies that address entrenched racial disparities in the community, as well as within our own organization.

To address the deficit we anticipated at the start of this budget process, I requested reductions from all of our departments. However, the extent and impacts of the necessary reductions in the budget have been tempered by higher Business Income Tax revenues than we expected, combined with the programmatic dividends of the investments we made last year with General Fund dollars

and pandemic aid from the state and federal governments. Some cuts were still necessary, but I prioritized reductions that came through increased efficiencies and had the least impact on employees, clients and the community.

As a whole, I believe that this year's Executive Budget is the most ambitious and forward-thinking budget that I've submitted in my years as Chair, built on the belief that Multnomah County can be more than reliable in times of stability and in times of crisis. We can be a transformative force for the community. Many of the investments made in this Executive Budget are meaningful steps toward building up new infrastructure and systems of coordination across the County that will reshape the breadth of what we do and how we provide those services more equitably for all residents.

The COVID-19 crisis shined a light on the many inequities that we have long wrestled with, but it also revealed the County's capacity to find solutions in partnership with our community, and move with conviction toward making things right. With shared vision, compassion and dedication to our community, we can continue to make great strides in the direction of justice, safety and the holistic health of our entire community.

Sustaining Our Public Health Response during an Emergency

The driving force behind Multnomah County's effective, adaptive response to the COVID-19 pandemic is our existing public health infrastructure that, for decades, has worked to prevent disease and death in our community through education, outreach, investigations and contact tracing, direct services, and much more. Their expertise, community connections and strategic programs are critical for the County and our residents to emerge from the pandemic in a way that builds health and health equity now, and far into our shared future. So as I prepared this budget, I made the decision to exempt both the Health Office programs and the Public Health Division from submitting any reductions to their programs. The pandemic underscored that we cannot afford to disinvest from our public health work; rather, now is the time that we must ensure that its resources and capabilities are stable and robust.

Upstream Health Programs

One of the ways that this budget affirms and supports the ongoing work of public health is by investing in upstream interventions, especially those that offer culturally specific support to communities that have long been overlooked and underserved. These programs lead to healthier individuals across their lifespans, result in healthier communities, and are especially critical to building community strength and resilience before, during and after crises.

It also fully funds programs that focus on building health equity, including:

- The **Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH)** program, which utilizes culturally specific and cross-cultural approaches that match community-identified and root causes of health inequities with responsive strategies focused on reducing chronic disease in the Black, African immigrant and refugee communities. The REACH team has played a critical role in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, supporting outreach, testing and vaccinations.
- Support for partnerships and coordination between Multnomah County, culturally specific community partners and historically marginalized communities, particularly the Pacific Islander, Native American, and Latinx communities. The County's **Community Partnerships and Capacity Building team** have been critical facilitators of these relationships, meeting with members of communities of color to address their concerns and supporting the training of culturally specific community health workers in community-based organizations. These connections have been especially critical throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and will play a key role in our community's equitable recovery from the pandemic.

- The **Healthy Birth Initiative**, which improves birth outcomes and the health of new families, mothers and fathers among our local Black communities through a culturally specific, family-centered model that leverages case management, health education, community engagement and service coordination.
- I also maintained the **Harm Reduction program**, a key public health initiative that reduces the transmission of HIV, HCV and bacterial infections among community members struggling with substance use disorder. The program provides access to sterile injection supplies and harm reduction services, including low-barrier medical care and connections to treatment.

New Medical Examiner

Medical examiners contribute to the County's tracking of specific types of death, helping to inform County-level responses related to suicide, violent deaths, COVID-19 and other leading causes of death. Medical examination is a central public service that contributes to our fundamental understanding of disparities in morbidity and mortality among Multnomah County residents. This budget adds funding for an additional medical examiner that will increase the County Medical Examiner's Office capacity to perform death investigations on par with similarly sized jurisdictions.

Communicable Disease Prevention and Control

Adding staff capacity to the County's Communicable Disease Services will support the program's work of protecting the community from preventable infectious diseases through epidemiologic investigation, planning and response for emerging infectious diseases, public health disease tracking, and disease threat analysis.

Additional Public Health Investments

Investments that continue and expand the County's COVID-19 response are outlined in the COVID-19 American Rescue Plan Act addendum.

Strengthening and Upholding Safety Net Services

Factors like poverty, discrimination, exposure to violence, lack of access to safe, stable housing and quality healthcare, food insecurity, and isolation can lead to future challenges and crises that harm individuals and strain the safety net. In light of a year during which so many community members have experienced profound loss, trauma and fatigue — and amid a surge in community violence exacerbated by disruptions to connection and stability — my Executive Budget maintains and strengthens central safety net services that intervene, prevent and respond to crisis.

Meeting the Behavioral Health Needs of Our Community

Crisis services continue to be an essential part of the behavioral health system. When an individual enters a mental health or substance abuse crisis, it's critical that there are services available to respond. The Executive Budget maintains funding for the **Crisis Assessment and Treatment Center**, which is one of the only subacute programs in the region for people in need of further stabilization after they are no longer in crisis.

My budget also continues funding for the **Urgent Walk In Clinic** in order to maintain its current service hours. This will ensure that there is a place open every day of the week where people who are experiencing a mental health crisis can receive immediate care from professionally trained staff, including a psychiatrist and a mental health nurse practitioner. As more people return to the public sphere, this service will become particularly important for those who are in need of urgent support.

Even effective models of behavioral health services and outreach can, and should, be improved as our understanding of what works best to meet the needs of our community members evolves. That's

why I am investing into the work of **re-envisioning and adapting the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program**, which relies on law enforcement to refer and approve people for participation in behavioral health services with a single service provider. The updated model of care will broaden the entryways to the program by leaning on non-law enforcement, as well as culturally specific outreach to homeless individuals struggling with behavioral health challenges and who may be at risk for becoming involved in the criminal legal system. Rather than services through a single provider, those who are eligible for the program will be offered treatment through a hub-and-spoke model that utilizes a wide network of community providers, including culturally specific treatment providers.

Multnomah County is also maintaining our investment in **school-based mental health (SBMH) services**, which provides mental health assessment and treatment services through school sites. The program connects with youth from communities that are traditionally underserved and experience barriers to accessing mental health services. Although this is a critical resource for the well-being of the youth in our community, the federal government reduced its funding for our SBMH program as a result of administrative requirements. With children returning to school after enduring a difficult and traumatic year, we cannot afford to allow the mental health needs of our youth go unmet. I chose to backfill the federal funding reduction with General Fund dollars in order to maintain SBMH services at their current level so that our students can continue to find the support they need.

Investing in Early Childhood and Youth Stability, Connections and Well-being

At a time when our children have been out of in-person school for a year and cut off from normal opportunities for connection and community, maintaining and sustaining supports for youth and family is more critical than ever. This starts by ensuring County programs provide our youth with opportunities, resources and tools that give them the best chance of growing up safe and healthy. Many of my investments send resources to critical community partners who are trusted, know the community deeply and are often best positioned to reach families.

The **Schools Uniting Neighborhood (SUN) Community Schools program** is a flagship partnership that supports children and families who are most in need. Through the SUN System, students access after-school activities, academic support and mentoring. Families can access classes, early childhood services, and housing, energy and employment assistance.

My budget maintains core SUN programming, as well as **SUN's Parent Child Development Services**, which helps low-income and families of color overcome barriers that lead to disparities in kindergarten readiness. I am also funding the addition of a position to support the implementation and success of programs at SUN schools that focus on high school students.

Through a newly funded Youth Program Coordinator, **Bienestar** will be able to provide healthy group and individual connections for youth living in the Cully neighborhood of Northeast Portland, which has been acutely affected by the increase in community violence. Bienestar's programming will offer opportunities for neighborhood youth to rebuild connection and community in the wake of the pandemic.

When children and youth do experience challenges, Multnomah County is also committed to providing appropriate services to interrupt and break cycles of trauma. This budget expands the Juvenile Division's **Community Healing Initiative (CHI)**, a community-centered, collaborative partnership designed to decrease youth violence by providing culturally appropriate support to Black, African American and Latinx youth on probation, and their families. Through assertive engagement, integrated case management, peer mentoring and planning for family success, CHI stops youth and gang violence in Multnomah County by addressing its root causes.

Further, this budget makes permanent the African American mental health consultant position in the Health Department's **Direct Clinical Services unit** that launched last fall. This position serves children and families who are impacted by community and gang violence with a range of culturally relevant and evidence-based mental health services, consultation, training, outreach and engagement.

Increasing Domestic Violence Crisis Response Unit to a 24/7 Response

Although Multnomah County's Domestic Violence Crisis Response Unit program is currently staffed until midnight every night of the week, many of the most complex domestic violence calls occur after midnight. Expanding the program by two additional staff will give the team increased capacity to meet survivors of domestic abuse on scene and offer advocacy and services within a small window when survivors are more likely to engage in the resources that are offered. Shorter response times increase survivor safety and offender accountability in situations with a high risk of lethality or a significant concern for immediate and severe re-assault.

Fair Housing Testing

Fair housing audit testing is a well-established method of assessing discrimination in housing access. Currently, this kind of testing is funded and performed only within Portland city limits. This investment will resource similar testing in all remaining areas of Multnomah County, including Gresham, Fairview, Troutdale and Wood Village. The testing will provide critical insight into the kinds of housing discrimination that Black, Indigenous and other people of color in Multnomah County face, as well as a basis to hold the private housing market accountable. The data collected from the testing will also inform future policy decisions in collaboration with the cities in east Multnomah County.

Increasing Public Safety by Breaking Cycles of Harm

My commitment to moving the County's vision for public safety away from incarceration and toward diversion, treatment, repair and rehabilitation continues to be reflected in the 2022 Executive Budget. These investments support programs that we know are effective at breaking cycles of incarceration, address racial and ethnic disparities that are endemic to the criminal legal system, and lead to a safer community.

Stabilization Treatment Program Expansion – Culturally Specific Clients

The Stabilization Treatment Preparation (STP) program assists justice-involved men with significant behavioral health challenges by providing short-term housing, as well as access to treatment and other supportive services. While the program has proven successful, Black and African American individuals who are both involved in the criminal legal system and experience behavioral health challenges still face higher barriers to receiving the help they need due to a lack of culturally specific services. Last year, we funded a new Afrocentric STP program and this budget maintains this 13-bed site that offers culturally responsive psychiatric stabilization services, legal skills training and a range of additional supports.

Mobile Behavioral Health Peer & Support

Members of the Black and African American communities have experienced difficulty in finding behavioral health treatment that incorporates their culture, tradition and values, and it only gets harder for individuals who have been incarcerated. This budget invests in the creation of a Black/ African American Mobile Behavioral Health team — consisting of a mental health provider, a certified addictions counselor and a peer support specialist — that is dedicated to serving justice-involved individuals who are re-entering the community from incarceration.

Additional Capacity in the Adult Addictions Treatment Continuum

Multnomah County's Addictions Benefit Coordination (ABC) team helps individuals with substance use disorders access treatment. They play a critical role by providing options for people ready to engage in services like residential treatment, outpatient and group therapy, and mentoring. However, people of color continue to face higher barriers to navigating and accessing the addiction treatment system. The Executive Budget funds an additional ABC team position that, in partnership with the Department of Community Justice, will be dedicated to working with individuals from the Black and African American communities on supervision to build positive relationships and connect them to the right level of care.

Conviction Integrity Unit Expansion

Reforming the criminal legal system requires not only looking to the future, but also acknowledging and correcting past wrongs. A criminal case should not simply end at sentencing, especially if a conviction was falsely obtained. New ongoing funding for the Conviction Integrity Unit will allow the District Attorney's Office to continue partnering with community organizations and working on cases where actual innocence may be at issue due to the discovery of new or changed evidence. The unit will also work on a variety of post-conviction issues such as clemency petitions and DNA review.

I am also investing new funding to pilot a related effort that expands the Conviction Integrity Unit to help individuals returning to the community from incarceration who continue to be impacted by collateral consequences. This expansion will support the work of obtaining expungements and addressing outstanding fines and fees, which can become steep barriers to essential resources like housing, credit, driver's licenses and employment opportunities.

Ensuring the County's Work Is Grounded in, and Builds up, Equity

Multnomah County's capacity to advance equity through our community services is deeply connected to the commitments we make and the actions we take to build a more equitable workplace.

By maintaining, and in some places increasing, resources and staffing focused on equity, Multnomah County can continue to move forward the Workforce Equity Strategic Plan and our efforts to foster safety, trust and belonging for all employees.

When Multnomah County made historic investments in workforce equity in FY 2020, we knew that it wasn't a one-time action. As a community, we set the vision with workforce equity and began to invest to make those goals meaningful and real throughout this organization in a way that impacts the culture of our work units, performance and accountability, recruitment, hiring, retention and promotion, and overall decision-making.

We created the **Complaints Investigation and Civil Rights Policy units**, and supported **equity teams and equity practitioners in our departments**, as well as deeper supports for equity work within Central Human Resources. This budget maintains these critical investments, but also recognizes that implementing the goals of workforce equity, as well as other recommendations that have emerged from our workforce, takes sustained commitment, courage and dedicated resources.

The investments that we make in our centralized initiatives and countywide offices play a foundational and critical role in moving this work forward. The work of transformation within the County largely happens team by team, work unit by work unit, and I want to appreciate the equity managers and equity practitioners within our departments who are leading, managing and supporting this work that impacts our workforce and our community-facing programs.

This budget includes reallocated, new and expanded staffing to support the **implementation of equity efforts within several departments**, including the Health Department, Department of County Human Services, Joint Office of Homeless Services, the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office and the Library.

This budget also supports an updated organizational focus and structure for the Office of Diversity and Equity that aligns critical policy work and puts Multnomah County in position to meet needs that have shifted since the office was created 11 years ago. As part of the budget, there is new dedicated staffing to bring additional support and coordination to our **Employee Resource Group network**. Additionally, the budget includes increased funding to support the addition of at least 20 new College to County internship opportunities — a critical part of our workforce equity and pipeline development.

Implementing Historic Voter-Approved Ballot Measures

In 2020, Multnomah County asked the community to support three ambitious ballot measures, each designed to help address a present-day need while also harnessing the potential to transform the future of the County. Even amid a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic, voters signaled that they supported this vision of Multnomah County — and the County's ability to bring it to fruition — by passing each initiative in decisive fashion.

Metro's Supportive Housing Services Measure

Permanent supportive housing is a model that, by connecting people with safe homes and the supportive services they need to stay in those homes, we know is effective at helping people break the cycle of homelessness, regain safety and health, and rebuild their stability. Historically, Multnomah County and the Joint Office of Homeless Service haven't had sufficient resources to keep pace with the need. With the Metro Supportive Housing Services measure, which will bring us \$52 million in funding this coming fiscal year, we can dramatically expand our response system to begin meeting the level of need for decades to come.

In the first year of the measure's implementation, we will invest heavily in the supportive housing strategies that we know work in helping people escape or avoid homelessness, including:

- \$3.7 million for expanded rent assistance and housing/wraparound services focused on communities of color.
- \$3.5 million to add critical support services and rent subsidies to 250 new homes funded by the 2016 Portland housing bond and the 2018 Metro housing bond.
- \$3 million to grow and add shelter, outreach and housing supports to existing behavioral health programs. Clients of the County's CHOICE program, Stabilization Treatment Preparation program, Addictions Benefits Coordination service and our Assertive Community Treatment teams will benefit from the opportunities added by this investment.

The budget also sets aside \$2.45 million for navigation teams, which will be expanded to be culturally responsive and led by peers. These teams will be able to immediately reach out to people living outside in large encampments and help them access substance use treatment, primary healthcare, and housing and shelter.

Building enhanced coordination within our system will be a critical step to ensuring that supportive services are expanded in a way that is accessible, sustainable and effective. A \$1.3 million investment will go toward establishing a cross-departmental team — the Joint Office, Health Department, Department of County Human Services and Department of Community Justice — to

coordinate the supportive housing programming. The new positions will support housing/shelter expansions in their respective departments.

Over the next two years, the measure will increase the budget of the Joint Office by almost 150 percent. To support this growth and to match the rapid increase in service delivery, the Joint Office is also engaged in an intentional organizational development process, working with staff and County departments, as well looking to best practices from other communities.

Finally, we have seen the demands of the pandemic over the last year put more pressure on an already-strained system, stretching our capacity to deliver services. As we prepare to rapidly expand our programming, our partner organizations that work every day to connect people with services and housing will require additional stabilization to continue and expand this work. A \$3 million investment will go toward increasing support to help recruit new staff and retain existing staff.

Preschool for All

Affordable and accessible preschool and childcare is a linchpin in the way our society functions. High-quality early education opens a door for children to achieve more in school, get better jobs and succeed in their careers. Beyond the direct benefit children get, we also can't overlook how critical the childcare system is for parents (and more frequently, women), communities, employers and nearly every sector of the economy. And as is often the case, the harms of a broken and incomplete system fall heaviest on working families and families of color.

The Preschool for All measure is poised to be one of the most effective, inspiring and long-lasting ways that we can address the disproportionate and generational harms of systemic racism and economic inequality. Our first Preschool for All investments in this Executive Budget — about \$60 million — move us toward establishing a strong, equitable program infrastructure to get this visionary program off the ground.

- Families will start applying for preschool slots in early 2022. In preparation, we are dedicating \$1.8 million to create an application process that reaches families who currently have the least access to high-quality, culturally responsive preschool experiences. This requires an accessible online application system, as well as the partnership of culturally specific and culturally responsive organizations that will perform outreach to families and guide them through the application process.
- One of the hallmarks of Multnomah County's model is uplifting and supporting preschool experiences that take place in homes, centers and schools. In-home preschool providers are the most culturally and linguistically diverse providers in the county. The budget includes \$300,000 to create a contracting structure that will allow these small businesses to join and participate in the program.
- Additionally, research shows that relationship-based, individualized professional development is critical to build the skills and knowledge of educators, who are essential partners in creating high-quality, culturally affirming preschool experiences. The budget includes \$2.4 million to launch this effort, as well as \$8.1 million of additional supports for preschool providers to sustain and strengthen their programs.
- To support the implementation of this new program, Multnomah County has created the new Preschool and Early Learning (PEL) Division within the Department of County Human Services. This budget includes \$2.6 million for building out the staffing to support this initiative, including a new division director and teams to support program development, policy, partnerships, operations and community engagement.

- To fully implement this new tax, Multnomah County must establish a tax collection system and process. This year's \$13.1 million investment will support the creation and launch of the new tax collection system. The City of Portland will collect the Preschool for All tax on behalf of the County.

Library Building Bond

The Multnomah County Library system is one of our community's most historic and treasured assets. And while it's the fourth busiest library system in the entire country, it ranks 102nd in the amount of total library square footage.

The lack of space is felt acutely in East County, where 20 percent of Multnomah County's total library space serves 40 percent of the county population. We also know that our libraries' resources, services and spaces are not equally accessible across the county.

The \$387 million capital bond will re-balance both library spaces and services through expansions and modernizations to create a library system that serves Multnomah County residents equitably. Every neighborhood library will be improved in some way through projects funded by the bond, which include:

- Constructing a brand new flagship library in East County.
- Expanding, rebuilding or renovating seven branch libraries, including Albina, Belmont, Holgate, Midland, North Portland, Northwest and St. Johns.
- Refreshing furniture and paint to other library locations.
- Converting to an automated materials handling system in order to increase efficiency and reduce handling costs.
- Connecting all library locations to 10-gigabit speed internet service.
- Increasing the accessibility of our buildings, services and technology for people with disabilities.
- Improving seismic readiness.

These projects also give the County the opportunity to equitably distribute our resources back into the community by building a diverse workforce. Through intentional contracting, we will continue our practice of requiring prevailing wage jobs on all construction projects and opening employment opportunities to people in our community for whom the trades have been traditionally inaccessible.

Conclusion

The pandemic has pushed Multnomah County to become more resilient, and to move with more urgency in building justice, health and equity for every community member. As we stand at the threshold between emergency and recovery, I am committed to sustaining the momentum that we have built through our collective response to this crisis. I have never been more hopeful or optimistic about what this community and this organization can become.

This Executive Budget is the culmination of months of work, as well as a reflection of the voices, perspectives and insights of countless community members and County staff.

I want to extend my gratitude to the Community Budget Advisory Committees for their work overseeing the budget process, and for the time that they spent with each County department to evaluate our programs and outcomes.

I also want to thank Commissioners Sharon Meieran, Susheela Jayapal, Jessica Vega Pederson and Lori Stegmann for their leadership and collaboration, as well as their dedication to serving the people of Multnomah County that has shone through the last year.

I'm exceedingly grateful for my Chief of Staff, Kimberly Melton, whose tenacity and unwavering commitment to excellence makes Multnomah County a better place. I am also thankful for my fantastic team: Liz Smith Currie, Adam Renon, Anna Marie Allen, Liam Frost, Nicole Buchanan, Raffaele Timarchi, Paul Park, Allison Conkling and David Kerry.

This document likely wouldn't exist at all without the work of our Central Budget Office and all of its staff. I want to especially thank Budget Director Christian Elkin and economist Jeff Renfro for providing their expertise and insight throughout an incredibly dynamic and challenging year of County finances. I am also grateful to Chief Financial Officer Eric Arellano, who has been instrumental in laying the foundation for the success of our three major ballot measures, and has also helped the County navigate the shifting nuances of federal funding across two presidential administrations.

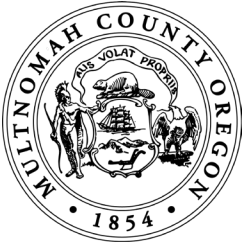
And finally, I want to share my deep gratitude to the 6,000 employees of Multnomah County. As much as the last year has been shaped by myriad challenges, it has also been defined by your dedication to supporting one another and stepping up for our community in crisis after crisis. It is a privilege and an honor to work alongside you.

Some staff will be directly affected by the financial implications of this budget, particularly reductions that are connected to changes in state funding. While departments have tried to direct reductions toward vacant positions, that was not always possible. I approached my budget decisions remembering that our staff and community partners are the ones who transform these investments into life-changing, life-saving services. Thanks to each of you for your commitment to the residents of Multnomah County, your daily contributions, and, even amid uncertainty and adversity, being part of work that matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Kafoury". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Deborah Kafoury



Deborah Kafoury

Multnomah County Chair

April 22, 2021

Multnomah County

Executive Budget Message: COVID-19 and American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

A little over a year ago, we watched, and prepared, as the COVID-19 pandemic escalated quickly from a far-off news story into a direct threat to the health and safety of our own community. And in the year since, we have seen our community stretched to its limits by illness, by financial hardship and by profound disruptions to our sense of stability.

There isn't a day that goes by when I don't reflect on how much things have changed, and how those changes have come on the backs of some of the steepest and most urgent challenges that Multnomah County has ever faced. But I think just as frequently about how we responded with urgency and with compassion, relying on a depth of learned expertise and community wisdom to navigate the uncharted waters of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It has been 14 months since Multnomah County fully activated our Emergency Operations Center and the countywide response to this emergency. In this time, we've acted to give public health guidance to our community and trained trusted community health workers to share information and foster engagement. We've investigated thousands of positive COVID-19 cases and outbreaks, and used that information to better understand profiles, risks and connections.

We developed an online destination to share news and answer questions, including a data dashboard that gives critical insight into how the virus is moving through our community. And most recently, we worked alongside community members, leaders and partners to launch vaccination efforts that focus our limited resources on reaching those at highest risk for illness and death.

As the pandemic led to an increase in both the frequency and severity of domestic violence and sexual assault, I saw our programs collaborate within the system and come up with new ways to make sure survivors could connect to critical, life-saving services.

We tapped into our network of partners to make sure that every last dollar of rent assistance we were given made it into the hands of families. And when we received funding that could be used as direct aid, Multnomah County established dozens of partnerships with community-based organizations to quickly distribute more than a million dollars to struggling families.

In FY 2021, Multnomah County deployed more than \$120 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds from local, state and federal sources. And we know that the needs in our community have only continued to deepen and increase.

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) was signed into law on March 11, 2021, and provides \$350 billion in additional funding for state and local governments navigating the impact of the

COVID-19 outbreak. These resources will greatly bolster our ability to respond to and recover from this public health emergency, address the impacts of COVID-19, and help offset reductions in revenue where feasible.

Funds will be distributed by the U.S. Treasury to states and eligible local governments, and are to be used to cover expenses related to COVID-19 and impacts from the pandemic. This legislation includes a direct allocation of funds to Multnomah County — \$157.6 million to be spent by 2024 — as well as opportunities to access other specific programmatic resources to respond to the pandemic. The County's initial allocation for FY 2022 is \$78.8 million. This memo's spending plan reflects this direct allocation, as well as other dedicated COVID-19 funds from state and federal sources, in total allocating more than \$95 million.

In order to live, to work, to connect and to rebuild our community, we must continue many of our current efforts and lean further into the health, housing and community services that not only help manage the spread of the virus, but also provide stability and accelerate recovery within our county. But most importantly, we must strive to respond in ways that truly reflect our values. We were guided by several key principles as we developed our FY 2022 ARP investments:

- We **inclusively lead with race** in order to best serve people and populations who have been disproportionately impacted by inequities. We honor the expertise, relationships, and resilience within communities of color through our partnerships and co-create solutions.
- Using an **equity and racial justice approach** helps us take into consideration inequities, current disease trends and a deeply held belief that there is tremendous value and positive impact in services provided in the language and cultural traditions of our diverse communities.
- Providing excellent service and supporting people in our community is a hallmark of what we do as a government, safety net system and Local Public Health Authority. County employees and our community partners are the heart of this work. Our work is at its best when we **engage and listen to the expertise and insight of those who are in and working with our community each day**.
- Embedding a **public health approach** within our priorities allows us to consider opportunities to impact the health and wellness of our community at an individual, community and population level, using data and making investments that can have short-term and long-term benefits.
- **Partnership with our jurisdictional partners, community leaders and community-based organizations** is a key component to increasing the effectiveness and impact of the millions of dollars being deployed throughout the county, region and state.

FY2022 American Rescue Plan Investments

Supporting the response to this public health emergency continues to be our top priority. With state and federal funds, **we will dedicate more than \$60 million to fund these critical activities within the County**. This includes nearly \$5 million for contact tracing and case investigation, about \$20 million to support isolation, quarantine, wraparound services and the call center, and more than \$20 million dedicated to testing and vaccination through the Public Health Division and our Community Health Centers. We will continue to support increased behavioral health services, increased capacity for the Health Officer program, and additional staffing in County communications and emergency management. This plan will also fund activities that improve remote work, air quality within County buildings, and the ability to track and manage these new federal funds.

Part of our responsibility at Multnomah County is to uphold the welfare of those who are in our direct care, particularly those in our **congregate settings like shelter, jail and juvenile detention**. We work to minimize risk and leverage increased supports, continuing to recognize that this is a virus that thrives on people being together. As part of our COVID-19 response, we have dedicated nearly \$2.2 million to continuing social distancing, enhanced cleaning and increased health services within our adult and juvenile facilities. We also continue to support additional transportation and housing supports for those exiting jail and correctional facilities.

This spending plan also continues — with partners at the City of Portland — funding the COVID-19 response within the Joint Office of Homeless Services to protect those who are unsheltered and in shelter. For FY 2022, Multnomah County has dedicated \$5.1 million in ARP resources towards the ongoing response, which will be combined with additional revenue sources, including federal CARES funds, federal grants and projected FEMA reimbursements. This plan also allocates an additional \$675,000 to a partnership with Portland Street Medicine and expanding access to hygiene services.

New investments through the American Rescue Plan have also allowed the County to restore and continue important services that might have been impacted by budget cuts at the local, state or federal level. Our FY 2022 ARP spending plan ensures the District Attorney's office has sufficient staffing to work through the backlog of domestic violence cases created as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. It also fully funds staffing positions within Corrections Health and within the Nurse Family Partnership program in Public Health.

Wraparound services and meeting basic needs are the core work of Multnomah County, and we are committed to maintaining our social service safety net and, as much as possible, investing in services that increase access to food, housing assistance, healthcare, mental health services and case management. That means investing more deeply in the kind of client assistance — gift cards, utility support and food access, for example — that our communities need most. This plan includes more than \$9 million for these efforts across County programs.

When this pandemic began, we didn't know how long it would last, who would become ill or how deeply it would impact us. What we have seen over the past year is the ripple effects of a virus that reach far beyond physical health. Our community has been deeply impacted economically, mentally and emotionally, as many have lost loved ones, housing, stability and community connection.

With the American Rescue Plan funds, Multnomah County has the opportunity to respond to crisis and make investments that address some of the negative impacts of this pandemic, and strengthen our community as we turn toward recovery and health.

Housing Stability and Eviction Prevention – \$816,000

The State's residential eviction moratorium is currently set to expire on June 30, 2021. Upon its expiration, we expect evictions for non-payment of rent to begin immediately and to disproportionately impact Black, Indigenous and other communities of color. Legal representation can mean the difference between keeping a home and losing one, or securing enough time and resources to find a new one. This plan funds two attorney positions and a paralegal position to represent households in eviction proceedings in Multnomah County.

The economic impacts from COVID-19 will likely be felt by many families well into the future. And compounding this potential scenario are the projections that rents will soon rapidly increase due to a shortage of new housing in the pipeline. A new investment in renter support would provide critical help for families in mid and east Multnomah County, focused on communities of color. Peer counselors will provide culturally specific one-on-one support and coaching to help renters work on their credit and budget, and prevent evictions.

This Executive Budget already includes \$48 million of state and federal Emergency Rent Assistance to continue our efforts to keep people housed throughout this pandemic. Our ARP spending plan includes additional staffing resources to help get these dollars out to community members quickly, effectively and equitably.

Wraparound Supports for Youth and Families – \$5.4 million

As many students return to the classroom this spring after a year of distance learning, families will look to summer as an opportunity to rebuild skills and social connection in preparation for next school year. With ARP dollars, we will support an enhanced SUN School summer program that will provide students with opportunities for academic support and enrichment activities in collaboration with partner school districts.

While our SUN programs were not able to offer activities and academic support in school buildings for almost a year, that hasn't kept our community partners from reaching out to and engaging with families and youth. As families faced new and increased obstacles, our SUN System responded with increased personal connection to basic needs and services. To continue these vital services for families, my spending plan includes new family resource navigators for our SUN schools and community-based partners.

Addressing Community Violence through Prevention, Intervention and Healing – \$2.7 million

Right now, our community is hurting from a surge in gun violence that has killed people, injured more, and traumatized communities and neighborhoods. But the underlying contributors to violence didn't just appear overnight. They've existed in our community, but were made worse and more volatile by the pandemic.

We are committed to confronting this pressing challenge by investing more in services that help reduce risk factors, and build the resilience of individuals, families and communities who have been most impacted by the violence in our community.

Starting with prevention investments, the County is expanding the reach of its successful Habilitation Empowerment Accountability Therapy, or HEAT, program. Additionally, we are investing in the Department of Community Justice's Elevate program that will provide community support and resources to young men in the Latinx and the African Immigrant communities impacted by gang involvement and gun violence, including peer support, skill building and culturally responsive services.

We're also expanding intervention strategies that focus on addressing behavioral health needs and interrupting cycles of violence. The Gun Violence Behavioral Health Response Team provides mental health consultants and peers to work with gun- and gang-impacted youth and families. At the Department of Community Justice, 23 of the last 55 homicides have had a connection to their adult or juvenile caseloads. The Addressing Trauma of Gun Violence program will use Community Health Specialists to help families develop safety plans and provide trauma support. In the Public Health Division, additional Community Health Specialists will work with youth using the Cure Violence model, addressing violence, health promotion and disease prevention.

Addressing trauma and providing victim supports is a critical part of breaking cycles of violence and harm. We've seen a 60 percent increase in the number of victims of violence who have signed up to be notified of their rights. Added capacity will ensure those notifications of rights happen in a timely manner in compliance with state statutes.

New funding in the Behavioral Health Division will also provide culturally specific opportunities for women emerging from trauma or transition to engage in workshops and one-on-one support to heal and recover using values from various faith practices.

Deepening Safety Net Services – \$1.155 million

During this pandemic, we have seen a marked increase in domestic violence within our community. This spending plan increases culturally specific case management services to better meet the needs of community members seeking help. Additionally, we are investing resources to ensure that in cases of high lethality domestic violence, we have victim advocates available to provide long-term case management and advocacy.

There is also additional funding for the Behavioral Health Division's peer recovery services and recovery center operations. Reports of increased substance abuse during the pandemic require multilayered responses, and peers play a critical role in building relationships and assisting individuals in recovery.

Disease Prevention, Intervention and Surveillance – \$1.4 million

Never has it been more clear that the assets and infrastructure of Multnomah County Public Health are vital for the protection of all our county's residents. Even as we have centered our public health work around COVID-19, other diseases like Ebola, tuberculosis and syphilis continue to impact families and communities. This spending plan expands staffing in the County's Communicable Disease Services to respond to outbreaks, perform case investigation and do lab reporting. It also creates and adds Emerging Infectious Disease staffing to expand and deepen disease response.

This plan also invests in a Health Data Exchange, which will allow Emergency Medical Services (EMS) providers and hospitals to better share data and create a more robust system for communicable disease notification. This shared technology will also improve quality assurance and quality improvement for emergency care systems.

Building Community Connection, Assets and Resilience – \$1.9 million

At Multnomah County, we often focus on the vital services that we provide to individuals, to families and to those in the midst of crisis. But what we also recognize is that services are just one component to stability, health and thriving communities. This spending plan invests in initiatives that are critical to building community strength, break cycles of poverty, and help build generational wealth and wellness.

An expansion to our Public Health Community Partnerships and Capacity Building team will increase investments in community coalition development in culturally specific communities — specifically Asian, Pacific Islander, Latinx, and Black and African immigrant communities.

A new Library Mobile Resource Center will take the Multnomah County Library into neighborhoods most in need of the services our library sites offer as our community recovers from the various impacts of the pandemic. It will provide hands-on access to 21st century technology, wireless internet access and STEAM learning opportunities.

The mobile resource will also be used to provide access to library materials and programs.

As we continue to respond to the immediate needs of our community during the pandemic, we must equally focus on how we will build the pathway to a racially just and equitable economic recovery. This plan supports the creation of the Multnomah Mother's Trust Project, which will partner with approximately 100 Black, women-led families to provide immediate access to a monthly income to meet basic needs and, over the coming year, develop connections to other community assets. With this investment, Multnomah County will continue efforts to develop a Baby Bonds pilot program.

Conclusion

We anticipate the needs in our community will far exceed even the resources and investments shared here. Our community has done herculean work in following guidance to stay home and stay safe, but the impact on the fabric of our community's physical, mental and economic health has been significant.

Even with the beginning of the end of the pandemic in sight, our community and our organization face a long road ahead. The work of addressing the deep harms that the pandemic has caused will take years, as will the work of recovering from the pandemic in a way that builds something better, more equitable, and more just than before.

We've all seen how capable Multnomah County is in responding to big challenges, and I have never been more hopeful about what this community and this organization can become.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deborah Kafoury". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent than the last.

Deborah Kafoury