

**REQUEST FOR ACTION
RAMSEY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Requesting Department: County Manager

Committee: Board of Commissioners

Meeting Date: 3/17/2020

SUBJECT: Temporary Quarantine and Isolation Facilities for Residents Experiencing Homelessness

REQUESTED ACTION

1. Authorize the County Manager to use up to \$1.8 million from the General Contingency Account and other general fund balances for temporary quarantine and isolation facilities for residents experiencing homelessness.
2. Authorize the County Manager to enter into agreements for temporary quarantine and isolation facilities for residents experiencing homelessness in an amount up to \$1.8 million in a form approved by the County Attorney's Office.
3. Authorize the County Manager to execute change orders and amendments to the agreements in accordance with the County's procurement policies and procedures provided sufficient funds are available.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 14th, 2020 the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners signed a temporary declaration of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This declaration of emergency is a necessary and prudent procedural action that gives the county board added flexibility to respond to the COVID-19 event, and eventually request reimbursement for response costs.

Ramsey County residents who are experiencing homelessness are highly susceptible to COVID-19 due to their residence within the shelter system. Additionally, according to the annual Point-In-Time Count over 50% of shelters residents are over the age of 50 and many shelter residents lack health insurance. Those who may be infected with COVID-19 will be unable to self-quarantine or isolate within the shelter space and additional capacity will be needed to prevent further spread and allow space for recuperation.

Ramsey County will open and operate two temporary quarantine and isolation facilities for residents experiencing homelessness. Staff members have identified two sites and are finalizing agreements with these facilities to begin operations as soon as possible.

Each facility will provide sleeping space for those in quarantine or isolation, nursing staff, shelter staff, security and other necessities including meals, showers, hygiene products, some clothing and snacks.

RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT IN SERVICE DELIVERY

Large and persistent racial disparities exist in our adult shelter system. For example, African-Americans accounted for 9% of the total adult population in Ramsey County, but 48% of the adult population within our shelter system. The resources needed to serve our residents experiencing homelessness will benefit all, but especially our communities of color and American Indian communities.

IMPACT OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The plan for temporary quarantine and isolation facilities emerged from conversations with local partners including the city, health care professionals, state agencies and homeless service providers. This partnership will be paramount in efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19 amongst the county’s residents who are experiencing homelessness.

LEVEL OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION (Underline all that apply)

Inform Consult Involve Collaborate Empower

FISCAL IMPACT

County Board approval is required to use General Contingent Account. The County Board is being requested to authorize the County Manager to use up to \$1.8 million from the General Contingency Account and other general fund balances for the described activity. A limited amount of state and federal funds has been made available for COVID-19 related costs. The County will be seeking reimbursement as appropriate as well as advocating for additional funding from other sources to be made available.

COUNTY MANAGER COMMENTS

This action is necessary for the County to respond in a timely way to protect the County and the community to the fullest extent possible.

PREVIOUS ACTION

None.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Resolution