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Dane County Department of Human Services Division of Adult Community Services

Interim Director – Astra Iheukumere

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 9, 2022
TO: Chair and Members of the Personnel and Finance Committee
FROM: Astra Iheukumere, Interim Director
RE: Social Worker Positions Vacant for More Than Six Months, Position #3370 and #3371

County Ordinance 29.52(15) requires the Personnel and Finance Committee and the County Executive to approve filling positions that are vacant longer than six (6) months. Two Social Worker positions, #3370 and #3371 in the Department of Human Services, have not been filled for longer than six (6) months. These positions were authorized in the 2022 budget but have remained unfilled. In an effort to improve the diversity of the workforce, these positions were reclassified to case managers. However, that decision was not upheld by the County Board. That process having taken longer than six months, the department is now attempting to fill these positions.

What is the nature of the work or what is the essential function of the position?

Both positions 3370 and 3371 are assigned to the Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) Program in the Department of Human Services. These positions are primarily responsible for meeting with persons who have a mental health and/or substance use diagnosis to educate them about the features of the CCS program and its Recovery model. These positions are also responsible for conducting intake assessments, determining individuals' eligibility for the program and certifying continuing CCS eligibility annually. CCS is a state-certified, Medicaid-funded program and is governed by state administrative rule. All activities of these positions must conform to those Medicaid and administrative rule requirements.

How has this function been fulfilled without his position?

The CCS Intake has continued to conduct intakes and annual eligibility determinations as it is able. The wait list for access to this program has grown with these vacancies.

What will be the impact on the Department's function and mission if the position remains vacant?

The current wait list for CCS Program entry is currently four months. For someone who is seeking help with a mental illness or a substance use disorder, this is far too long. If these positions remain vacant, the lack of access to CCS will grow worse.