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Sub 1 to 2021 RES-148

**AWARDING A CONTRACT FOR CONTINUATION OF NON-CONGREGATE
SOCIAL DISTANCING AND ISOLATION/QUARANTINE SHELTER SUPPORT TO
FOCUS COUNSELING DCDHS – HAA DIVISION**

This project is funded with the County’s allocation of local aid authorized in the 2021 American Rescue Plan. Therefore, this resolution follows the format outlined in 2021 RES-013.

Justification

Authorizing Law: In March of 2021, the federal government authorized the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan (ARP) stimulus bill authorizing additional funding to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic across multiple areas of need.

Dane County was allocated over \$106 million in ARP local aid. A portion of those funds has been committed to various efforts to prevent and end homelessness and limit spread of COVID-19 through efforts to provide social distancing in the congregate shelter system. \$2.4 million in ARP funding was approved by the Dane County Personnel and Finance Committee in April to assist with non-congregate sheltering efforts for people experiencing homelessness.

Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Preventing exposure to and spread of COVID-19 among households experiencing homelessness has been a pillar of Dane County’s pandemic response. Beginning in March of 2020, Dane County funded non-congregate hotel shelter operations and assisted with other congregate shelter expansions to quickly create critical social distancing in the community’s homeless shelter system, partnering with numerous hotels to provide rooms, and with the City of Madison, Public Health Madison-Dane County, and frontline agencies to administer the program.

While Dane County has one of the highest vaccination rates among eligible individuals in the United States, data suggests that the vaccination rate among people experiencing homelessness is much lower. Lower vaccination rates, combined with the rapid emergence of the COVID-19 Delta variant, necessitates the continuation of non-congregate shelter options for certain people experiencing homelessness to reduce exposure and spread of the virus.

The Dane County Department of Human Services – Housing Access and Affordability Division (HAA) seeks to contract with Focus Counseling to continue non-congregate isolation and quarantine shelter for people experiencing homelessness who are symptomatic/positive for COVID-19 or a close contact for a positive COVID-19 case.

HAA also seeks to contract with Focus Counseling to continue non-congregate shelter for people experiencing homelessness who are at higher risk of severe illness if they contract COVID-19.

Focus Counseling has provided services for both programs since Dane County’s COVID-19 response began. The funding source for the program is changing from CARES to ARP. An RFP will be issued to identify a provider for both programs for 2022, in the event they continue into 2022.

Duplication of Funding/Existing Partnerships and Programs: The funding is not duplicative for a program providing non-congregate isolation/quarantine shelter for people experiencing

52 homelessness who are symptomatic/positive for COVID-19 or a close contact for a positive
53 COVID-19 case.

54 The funding is cooperative with other non-congregate shelter programs, as additional
55 space/programming is needed to maintain social distancing in the shelter system during this
56 time.

57 **Expected Outcomes and Data Collection**

58 Isolation/Quarantine Program

59 Expected program outcomes include the safe recovery and discharge of people who are positive
60 for COVID-19, and safe shelter and discharge of people who need to quarantine due to symptoms
61 prior to test results or due to being a close contact to a positive COVID-19 case. The average
62 number of people served by this program at any given time fluctuates based on COVID-19 spread
63 at any given time. More than 70 people were served at one time during the pandemic's peak in
64 the fall/winter of 2020/2021, and early during the summer of 2021 fewer than 12 people were
65 served at any given time.

66 Data collection will minimally include the number of and demographics for the people served by
67 the program.

68 Non-Congregate Hotel Shelter

69 Expected program outcomes include the provision of safe, non-congregate shelter for people
70 experiencing homelessness who are at higher risk of severe illness if they contract COVID-19.
71 Guests will receive information on how to limit their exposure to COVID-19, receive the COVID-
72 19 vaccine, and make connections to community supports such as housing, employment, medical
73 care, economic assistance programs, or other needs identified by the shelter guest.

74 Data collection will minimally include the number of and demographics for the people served by
75 the program, the average length of stay in non-congregate shelter, and program exit destinations.

76 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the County Board requests quarterly reports
77 be shared with the members of the County Board, and that the Health and Human Needs
78 Committee review the reports on a quarterly basis and discuss how the information
79 presented addresses anticipated program outcomes.

80 **BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the following contract be awarded and that the County
81 Executive and County Clerk are hereby authorized and directed to sign the agreement on behalf
82 of Dane County, and that the Controller is authorized to make payments:

83 <u>Vendor</u>	<u>Contract Amount</u>
84 Focus Counseling, Inc.	\$1,651,991