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Director – Shawn Tessmann

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 20, 2020

TO: Chair and Members of the Personnel and Finance Committee

FROM: Shawn Tessmann, Director

RE: Economic Support Specialist Positions Vacant for More Than Six Months, Positions #2790 and #1340

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 Economic Support Specialist positions, #2790 and #1340 in the Department of Human Services, have not been able to be filled for longer than six (6) months. These positions were left unfilled upon being vacated in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. There is now a need to fill these positions.

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

Economic Support Specialist (ESS) are front-line staff who process applications, reviews, staff the call center and Job Center front desk. ESS are needed to keep benefits flowing to the vulnerable population we serve.

How has this function been fulfilled without his position?

Without filling the ESS positions, work has been distributed to other ESS and Leads by taking on additional projects to complete applications and process verifications timely. This increases the possibility of overworking and burning out employees. Our training protocol has been to hold off on hiring ESS until we have 3 vacant ESS positions. EAWS currently has a total of 4 vacant ESS positions.

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

Our staff, the vulnerable population we serve, our Capital Consortium and community partners will all be negatively impacted by reduced staff capacity. These positions draw outside Income Maintenance revenue.