



Joe Parisi  
DANE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

## Dane County Department of Human Services

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June 25, 2020

TO: HHN Committee

FROM: Shawn Tessmann

RE: June 2020 Update

Thank you for your support of DCDHS. As indicated in previous meetings, I intend to produce a written memo when appropriate of my updates so as to facilitate greater communication and transparency with the board.

Below is my update for June, 2020.

First is that HHN asked me for some staff feedback in some specific areas for consideration for COVID funding. Below are the areas I indicated I would follow up on and the ideas I have at this point.

Utility Assistance—we did connect with Energy Services Inc ([ESI](#)) with whom DCDHS has an existing relationship for utility assistance. They believe they can make a meaningful impact in reducing the number of people facing cut-off with a \$50,000 CARES contract. I'm certain they would be happy to present before the committee at the July meeting should you have additional questions for them.

Domestic violence—we also connected with DAIS to inquire about their status. They indicated the biggest help in the immediate term would be to fund hotel vouchers for overflow. DAIS also mentioned the digital divide for their guests and the interest in an allocation to be used to purchase pre-paid cellular phones. WiFi access and enabling a hot spot would be especially helpful.

Mental health—I was asked to inquire about underserved population. We were recently contacted by Pastor Allen at Mt. Zion Baptist Church and representing the African American Council of Churches. He shared a need they had for mental health professionals to consult with some in their membership who need mental health support. We worked with one of our crisis stabilization providers, Anesis, to expand their scope so they can be available to respond quickly and intervene with individuals who are MA eligible and are experiencing a mental health crisis. They are planning to do outreach to partner with organizations in communities, including churches and other agencies.

We also recently expanded Resource Bridge (\$152,874 in Mental Health Block Grant funds) a program operated by Journey MHC that supports and helps people stabilize after a crisis while

transitioning them to longer term services as needed. As part of this pandemic-related expansion, the length of service (average 90 days) was waived in the contract.

Transportation to Testing—We have been arranging rides for asymptomatic individuals to the Alliant, but only if referred by Public Health. More funding would be needed if we wanted to expand beyond public health referrals. We try to group these rides so we have 2-3 individuals in a van at the same time. The vehicle is able to go to the front of the testing line. The cost typically ranges from \$25-\$50 one-way. There are two taxi companies that are hesitant but may be able to transport symptomatic individuals to the Alliant, if they can find willing drivers. One-way cost can be \$24 from the far west or east side and \$50 or more for a rural transport. RSVP and Time Bank are not transporting people right now but are transporting meals, food pantry boxes, and supply kits.

Aside from those ideas for your consideration, below is a general update on DCDHS activities since the last meeting.

- Reconstitution. We have established a plan to allow more staff to return to the office and to ramp up our activities in the community. No more than 25% of staff are in our buildings. Both the ADRC and JCO are now open. We have made physical accommodations to buildings, provided PPE and modified procedures to enhance the safety of staff but some remain apprehensive as you might expect. We are focusing on a fair rotation of all staff coming in where open on a rotational basis and referring to ADA/FMLA for those staff who might have health conditions for them or their family. We are actively avoiding putting managers and supervisors into positions where they are being asked to evaluate for such medical conditions as it is not appropriate that they do so.
- Attached is a memo on the use of the Lyle Fund. We understand HHN is in the habit of being curious about this fund. Let me know if you have questions about that.
- I also wanted to let the committee know that as of June 22, 2020, 4C's has administered over 75% of the grant funding to keep child care centers open or to get them to re-open. Attached is a list of centers and providers receiving the funding sorted by zip code.
- Badger Prairie had a surprise visit from the Department of Health Services last week to do an audit of their COVID response. No deficiencies were found.
- Some of you may recall that DCDHS plans to transition out of the Stoughton office in lieu of a stronger JFF presence. We have a follow up meeting to talk about that change with locally elected officials in the coming weeks. We are also exiting our lease agreement for the Annex property close to the Job Center. Philosophically, we intend to embrace an approach of more flexible work from home arrangements as a long-term solution to our long-term space problem.
- Eviction prevention. Attached are a couple of documents the committee might find helpful - the prioritization tool and also an update on the applications processed and their demographics. We will update the applications processed information at least monthly.