



Our Mission: Providing quality services through responsible leadership, innovation and the cooperation of dedicated people

**Date:** Dec. 21, 2021  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Dec. 21, 2021, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

### **Attorney added to county-supported court representation**

Victoria Herr will provide legal representation for children in need of protection or services (CHIPS), termination of parental rights, and permanency cases in Washington County after the County Board approved a contract with her Dec. 21.

The contract runs from Jan. 1, 2022, through Dec. 31, 2023.

The county is required by state law to provide this representation for parents or guardians in these cases. State statute also requires reasonable compensation for the attorney.

The county contracts with five attorneys for this representation. Since 2014, the county has been contracting with attorneys to provide these services for a flat monthly amount of compensation to manage and predict costs. Under the terms of the agreement, Herr will provide representation for approximately 30% of these cases within Washington County.

**Contact: Jennifer Wagenius, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6007**

### **County will continue to work with Canvas Health for services**

Canvas Health will continue to provide services to county residents after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$1.3 million contract with the agency for 2022.

Canvas Health provides services to children, adolescents, adults, elderly individuals, and families who struggle with aging, crises, chemical and mental health, and domestic and sexual abuse.

A great place to live, work and play...today and tomorrow

Washington County has contracted with Canvas Health for many years to provide state-mandated mental health services and other services to county residents, a majority of which fall under this contract. These services include adult psychiatry, rapid access clinic psychiatry services, outpatient mental health services, psychological and parenting evaluation services, abuse and recovery services, case management for children diagnosed as Seriously Emotionally Disturbed (SED), and family-based services.

With the advent of Minnesota Managed Care Organizations and the Affordable Care Act, there has been a shift in funding for services that were historically funded through the Canvas Health contract. Data continues to be collected and reviewed to understand these changes and to adjust funding accordingly.

In reviewing data that was collected in 2020 and part of 2021, services in the Canvas Health contract were identified as services now billable to Medicaid for a large number of Washington County residents. Subsequently, adjustments have been made to the county contract with Canvas Health consistent with the data. All changes have been made with the focus of ensuring that residents are receiving needed services in an appropriate and timely manner, while also ensuring the responsible use of taxpayer funds.

The changes for the 2022 contract include programs being eliminated, programs being reduced for a reduction of \$41,500 in costs, and programs being added, for an increase in costs of \$34,868, for an annual net decrease in costs of \$6,632 from last year's contract.

Outcome data is collected and analyzed on all services purchased from Canvas Health. An annual performance report is submitted to Washington County, and is available upon request.

**Contact: Sarah Amundson, Community Services Division Director, 651-430-6597**

### **County's Board approves labor agreements with county employees**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved collective bargaining agreements with county bargaining groups, and compensation and benefit agreements with a number of employee groups Dec. 21.

Those groups whose agreements were approved for the coming two years are:

- compensation and benefits for department heads and department deputy directors for 2022 and 2023. It includes general wage adjustment of 2.5% in 2022 and in 2023.
- confidential employees and confidential supervisors not represented by a bargaining unit. The group will receive general wage adjustments of 2.5% in 2022 and in 2023.
- tentative agreement for the 2022-2023 collective bargaining agreement with the Supervisor's Association bargaining unit. It includes general wage adjustment of 2.5% in 2022 and in 2023. Paid parental leave of three weeks will be provided for the birth or adoption of a child in exchange for one fewer day of PTO. This will affect new employees of the group hired after Jan. 1, 2022.
- a tentative agreement for 2022-2023 collective bargaining agreements with both the Exempt and Non-Exempt bargaining units represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council No. 5. It includes general wage adjustments of 2.5% in 2022 and in 2023
- a tentative agreement for the 2022-2023 Collective Bargaining Agreement with the International Union of Operating Engineers Local No. 49 AFL-CIO (49ers). It includes general wage adjustment of 2.5% in 2022 and in 2023. Jan. 1, 2022, will see changes to the 49er job classifications consistent with the ranges of the rest of the county's classifications. Clothing allowance will be converted from its current form of an annual lump sum to a base wage.
- a tentative agreement for the 2022 - 2023 Collective Bargaining Agreement with Law Enforcement Labor Services (LELS) Local #372 Essential Captain/Commander Unit. It includes general wage adjustment of 2.5% in 2022 and in 2023.
- a tentative agreement for the 2022-2023 Collective Bargaining Agreement with Teamsters Local No. 320 (Probation Officers). It includes general wage adjustment of 2.5% in 2022 and in 2023. Paid parental leave of three weeks will be provided for the birth or adoption of a child.

All the agreements outline the county's contribution to health insurance premiums in 2022-2023 for all the groups. In addition, the agreements outline the addition of Juneteenth, June 19, as a paid

holiday, removing Christmas Eve as a holiday, and adding a floating holiday, with the exception of the Teamsters Local 320.

The board also approved one-year tentative agreements for 2021 with the Minnesota Public Employees Association (MNPEA) Correctional Officer/911 Supervisors Unit and the Minnesota Public Employees Association (MNPEA) Correctional Officer/911 Unit. Under the agreements, on the first pay period following the effective date of the contract, a one-time 2% lump sum of salary will be applied, and on the first pay period following the effective date of the contract, a one-time \$1,000 lump sum payment will be made. Correctional Officer Sergeant uniform allowance for 2021 shall be \$695 and Correctional Officer uniform allowance for 2021 shall be \$660.

**Contact: Angie Nalezny, Human Resources Director, 651-430-6075**

### **Lakeview Hospital, Health Partners Medical Group will provide correctional health services**

Lakeview Hospital and Health Partners Medical Group will continue to provide correctional health medical services in Washington County during 2022, after the County Board approved a contract with the health care providers Dec. 21.

Washington County is required by the state to provide medical care to jail inmates. The county also administers medical care services in the jail, providing nursing staff in the medical unit. The county contracts for several services, including medical, dental, pharmacy, mental health, laboratory, and other services.

Through this renewed agreement with Lakeview/HealthPartners, the county will access a jail medical director who is responsible for signing standing orders and providing oversight of policies and procedures used in the Jail Medical Unit. The medical director also provides on-call medical care and stands in for the provider as needed. The contract also provides for an on-site provider of medical services to inmates each week. Staff provide specific medical care and support based on inmate needs and initiatives occurring in the medical unit.

The costs of services provided under the contract are either paid through health insurance or a health plan if the inmate is insured, or by the county.

**Contact: Jill Timm, Public Health Program Manager of Nursing Services, 651-275-7286**

## **Community Corrections report on comprehensive plan for 2022-2023**

The Washington County Board of Commissioners received a report Dec. 21 on the county's Department of Community Corrections' comprehensive plan for 2022-2023.

Highlights from the comprehensive plan are the department's:

- review of the adult pretrial process to assess for fairness and equity;
- the development and implementation of a Community Corrections Equity Change Team; and
- continued collaboration with the Robert F. Kennedy National Resource Center for Juvenile Justice.

Goals that the department reviewed were:

- the percentage of juvenile probation clients who are not convicted of a new felony offense following discharge from supervision, which is at 98% for 2020;
- the number of departmental staff administered one-on-one cognitive skills interventions completed with clients, which was 2,463 in 2020;
- the percentage of clients successfully completing their court ordered Sentence to Service condition, which was 84% in 2020;
- the percentage of juvenile probation clients enrolled in an education program, which was 86% in 2020;
- the number of clients supervised through dosage probation, which was 235 in 2020; and
- the number of clients using GPS and electronic alcohol monitoring, which was 265 in 2020.

**Contact: Terry Thomas, Community Corrections Director, 651-430-6951**

## **Washington County will receive Met Council grants to improve access to parks**

Washington County will receive a \$150,000 grant from the Metropolitan Council to improve access to programs and county parks for all residents and visitors to the county, after the County Board accepted the grant Dec. 21.

The county submitted a grant proposal to the Metropolitan Council as part of a competitive process to secure funding for equity initiatives. The money will cover the expenses associated with hiring a two-year special-project position of a parks coordinator to serve as a community outreach specialist to

build community partnerships and coordinate park programming, outreach events, and Parks-on-the-Go Programs.

The position will be funded for two years and provide Washington County with the staff and expertise to better serve a broader range of community members. In agencies across the region, a dedicated staff position has been shown to be a successful model to move forward equity and engagement goals. With a dedicated staff member, whose purpose is to work directly with the community to plan programming and outreach events, the county will be able to target the broad spectrum of underrepresented populations.

The county will also receive funds to provide parks programs, including \$60,000 for a Parks-on-the-Go Vehicle, \$70,000 for Paddle Port Rental Equipment & Learn to Paddle Program, and \$80,000 for accessibility improvements. The paddle sport rental equipment and learn to paddle programming will be at Square Lake Park and Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park.

**Contact: Sandy Breuer, Parks Director, 651-430-4371**

### **Washington County will participate in opioid settlement**

Washington County will receive funds from a settlement with certain opioid manufacturers and distributors as part of a multistate coalition reaching a settlement with the companies.

The County Board agreed to participate in the settlement after discussing it in a closed session Dec. 21. The board had a deadline of Jan. 2, 2022, to agree to the settlement.

The State of Minnesota joined a multistate coalition in reaching nationwide settlements with the opioid distributors and manufacturers. Washington County has also filed suit against these similar entities and are represented by the Lockridge, Grindal and Nauen law firm.

This board reviewed a number of public documents from the Office of the Minnesota Attorney General that describe the national settlements that have been reached, the implications for the state, counties and cities, and a frequently asked questions document.

After the closed session, the board agreed that the county should join the national settlement.

The money will be used to support social service agencies through the Opiate Epidemic Response Fund.

According to the Attorney General's office, the state will receive more than \$296 million over the next 18 years to support state and local efforts to fight the opioid epidemic. Up to \$222 million will be paid directly to cities and counties. Payments could be received as early as April 2022.

More than 5,400 Minnesotans have died from opioid overdoses since 2000.

**Contact: Yvonne Klinnert, Public Information Manager, 651-430-6026**