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**Sponsor:** Financial Assistance Services

**Meeting Date:** 11/19/2024

**Title:** Financial Assistance Services Department Annual Authority for Procurement Requests

**File Number:** 2024-524

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**Background and Rationale:**

The Financial Assistance Services Department provides safety net programs and quality services to the county's poorest and most vulnerable residents. It determines eligibility for and distributes benefits for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, the Minnesota Family Investment Program, Diversionary Work Program, Housing Support Program, Childcare Assistance, Medical Assistance, and Emergency Assistance programs to thousands of county residents. The department is committed to be a resident-centered agency that helps people meet their basic needs so they can live in dignity and achieve their highest potential. It seeks to exceed the expectation of community by increasing accessibility to the critical services the Financial Assistance Services Department provides.

This request for board action includes requests intended to improve and streamline the procurement processes with a centered focus on equity in the delivery of services to individuals. One example includes directly entering into agreements for services with providers where the need far exceeds the supply. Other examples include using contracts already established through other counties or utilizing a contractor selection process that is certified by the state of Minnesota. Ramsey County Board approval will continue to be requested for changes in practices, policies, new grant applications or actions affecting complement, revenues or appropriations relating to county levy, while maintaining an open, competitive solicitation process committed to racial equity. This effort increases transparency in how the department collaboratively engages the community during the solicitation and contracting process to meet the needs of racially and culturally diverse individuals, families, and communities.

**Recommendation:**

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

Authorize the County Manager, subject to review by County Attorney's Office and the Finance to do the following:

1. Enter into the following expenditure agreements without solicitation through December 31, 2025, and execute future amendments to the agreements in accordance with the county's procurement policies and procedures, provided the amounts are within the budget for the services listed below:
  - A. Contracts in which the county currently provides services and receives payments from external sources, such as health plans, the Courts, other counties, and other parties, including payments for services already provided.
  - B. Lead or host county contracts held by other counties in accordance with Minnesota Statute 256.0112.
  - C. Community support programs, culturally specific African American community support programs and culturally specific American Indian / Indigenous community support programs.
  - D. Providers when the Minnesota Department of Human Services has issued the solicitation for an existing service in the county and selected the contractor or when the Minnesota Department of Human Services has approved the contractor through a certification process.
2. Approve actions deemed necessary for the orderly administration of expenditure agreements through December 31, 2025.
  - A. Acceptance of supplementary awards or rate adjustments the county may receive from funding sources other than county levy; and execute amendments with funders and contractors.
3. Authorize the County Manager to enter into expenditure grant agreements and execute amendments to agreements in a form approved by Finance and the County Attorney's Office provided the amounts of funding are within the limits of the department's approved budget.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Frethem, seconded by Commissioner McGuire. Motion passed.

Aye: - 6: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

By:   
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Jason Yang, Interim Chief Clerk - County Board