
Sponsor: County Manager's Office

Meeting Date: 8/23/2022

Title: Joint Powers Agreement with City of Saint Paul for Immigrant and Refugee Services

File Number: 2022-409

Background and Rationale:

Residents and community have met with Ramsey County to discuss the impact that current immigration policies have on immigrant and refugee communities. The federal policies result in uncertainty, fear, anxiety and family disruption that impacts the well-being, prosperity and overall opportunity of residents, businesses and families. Within the past decade, detained representation rates have generally risen across immigration courts overall. Ramsey County and the city of Saint Paul are committed to engaging the community and building trust across public services to ensure that long-term community prosperity is shared by all and all residents and community, regardless of immigration and refugee status, feel welcome and safe.

The two parties now wish to enter into a Joint Powers Agreement pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 471.59 to continue and maintain the jointly funded immigrant and refugee legal defense program. Ramsey County and the city of Saint Paul will both contribute \$100,000 each to the joint fund. This program is also in partnership with the Vera Institute for Justice, who distributes the funds and have been collaborating with three immigration legal service providers: Immigrant Law Center of MN; The Advocates of Human Rights; and Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid. These partners provide legal representation to residents facing removal proceedings and who earn less than 200% of the poverty guidelines. Ramsey County will provide the Vera Institute of Justice the joint funds to distribute to residents who utilize the program. Pursuant to the Joint Powers Agreement, monies paid by the city of Saint Paul will be used for legal services provided to Saint Paul residents.

Recommendation:

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners resolved to:

1. Approve the Joint Powers Agreement with the city of Saint Paul authorizing the city's transfer of funds up to \$100,000 to the county for immigrant and refugee legal defense services, for the period from August 23, 2022 through December 31, 2023.
2. Authorize the Chair and Chief Clerk to execute the Joint Powers Agreement.

A motion to approve was made by Commissioner Carter, seconded by Commissioner Reinhardt. Motion passed.

Aye: - 7: Carter, Frethem, MatasCastillo, McDonough, McGuire, Ortega, and Reinhardt

By: _____



Mee Cheng, Chief Clerk - County Board