



COLLEC JAN 31 '25 PM 1:58

COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

January 31, 2025

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

RE: Authorization to Contract with Journey's End Refugee Services

Dear Honorable Members:

The Erie County Department of Health (ECDOH) is seeking authorization to enter into contract with Journey's End Refugee Services for in-person interpretation and translation services for Environmental Health's programs, inspections, and services.

Should your Honorable Body require further information, please contact Commissioner of Health Gale Burstein. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark C. Poloncarz", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/jah
Enclosure

cc: Dr. Gale Burstein, Commissioner of Health

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Department of Health
Re: Authorization to Contract with Journey's End Refugee Services
Date: January 24, 2025

SUMMARY

ECDOH's Environmental Health Division is seeking authorization to contract with Journey's End Refugee Services for in-person interpretation and translation services to bridge language barriers for non-English speaking county residents. This contract would specifically help with conveying information about programs, services, and results of inspections. ECDOH is seeking authorization to waive the RFP procedures because they are the only known qualified agency to provide the in-person translation needed to meet on location.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding was budgeted for and is currently available for the contract in account 516020 Professional Services as well as various grant funds that could be used for specific programs.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

ECDOH would ensure fair and equitable access to various programs and services to all Erie County residents regardless of language spoken. This contract would also assist inspectors working with residents on correcting various hazards including lead hazards in homes that have children under 5.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

Erie County would not be providing adequate translation services for in person services, programs, and inspections done by Environmental Health.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

ECDOH will work with Budget and Management and County Attorney's Office on executing all terms of the contract.

RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Re: Authorization to Contract with Journey's End Refugee Services

WHEREAS, the Erie County Department of Health's Environmental Health Division provides education, outreach, and inspections for various issues including safe drinking water, lead hazards, rabies clinics, food service inspections, tobacco enforcement, and many other issues; and

WHEREAS, Erie County has a growing New Americans population who own homes, business, and participate in various department programming; and

WHEREAS, ECDOH would like to contract with Journey's End Refugee Services for in person translation services to meet New Americans where they are; and

WHEREAS, in person translation services help facilitate and ensure all residents are aware of available programs and how to mitigate or remediate any environmental hazards to protect their health; and

WHEREAS, ECDOH is not aware of any other local agencies who provide in person services at various locations to help with issues specifically around inspections; and

WHEREAS, funds are available in account 516020 Professional Services to cover the cost of the services.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, the Erie County Legislature hereby authorizes the County Executive or Deputy County Executive to enter into a contract with Journey's End Refugee Services, waiving the procedures in Section 26.08 of the Erie County Administrative Code; and be it further

RESOLVED, that sufficient funds to cover the cost of this contract already exist within the Health Department (Fund 110, Funds Center 12730) 2025 General Fund Budget in Account 516020 - Professional Services, Contracts and Fees; and be it further

RESOLVED, authorization is hereby given for the Division of Budget and Management to make any technical adjustments necessary to effectuate this resolution; and be it

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution will be forwarded to the Erie County Executive's Office, Comptroller's Office, Department of Health and Division of Budget and Management.