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## AGENDA ITEM BRIEFING

Commissioners Court – June 30, 2020

AI Number: 75841

Project Number: 2020-227

**Information:** [Requesting authority to authorize a discretionary exemption for Electronic Medical Records System] Hidalgo County Health Department [*in order to assist with County functions related to medical and public health measures.*]

**Description of AI:** (A) Exemption from Competitive Bidding; (B) Presentation of Scoring Grid; (C) Authority to negotiate service agreement

**Funding Source:** CARES Act Relief Fund (TBD)                      **Acct. #** 0-1287-441-42-115-096-0-

**Requested by:** Eduardo “Eddie” Olivarez, Health Director                      **Department:** Health Department

**Prepared by:** Elena Gomez, Contract Specialist II                      **Department:** Purchasing Department

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### BACKGROUND

On March 17, 2020, pursuant to the authority under Texas Government Code Section 418.108, Hidalgo County Judge Richard Cortez issued a Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency due to the imminent threat arising from the Coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 22, 2020, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 418.108(b), the Commissioners Court of Hidalgo County issued an Order of Continuance of Declaration of Local Disaster for Public Health Emergency that affirmed the activation of the Hidalgo County Emergency Management Plan and extends the Declaration of Local Disaster.

In coordinating the response to this ongoing public health emergency, the Hidalgo County Health Department is in need of a Electronic Medical Records System to allow for effective access to the data as well and increase user capacity.

In order to meet the needs of our community, Hidalgo County Health needs additional sources assist with COVID-19. With these additional resources, Hidalgo County Health will be able to better our medical community in any medical intervention. This will allow us to increase scalability in the number of remote sites needed to mitigate the impact caused by resurgence of Covid-19. It will also be able to handle a much larger quantity of clients without further stressing our own information technology infrastructure.

### COMPLIANCE

Discretionary exemptions are authorized by the Texas Local Government Code 262.024 (a) states “a contract for the purchase of any of the following items is exempt from the requirement established by the section 262.023 if the commissioners court by order grants the exemption.” This request is being made under LGC 262.024 (a) (2), an item necessary to preserve or protect

the public health or safety of the residents of the county, and LGC 262.024 (a) (4) a personal or professional service. The procurement of services complies with 2 CFR 200 requirements.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

The new systems allow for effective access to the data as well and increased user capacity.

## **AGENDA ITEM CAPTION**

- A. “Discussion, consideration, and action to approve a necessary CARES Act Relief Fund expenditure to cover cost not accounted for in the current budget and cannot be lawfully funded by line item, allotment or allocation, for the Electronic Medical Records, in order to assist with County Public Health expenses addressing the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency; the Court having reviewed the Agenda Item Briefing, herein finds that such expenditure is reasonable and necessary for the intended use.
- B. Exemption from competitive bidding requirements, pursuant to Texas LGC 262.024(a)(1): an item that must be purchased in case of a public calamity if it is necessary to make the purchase promptly to relieve the necessity of the citizens; (2) an item necessary to preserve and protect the public health and safety of the citizens.
- C. The current Electronic Medical Records system is not capable of handling and analyzing the data related to the Covid-19 infections effectively. The new systems allow for effective access to the data as well and increased user capacity. This will allow us to increase scalability in the number of remote sites needed to mitigate the impact caused by resurgence of Covid-19. It will also be able to handle a much larger quantity of clients without further stressing our own information technology infrastructure. The additional capability may integrate with the Healthcare Health Information Exchange and promote a secure patient health information exchange with local healthcare providers.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Approval of the items will allow the Hidalgo County Health Department to proceed with securing the laboratory design necessary to address the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. Recommending that Commissioners Court authorize the exemption for said architecture services as stated as they are reasonable and necessary expenditures related to the County’s COVID-19 Public Health Response. Expenditures will be charged to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Relief Grant Fund and/or other grant assistance available to address the COVID-19 public health emergency.

### **Attachments:**

- 1295 Form
- Project Overview
- Tex. Loc. Gov. Code
- 213 Form
- Agenda Item Briefing