

AGENDA ITEM BRIEFING

Commissioners Court – August 25, 2020

AI Number: 77019

Information: Requesting authority to provide emergency relief to local Hospitals in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency as necessary and eligible under the CARES Act Relief Fund.

Description of AI: Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with various local Hospitals for necessary medical and public health expenses directly related to their efforts to increase capacity for treatment of COVID-19 patients.

Funding Source: CARES Act Relief Fund

Account No.: 0-1287-480-XX-115-096-X-843

Requested by: Laura Matamoros, Economic Development Director

Department: County Judge's Office - Economic Development Division

Prepared by: Merlen Munoz, Budget Analyst

Department: Budget & Management

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.

The County desires to designate a portion of the funds received to reimburse various local Hospital for expenses incurred as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The purposes of the agreement is to memorialize the understanding between the parties that the County will reimburse Hospitals a specific amount of the CRFund in order to directly address and reimburse necessary medical and public health expenses incurred directly relating to the COVID-19 public health emergency. In exchange, the Hospital will make efforts to continue to provide services and expanded capacity as authorized in the agreement.

COMPLIANCE

Pursuant to guidance provided by the United States Department of Treasury issued April 22, 2020 and updated on June 30, 2020, the CRFund allows a recipient to utilize funds for necessary expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency and meets the other criteria of section 601(d) of the Social Security Act as outlined in the Guidance.

ADMINISTRATION

Approval of the item is consistent with Hidalgo County's intended purpose to utilize funds for necessary expenditures incurred due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. The goal is to provide efficient and effective delivery of services in light of change in technology, the public's expectations, and the area's population and economy. Hidalgo County Health is taking the lead in responding to the COVID-19 health emergency for our community as a whole.

AGENDA ITEM CAPTION

1. 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, to provide emergency relief to local Hospitals, in order to assist with expenses associated with 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.
2. Discussion, consideration and approval of Memorandum of Understanding between Hidalgo County and various local Hospitals for necessary medical and public health expenses directly related to their efforts to increase capacity for treatment of COVID-19 patients.
3. Approval of interdepartmental transfer.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The CRF – Incurred Cost Committee recommends approval to provide emergency relief to the County's local Hospitals as they are reasonable and necessary expenditures to address the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. Reimbursements will be charged to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Relief Grant Fund available to address the COVID-19 public health emergency.