



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 20-1398A, **Version:** 1

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### **Subject:**

Interlocal Agreements with the Public Defender's Office for jail diversion, juvenile crossover case managers, a therapist for the Ready for Life program, and an information technology position.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approval of the Interlocal Agreements with the Public Defender's Office for jail diversion, juvenile crossover case managers, a therapist for the Ready for Life program, and an information technology position.

- The Interlocal Agreements support programming and services offered by the Public Defender's Office.
- Jail Diversion program directs the placement of individuals to appropriate mental health services in lieu of jail and the juvenile crossover program assists youth who are at-risk of re-offending and entering the adult justice system.
- In Fiscal Year 2019, Jail Diversion program served a total of 756 clients and the Chronic Inebriate Program served 50 total clients.
- Thirty-six youth received services from the Crossover program from March 2019 to April 2020.
- The information technology position supports Article V requirements.
- The total amount of funding for the five Interlocal Agreements is \$1,221,550.00 for the Fiscal Year 2021.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Ensure Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

2.1 Provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to ensure a safe and secure community

2.2 Be a facilitator, convener, and purchaser of services for those in need

2.4 Support programs that seek to prevent and remedy the causes of homelessness and move individuals and families from homelessness to permanent housing

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers

5.3 Ensure effective and efficient delivery of county services and support

### **Summary:**

The Interlocal Agreements provide funding for diversion and support programs offered through the Public Defender's Office to aid with operations and assist clients in need. These programs help stabilize clients by connecting them to services and community resources as a diversion from incarceration and to reduce future justice system involvement.

### **Background Information:**

The Public Defender's Office provides legal advice, counsel, and defense services to needy and

indigent citizens accused of crimes in Pinellas County (County). Programs are in collaboration with the Public Defender, State Attorney, Pinellas County Sheriff, Judiciary, and local service providers.

The Jail Diversion Recovery Program specifically targets individuals whose legal involvement may be a result of untreated mental illness or co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders for services. Services include: assessments, transportation, transitional housing, psychiatric referrals, treatment plans, prescription medication therapy, intensive case management, court liaisons and other community resources. Over a sixteen-year period through 2019, Jail Diversion had served 7,837 clients with a 94% success rate. As a result, the placement of these patients in mental health services has resulted in effect program connections and reduced jail stays.

The Crossover program focuses on identifying youth that are at a high risk of re-offending and whose cases cross over into both the dependency and delinquency divisions of the Unified Family Court of the Sixth Judicial Circuit. This program benefits youth in foster care who are most in need of stability. Between March 2019 and April 2020, 36 youths received services from the Crossover Case Managers. They received a wide array of services from psychiatric counseling, to obtaining social assistance benefits, to scheduling medical and dental appointments. The clients ranged in age from 12 to 19 years old. With the additional support of a new grant award from the Department of Children and Families, in partnership with the County and Ready for Life, the Public Defender's Office anticipates serving 150 additional youth with intensive diversion services over the next three years.

The therapist at Ready for Life assists youth that are aging out of the foster care system. The therapist will work with the youth to find employment, housing, and other vital skills to become successful and achieve independence.

The IT position performs all necessary on-site installation and support services for computers and equipment purchased by the County. Article V of the Florida Constitution requires the County to provide all reasonable and necessary technology as well as communication functions for the Public Defender.

**Fiscal Impact:**

Funding of \$1,221,550.00 is consistent with the FY21 Tentative Budget.

Interlocal Agreement amounts are as follows:

- \$854,660.00 for the Jail Diversion Recovery Programs comprised of;
  - o \$661,750.00 to fund Recovery Program services (Jail Diversion & Chronic Inebriate)
  - o \$153,680.00 for two community case managers
  - o \$39,230.00 for program expenses
- \$74,660.00 for the Jail Diversion caseworker
- \$151,620.00 for two Crossover case managers
- \$81,070.00 for the Ready for Life therapist
- \$59,540.00 for the IT position

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Daisy Rodriguez, Director, Human Services

**Partners:**

Public Defender's Office

**Attachments:**

Jail Diversion Recovery Program Agreement

Jail Diversion Case Manager Agreement

Juvenile Crossover Case Manager Agreement

Ready for Life Therapist Agreement

IT position Agreement