



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
July 23, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Submitted by: Kelly Wallace, Acting Director, Health, Housing & Community Services

Subject: Contract No. 9888A Amendment: Merritt Hawkins for Recruitment Services:
Psychiatrist

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager or her designee to execute an amendment to Contract No. 9888A adding \$100,000 to the expenditure contract with Merritt Hawkins for Recruitment for Psychiatrist III for a total contract limit of \$149,990 for the period beginning March 2, 2015 and ending on June 30, 2021.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Funding for this contract is available in Health (Short/Doyle) Fund Account 316-51-503-521-2007-000-451-612990 (50%) and Mental Health State Aide Realignment Fund Account 158-51-503-521-2006-000-451-612990 (50%). The contract amendment has been entered into the City's Contract Management System and assigned CMS No. UXLL2.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The contract amendment provides financial support to Merritt Hawkins, by reimbursing it for psychiatric recruitment services up to \$149,990 for the period beginning March 2, 2015 and ending on June 30, 2021. The Mental Health Division's Adult Mental Health Clinic has a staffing shortage of 1.5 FTE of a total of 3.0 FTE that are allowed to prescribe medication. Vacant positions include a 1.0 FTE Mid-Level Practitioner and a 0.5 FTE Psychiatrist III. This contract amendment will allow continued use of psychiatrist recruitment services through Merritt Hawkins until efforts allow for the hiring of permanent staffing for these positions.

BACKGROUND

The City of Berkeley's Mental Health Division (BMH) has experienced great difficulty in filling vacant positions for staff who can prescribe psychiatric medications. Due to a variety of factors, including the Medi-Cal expansion through the Affordable Care Act, an existing shortage of psychiatrists in the region has been greatly exacerbated. Many area providers are experiencing staff shortages in psychiatry, as the exploding need for psychiatry has led to existing staff leaving for new positions and an overall shortage of providers.

In response to these staff vacancies, a wide recruitment for psychiatrists was performed by the City's Human Resources Department, including contacting all licensed psychiatrist in California to inform them of the job opportunities. Unfortunately, this effort led to a small list of qualified candidates in the Psychiatrist III position. After interviewing all applicants who were interested in the position, only one applicant accepted a position covering 0.5 FTE, and that applicant has since left the position.

Given the continued staffing shortage, several measures have been put in place to locate permanent staffing for these positions. These include creating a continuous list for the Psychiatrist III classification, so that any time we have an interested applicant we can consider them for employment; the creation of a contract (No. 9880) with Jackson & Coker for Locum Tenens psychiatric services; and the conversion of one vacant 0.5 FTE Psychiatrist III position into a 1.0 FTE Mid-Level Practitioner position in hopes that this classification will be easier to fill. A list has been created for the Mid-Level Practitioner position and interviews are ongoing for this vacancy.

To provide necessary medication prescribing and monitoring services while attempting to fill these staff vacancies, the City entered into Contract No. 9888 with Merritt Hawkins on March 2, 2015 for psychiatrist recruitment services with a contract limit of \$24,990. When recruitment efforts did not lead to securing staffing, contract amendment 9888A increased the contract limit to \$49,990 on July 1, 2016. Due to continued vacancy and approaching the contract limit, this contract amendment will ensure the City provides quality mental health care while taking steps to secure permanent staffing.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the action requested in this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Merritt Hawkins offers recruitment services for psychiatrists who provide services to Medi-Cal, uninsured, disenfranchised, and under-served populations. These services are necessary for the provision of mental health treatment provided by the City. These services will only be utilized until permanent staffing positions are filled.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The City could not provide necessary medication prescription and monitoring services for individuals with mental illness. This was rejected because it would have led to harm to current and prospective mental health patients.

CONTACT PERSON

Steve Grolnic-McClurg, Manager, Mental Health Services, HHCS, (510) 981-5249

Attachments:

1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT NO. 9888A AMENDMENT: MERRITT HAWKINS FOR RECRUITMENT SERVICES: PSYCHIATRIST

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley's Mental Health Division (BMH) has a successful partnership with Merritt Hawkins, providing recruitment services for psychiatrists; and

WHEREAS, Merritt Hawkins is an essential provider of recruitment services in Berkeley; and

WHEREAS, Merritt Hawkins offers recruitment services for psychiatrists who provide services to Medi-Cal, uninsured, disenfranchised, and under-served populations; and

WHEREAS, Merritt Hawkins' services support mental health goals of improving the health and well-being of the community during periods of staff shortages; and

WHEREAS, funds are available in the current year budget.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager or her designee is authorized to execute an amendment to Contract No. 9888A with Merritt Hawkins adding \$100,000 for a total contract amount not to exceed \$149,990 for the period March 2, 2015 and ending on June 30, 2021 for the purpose of funding psychiatrist recruitment services; CMS No. UXLL2; Health (Short/Doyle) Fund Account 316-51-503-521-2007-000-451-612990 (50%) and Mental Health State Aide Realignment Fund Account 158-51-503-521-2006-000-451-612990 (50%). A record copy of said contract to be on file in the office of the City Clerk.

