

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

RESOLUTION NO. 01-066

Acceptance of the Report of Contract Policy Team; Adoption of Policies Governing Human Service Contracting

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Finds:

- a. In October 1999 the Chair appointed a Contract Policy Team to examine Multnomah County's human service contracting policies. This team was to examine the legal mandates/parameters for human service contracting and best practices; develop a policy on contracting versus direct provision of human services and develop a policy that would allow for partnerships with human service providers.
- b. The Multnomah County Auditor has called for an updated human service contracting framework (Contracted Human Services: Build Successful Contracting Relationships, March 2000).
- c. The Contract Policy Team has recommended an updated framework, policies, and procedures for human service contracting that incorporates best practices and allows for creative partnerships with community service providers.
- d. Human service contractors attending an open meeting on January 16, 2001 approved the direction recommended by the Contract Policy Team.
- e. Improvements in public safety, school success, community health, and reduction of poverty in Multnomah County require the cooperative action of government at all levels, businesses, non-profit organizations, and the general public.

The Multnomah County Board of Commissioners Resolves:

1. The following vision and values shall guide Multnomah County's human service contracting process:

Multnomah County's vision is to increase the sense of safety, personal opportunity and success of all County residents. We achieve this vision through cooperation, partnerships and contracts with other governments, businesses, non-profit organizations, and individuals throughout the County.

All public services, whether provided directly by the County or by its contractors, shall be of excellent quality, customer-focused, and a good value for tax dollars.

The following values guide our work: integrity, responsiveness, vision, quality of service, fiscal responsibility, accountability, teamwork, and diversity.

2. The following principles shall guide Multnomah County's human service contracting process:

Multnomah County commits to working with our partners to continually assess and improve how we deliver services. We commit to excellent service to our partners through adherence to the Multnomah County Human Services Contracting Guidelines.

We seek the most efficient and effective method to deliver human services. In making the decision to deliver services directly, or to contract for services, each County department shall consider and balance multiple criteria including: clear and enhanced benefits to the consumer such as improved access, improved coordination, or reduction of barriers to service such as culture or language; benefits of direct public oversight and accountability; significant cost savings or efficiencies; availability of technical or specialized expertise; mandates that require or forbid various service provision options; departmental mission.

It is recognized that maximizing some of these factors may require tradeoffs in others. Which factors are primary may vary from situation to situation. Given this complex relationship there is no a priori answer as to whether services should be directly provided or contracted.

3. To the extent necessary, Multnomah County shall amend its contracting procedures to allow for human service contracting partnerships in addition to the current model of market-based contracting. For the purposes of human services contracting, a partnership is defined as a collaborative contracting relationship between Multnomah County and a non-profit or for-profit corporation in which both parties contribute resources toward achievement of a common social goal.
4. To ensure consistency in approach all departments that contract for human services shall follow a common procedure to:
 - a. determine whether to directly provide or to contract for human services;
 - b. define some human service contracts as partnerships;
 - c. ensure that partnership continuation is based on consistently understood and documented satisfactory performance.
 - d. use common performance standards for human service contract partnerships.
5. Board Resolution 93-232 requires that "each Department [shall] establish goals, objectives and performance measures for all services delivered." It also requires that departments "ensure that goals and objectives with performance agreements are part of all services delivered directly, by contracts, or Intergovernmental Agreements . . ." The Board hereby reaffirms its commitment to public accountability through measuring the effectiveness of all programs delivered with County funds.
6. All Multnomah County human service contracts shall contain a dispute resolution procedure that conforms to the following template:

It is the policy of Multnomah County to facilitate communication and prompt resolution of disputes between the County and its contractors. Departments and contractors should first attempt to resolve all disputes through informal means. If the contractor is not satisfied with the results of informal discussion with the department, the contractor shall have the opportunity to submit a letter describing and, if appropriate, documenting the contractor's specific

complaints or concerns. The contract shall state the name of the person designated to receive such letters. The designated person shall contact the contractor promptly (not more than 10 days after receipt of the letter) and attempt to resolve the dispute. If the dispute remains unresolved, the contractor shall have the opportunity to submit a letter to the department director or the director's designee describing the issues that remain unresolved. The department director or the director's designee shall contact the contractor promptly and attempt to resolve the dispute. If the dispute remains unresolved after the department director's attempt to resolve it, the department shall consider offering to enter mediation with the contractor to resolve the dispute.

7. Multnomah County recognizes that achievement of important community goals requires the cooperation of government, business, non-profit agencies, as well as individual citizens. To promote the success of joint efforts to improve our community, Multnomah County shall work with our partners to promote our common success. To the extent that resources permit, Multnomah County shall provide technical assistance to our partners through a variety of means, including one-to-one consultation with County employees, attendance at Multnomah County sponsored training events, or consultation provided through a third party.
8. The Board designates the Director of the Department of Support Services to be the carrier of the County's vision and policies for human services contracting. The Director of the Department of Support Services shall be responsible for development of the administrative rules needed to implement this human services contracting policy and procedures and for overseeing that those policies and procedures are followed. The Report of the Contract Policy Team (February 12, 2001) shall be taken as a template for development of specific procedures. The Director may modify those procedures as needed, to ensure effective implementation of the policies adopted in this resolution.

ADOPTED this 17th day of May, 2001.



REVIEWED: 05/17/01

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
FOR MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON

Bill Farver, Acting Chair

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