

AGENDA



Thursday, July 23, 2009

**Health and Human Services
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION****Item No. 40**

Subject: Approve an ordinance accepting \$136,016 in grant funds from the TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES, COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS SECTION; and amending the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Health and Human Services Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund of Ordinance 20080908-002 to appropriate \$136,016 for the Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Unit to conduct public health and emergency response activities and to add one full-time equivalent position.

Amount and Source of Funding: Funding is available from the Texas Department of State Health Services, Community Preparedness Section. The grant period is from August 1, 2009 through July 31, 2010. A city match of \$40,500 is required.

Fiscal Note: A fiscal note is attached.

For More Information: David Lurie, Director, 972-5410; Janet Pichette, Unit Manager, Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Unit, 972-5486; Linda Terry, Agenda Coordinator, 972-5023.

The Texas Department of State Health Services is allocating funds for the continuation of Public Health Emergency Preparedness activities defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and categorized to address public health preparedness goals: (1) Increase the use and development of interventions known to prevent human illness from chemical, biological, radiological agents, and naturally occurring health threats; (2) Decrease the time needed to classify health events as terrorism or naturally occurring in partnership with other agencies; (3) Decrease the time needed to detect and report chemical, biological, radiological agents in tissue, food, or environmental samples that cause threats to public health; (4) Improve the timeliness and accuracy of information regarding threats to public health as reported by clinicians and through electronic early-event detection in real time to those who need to know; (5) Decrease the time to identify causes, risk factors, and appropriate interventions for those affected by threats to public health; (6) Decrease the time needed to provide countermeasures and health guidance to those affected by threats to the public's health; (7) Decrease the time needed to restore health services and environmental safety to pre-event levels; (8) Increase the long-term follow-up provided to those affected by threats to public health; and (9) Decrease the time needed to implement recommendations from after-action reports following threats to public health.

With these additional funds, the Epidemiology and Disease Surveillance Unit will continue public health emergency preparedness planning and response activities in Austin and Travis County. HHSD will use these funds to conduct revisions to key public health emergency preparedness plans, community outreach, and grants management activities, improve disease outbreak investigation, planning and response capability by purchasing upgraded computer equipment, and improve response capability by providing training and travel funds for response staff.

The funds will also be used to add one full-time equivalent position, a Health and Human Services (HHS) Program Coordinator. This position previously lost due to a reduction in grant funding. The Program Coordinator will assist with grants management, preparedness planning and response, and training activities. In the event that funding for the additional position is eliminated, the need for the position will be reviewed.

The grant match is provided by existing General Fund budget for a Disease Surveillance Specialist.

Statement Required by Corporate Budget: All department grant application requests are reviewed by the Budget Office prior to submission to ensure that the grant minimizes the financial impact to the City.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Related Goal: Maintain a public health and human services emergency preparedness capacity in coordination with other City departments and community partners that allocates existing and emergency resources in a flexible and responsive manner to address public health risks and human services needs in an emergency.

Outputs/Outcomes

The additional grant funding will impact the following performance measures:

Number of City of Austin (COA) employees trained to respond in a bioterrorist event will increase from 50 to 60

Number of volunteers trained to respond in a bioterrorism event will increase from 25 to 35

Number of emergency bioterrorism drills conducted will increase from 6 to 10

HHSD staff (current and new) trained on City of Austin Public Health Preparedness Medication Distribution Plan will increase from 25 to 35