



Legislation Details (With Text)

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Municipal Court and Legal Service IGA

Summary and Background Information:

Synopsis:

The purpose of this item is to discuss two Intergovernmental Agreements (IGA); One related to the operation of Municipal Court and the other related to legal services for disadvantaged residents.

Municipal Court Operations IGA:

The municipal court has benefited from the ability to conduct video arraignments for defendants incarcerated in the Adams County Jail. These arraignments require jail staff to bring the defendant from their assigned jail cell to the video arrangement room for the hearing to take place. This was previously done with deputy sheriffs; the cost was previously a sheriff's budget item. The sheriff has experienced a significant increase in video arraignments for county and municipal courts throughout Adams County. The sheriff has indicated that he cannot continue to provide these services at no cost. Moving forward, the sheriff has offered to run all municipal arraignments with non-sworn bailiffs, which will reduce the total cost and is requesting that the municipalities cover the cost associated with this service, beginning in 2019. A draft IGA is under development and will be brought to City Council for consideration in the near future. The proposed terms include a one-year term with two annual renewals for a total annual cost of approximately \$15,000 for Commerce City.

Colorado Legal Service IGA:

The proposed program of services that would be provided by Colorado Legal Services (CLS) to residents in Adams County and Broomfield County through an agreement among the participant entities. The two-year pilot program is intended to provide legal assistance to low and moderate-income individuals focused on landlord/tenant issues, including representation in the county courts.

Services will be provided at an office in Brighton and another office at a central location that is accessible to potential clients. The offices would be utilized by CLS, at no cost to CLS, to meet with potential clients. CLS would provide two attorneys and one paralegal during the pilot program. Attached is an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) created for this program. The total cost to Commerce City for this two-year pilot program is \$30,000; \$15,000 per year.

Background on Colorado Legal Services (CLS):

Colorado Legal Services is a non-profit organization that has helped low-income individuals including seniors in Colorado for over 90 years. CLS' mission is to provide meaningful access to high quality, civil legal services. Some of these services are provided through legal aid and pro bono attorneys, law students and others. CLS provides its services through 13 offices located throughout the State. The administrative office is located just outside of downtown Denver. Adams County residents are served by the Denver CLS office. CLS is primarily funded by grants (including the State of Colorado, Department of Health and Human Services, Legal Services Corporation, Colorado Health Foundation, and the Department of Justice) and contracts.

CLS has asked for a two-year pilot program commitment that would serve Adams and Broomfield County residents out of two locations (one at the Courthouse in Brighton and the other at a central location). Services for residents of other counties will go through the intake process in these offices that will be connected to the Denver CLS offices. CLS will provide two attorneys (one experienced attorney and one less-experienced attorney) as well as a part-time paralegal. Adams County has agreed to work with the court to adjust their schedule to provide more opportunity for office hours at the two offices. Adams County Attorney and Westminster City Attorney have worked together to arrange for funding management as well as an agreement between the supporting stakeholders; the IGA. The suggested levels of financial support (per year):

Adams County \$50,000 (committed)

Aurora \$25,000 (committed)

Brighton \$12,000 (committed)

Broomfield \$15,000 (suggested)

Commerce City \$15,000 (suggested)

Federal Heights \$15,000 (suggested)

Thornton \$20,000 (suggested)

Westminster \$35,000 (committed)

\$187,000

Staff Responsible (Department Head): Troy Smith, Deputy City Manager

Staff Member Presenting: Troy Smith, Deputy City Manager

Financial Impact: \$15,000 Annual

Funding Source: TBD