



## Dane County Department of Human Services

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### Dane County Department of Human Services 2023 Request Budget Summary: Perseverance

If there is a word for the staff of the Dane County Human Services team and community partners over the last year it would be *perseverance*. Perseverance in commitment to providing services to our community. Perseverance in creating a workplace that empowers all employees. Our budget for 2023 is no different, and perseverance will be required as we continue to face uncertain times, times of high demand for behavioral health support, times of economic and public health uncertainty. It is a great honor to meet the needs of our community alongside the experts in Human Services from the frontline CNAs at Badger Prairie who have worked long hours to care for older adults of our community, to the Peer Support Specialists helping people overcome addiction, to the Immigration Affairs Office Social Workers who have managed twice as many requests as the previous year due to multiple global crises, to the Housing Specialists who ensured that people in our community had shelter throughout one of the most difficult times in decades, to those who keep the infrastructure of the department running.

In our 2023 budget—compiled by the expertise throughout Human Services—you will find requests that reflect our points where the community needs us most, the areas where we know, with greater investment, we could be meeting community need at a higher level. You will also find requests for funding efficiencies that will help streamline processes, thereby helping us be more nimble and responsive. All of our requests are directly driven by a need to fulfill the Human Services mission of empowering people to thrive throughout Dane County—and that includes our employees. The Department’s 2023 budget request totals \$250,125,672. This breaks down into over \$160,594,541 million in outside revenue and \$89,531,131 million in county levy. This proposed budget meets the expectation of not increasing our reliance on local levy dollars, as directed.

In 2022, our community has also shown tremendous perseverance. Approximately 167 households exited from hotel shelter into housing. Additional affordable housing units were opened; 116 units in Fitchburg and 93 on Madison’s north side. In terms of housing assistance, \$14 million went to over 2,322 households across Dane County (outside of the City of Madison) to increase stability and prevent evictions. A full scale remodel of the Dane County Job Center was completed where, in the first half of the year, 70,000 calls answered customer inquiries about benefits, and over 200 job placements were made through Foodshare, Employment and Training. We increased support to people in mental health crisis. The Behavioral Health Resource Center, which helps those in need of mental health and addiction support navigate complex medical systems, reached a record number of cases in March 2022. Our aging population continues to grow, and we are working hard to meet the demand for services to assist older adults navigating increased isolation and rising living expenses including gas, food, and housing. As we continue to expand our aging service delivery, we launched a training for those with guardianship, and raised general awareness of elder abuse. To sharpen our focus on the growing older adult population, and to address the greater demand for behavioral health support operationally, the

Division of Adult Community Services has been divided and is now two divisions: The Division of Behavioral Health and the Division of Disability & Aging Services.

We deeply value our collaboration with our community partner agencies and rely on them to provide support for families, youth, and children. This includes afterschool and academic enhancement, and early childhood development services. This year, our Out of Home Care Unit published a [Transracial Parenting Guidebook](#) to help parents in transracial homes learn how to thrive and celebrate their multicultural families so that children can gain a strong sense of racial identity and cultural connection.

Our [Vision: Next Strategic Plan](#) priority setting informed our 2023 budget proposal, as we approach our work with a racial justice lens and modernize our internal infrastructure to better serve the community, while building systemic change. Some highlights from our proposal:

- Create a Youth Transitional Living Program, which fills a gap for young adults (17.5-24) in our community who have been involved in foster care, will house up to 8 people at any given time.
- Develop a youth crisis stabilization model to support children with acute mental health needs to include 2 Parent Support positions.
- Create 6 positions in Children's Long-term Support: 3 Case Managers, 2 Lead, and 1 Quality Assurance to support the growing caseloads and eliminate the enrollment waitlist.
- Increase AAA Focal Point funding in support of AAA Board priorities: cover higher food costs, increase capacity for case management, and support cultural diversity programming.
- Increase Journey Mental Health CARES Program Funding, and invest in an outpatient behavioral health clinical program collaborative in partnership with Journey Mental Health and Centro Hispano.
- Add 1 Child Protective Services Manager to meet the growing need for youth services from behavioral health to children involved in CPS.
- Increase payment rate to foster care providers for level 3 & 4 placements to help meet the recruitment and retention demand of youth with complex care needs. Add 1 Out of Home Care Supervisor to meet the needs of Kin and Foster care under the Families First Prevention and Service Act.
- Add 3 positions to support older adults: 1 Dietician, 1 Dementia Care Specialist, and 1 Resource Specialist.
- Add 4 Case Managers, and 1 Social Work Supervisor to the Comprehensive Community Services program to support a growing caseload.
- Add an Accountant and IT Business Analyst Positions, and IT funding to keep pace with the increased contracting requirements and DCDHS footprint expansion (over 100 new contracts were added in the last two years).
- Increase funding for medical supplies at Badger Prairie Health Care Center, due to a loss of federal Covid-19 funds.
- Invest \$200,000, in capital, in electric vehicle purchases (4 vehicles) to modernize the DCDHS fleet.

The 2023 budget marks the transition between Department leaders in Human Services. The continuity in service delivery and approach can be attributed to a team effort to pursue our vision of empowering people throughout Dane County to thrive. We will provide consistency while prioritizing community connections. We look forward to working with administration and policy makers to serve our community with passion and excellence.

Thank you for your partnership and support.

*Astra M. Iheukumere*

*Interim Director, Dane County Department of Human Services*