



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Satpal Sidhu, County Executive  
**FROM:** Erika Lautenbach, Director  
**RE:** Opportunity Council – Housing and Essential Needs Program Contract Amendment #10  
**DATE:** October 12, 2021

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Attached is a contract amendment between Whatcom County and Opportunity Council for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

Housing and Essential Needs (HEN) is a program of the Washington State Department of Commerce Consolidated Homeless Grant (CHG) and provides funding for rent and utility assistance, essential needs items, and case management for recipients whose eligibility is determined by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). The purpose of this amendment is to increase funding by \$503,370 as a result of increased funding received through the new CHG which began on 07/01/2021.

This additional funding will support:

1. Personnel and operations costs, which:
  - a. Includes an additional Case Manager FTE;
  - b. Reflects increased support from all 9 Case Managers, which includes 2 Lead Case Managers and is necessary to extend existing clients with significant barriers to housing, in motels; and
  - c. Reflects support for an increase to the estimated number of households to be served (230 from 214)
2. Rent and related costs; and
3. Subsequently, increased indirect costs.

The number of eligible households receiving essential needs has decreased due to increased purchases of move-in kits, which cost more than filling monthly bags of essential needs. The number of eligible households receiving case management and rental assistance is only slightly higher as there are less households exiting the HEN program and motel stays are being extended due to COVID and the lack of affordable housing.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this contract, in an amount not to exceed \$2,540,694 for the current contract period (07/01/2021 – 06/30/2022) and \$7,207,481.50 for the entire contract period (07/01/2018 – 06/30/2022), is provided by the Washington State Department of Commerce CHG. These funds are included in the 2021 budget. Council approval is required as funding provided through this amendment increases the approved budget by more than 10%.

Please contact Ann Beck, Human Services Supervisor at 360-778-6055 ([ABeck@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:ABeck@co.whatcom.wa.us)) or Kathleen Roy, Assistant Director at 360-778-6007 ([KRoy@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:KRoy@co.whatcom.wa.us)), if you have any questions or concerns regarding this request.

