


WHATCOM COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

BILL ELFO  
SHERIFF



PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING  
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive  
FROM: Bill Elfo, Sheriff   
RE: Quest Diagnostics  
DATE: February 3, 2022

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Enclosed are two (2) originals of an Amendment to renew the Agreement between Quest Diagnostics and Whatcom County for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

Whatcom County Jail has an Agreement with Quest Diagnostics to provide Laboratory Testing Services for inmates when required by the medical staff.

Quest Diagnostics is the laboratory that took over the community accounts previously held by PeaceHealth St. Josephs when the hospital shut down their community lab several years ago. Until fairly recently, there has not been another local lab that could handle the level of activity the Jail generates. Within the past 2 years, another entity, Northwest Labs, has opened in the community and appears to have the capacity to meet our needs.

Previously, their focus has been providing rapid response PCR testing for the community to help control the COVID-19 epidemic. In support of those efforts, we had elected not to seek an RFP for Lab services until such time that the community need had reduced. It now appears that with the information coming out of the National, State and Local Health Departments, along with the availability of rapid testing, it would be reasonable for Corrections to issue an RFP for these services, most probably in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2022.

For the balance of 2022, we are seeking to continue the existing contract with Quest, to allow us the time to create and issue the RFP for jail laboratory services.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding comes from the Corrections bureau budget and is a fee for service. Although we have budgeted \$70,000, we are typically spending between \$40,000 and \$50,000.00 each year. We have been notified by Quest that prices have increased this year, therefore, we are requesting that the budgeted amount (\$70,000) be approved for this contract.

▪ **Differences from Previous Contract**

The original contract listed the annual maximum amount at \$23,000.00, this should have changed with Amendment #1, but was missed. It was caught during the contract renewal process. We have budgeted \$70,000.00 each year for the past several years.

Please contact Wendy Jones at extension 6505, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.