

May 28, 2020

TO: Bob Miller
Chairman, Finance Committee

FROM: Hope Otto
Human Services Director

RE: Increase in Juvenile Detention worker pay 2020 budget

The starting wage for a Juvenile Detention worker for Racine County is currently \$15.71 which falls below every county in the state, ranging from \$1.50 to \$10.00 above Racine County. This salary is also well below the starting wage for a Corrections Officers working for the Racine County Jail, which is currently at \$ 19.53 for 2020. The Corrections Officer position is a position that detention workers move to once trained through the police academy at a cost to the HSD budget of \$600.00 per person, due to the increased wage. Additionally, turnover in detention staff not only puts a strain on Racine County resources due to the efforts to screen applicants and to properly train them, but the ability to maintain fully trained and skilled employees to operate a division efficiently is at risk. Not only are we losing staff to the Racine County Jail, we have data that has shown that, once trained, several of the detention workers in the past year have left stating better pay at other like facilities.

Estimated Cost of Training 1 employee: \$10,887.76

- 3 weeks of orientation and training: Estimate cost \$15.71 X 120 hours Total \$ 1,885.20
- 5 weeks of Jail Academy: Estimate Cost \$15.71 X 224 hours Total \$3, 519.04
- Coverage while at the academy: Estimate Cost \$24.48 X 224 hours Total \$5,483.52

Turnover to date in:

8 workers in 2019 left Juvenile Detention

- ✓ 3 to Kenosha
- ✓ 4 to Racine Corrections
- ✓ 1 to Milwaukee

In order to continue to provide high quality service for our youth in detention we need to ensure that our staff are receiving an equitable rate of pay to provide a high level of trauma informed care to the youth in our facility, especially as we continue to prepare for the SRCCCY. This pay increase will allow Racine County to recruit more qualified individuals and increase retention rates.

Sincerely,

Hope Otto, Director
Racine County Human Services Department