



Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request

5A

Agenda Item #

Requested Meeting Date: April 14, 2026

Title of Item: Personnel Committee Recommendation (Shared Social Worker Position, new)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR AGENDA <input type="checkbox"/> CONSENT AGENDA	Action Requested: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approve/Deny Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt Resolution (attach draft) <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Public Hearing <i>*provide copy of hearing notice that was published</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Direction Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Item <input type="checkbox"/> Information Only
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Submitted by: Bobbie Danielson	Department: Human Resources
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Presenter (Name and Title): Bobbie Danielson, Human Resources Director, and/or Sarah Pratt, HHS Director	Estimated Time Needed: 5 min.
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Summary of Issue:

Counties are responsible for completing MnCHOICES assessments as required by Minnesota Statute 256B.0911. These assessments determine eligibility for support services that are typically needed by residents with chronic needs or disabilities. Assessment numbers continue to rise across the state, and this trend is also evident in Aitkin County, as shown in the three-year data below:

MnCHOICES Assessments
 2023: 267
 2024: 299
 2025: 380

Hours Spent on MnCHOICES
 2023: 3,741
 2024: 4,505
 2025: 4,620

Health and Human Services currently has 3 FTE regularly assigned to completing MnChoices assessments. To help with the workload, a .4 FTE originally hired within Behavioral Health and for emergency MnCHOICES assessments has been completely reassigned to MnCHOICES to help manage the increasing volume. It is critical to minimize wait times for the assessment as delays in the assessment result in delayed services which can have a significant impact on clients.

We have been actively looking for a temporary solution and have reached a conceptual agreement with Crow Wing County to share a position. Under the concept, Aitkin County would hire the position and the position would work equally in Aitkin and Crow Wing Counties and the costs would be split equally.

The intent is to hire this position for up to 2 years. The Aitkin share of the cost would be covered by the existing department budget for 2026 and there would be partial reimbursement from the State of Minnesota.

Alternatives, Options, Effects on Others/Comments:

The Personnel Committee recommends approval of this 2 year temporary Social Worker position.

Recommended Action/Motion:

Motion to authorize the hiring of a full-time Social Worker (new position) for a period of up to two years, with costs shared 50:50 with Crow Wing County, and to authorize the Board Chair and County Administrator to sign a shared employee agreement following review by County Attorney James Ratz.

Financial Impact:

Is there a cost associated with this request? Yes No

What is the total cost, with tax and shipping? \$ See below.

Is this budgeted? Yes No *Please Explain:*

As stated above, the Aitkin County share of the cost would be covered by the existing department budget for 2026 and there would be partial reimbursement from the State of Minnesota.