

SUSPENSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
FROM: ECSO Division of Correctional Health
Re: Proposed spending plan, INTRO 7-8
Date: May 24, 2017

I. Preface

The Erie County Sheriff's Office appreciates the opportunity to speak at the May 18, Health and Human Services Committee meeting. There were multiple plans presented to the committee, and each was a valuable option to deal with the county-wide opioid epidemic. At the meeting, Michael Reardon, 1st Deputy Superintendent/Compliance, detailed the Division of Correctional Health's (DoCH) need for a registered nurse and discharge planner to complete the jail's drug detox program.

Although many of the plans put forth in a recent memo to the Legislature pertaining to INTRO 7-8 are noteworthy, the Sheriff's plan is the only one that enables the DoCH to assist inmates with post-release addiction treatment plans.

There is a major difference in the Sheriff's Office plan and the Department of Mental (DoMH) Health's plan which proposes a similar job title; the type of inmate the departments treat. The DoCH evaluates all inmates, while the DoMH is only responsible for inmates diagnosed with mental health issues, which is about 1/3 of the inmate population. Furthermore, the DoMH currently has a discharge planner for mentally ill inmates while the DoCH does not have a discharge planner for inmates with addictions. In other words the two proposed jobs perform different services for a different constituency.

II. Summary

The Erie County Sheriff's Office DoCH is requesting \$100,000.00 of the proposed \$1,000,000.00 detailed in INTRO 7-8 to create and fund a Registered Nurse/Discharge Planner, JG 8, for post-release addiction treatment coordination. This position will be dedicated to inmate health care and addiction treatment for inmates as well as process and coordinate the continuum of care with community-based or private sector treatment organizations.

III. Fiscal Implications of Proposal

\$100,000.00 dollars

IV. Reasons for Recommendation

In 2016, the Erie Sheriff's Office treated 6,598 inmates with substance addiction but did not have a registered nurse/discharge planner to aid the inmate's transition from treatment while incarcerated to continued treatment post-release. Without this important position, inmates may not have the resources to enroll in treatment programs to continue their progress away from addiction. Hence, without continued care, many individuals quickly fall back into addiction and incarceration cycle.