



CITY OF MELROSE

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

ANTHONY CHUI
Director

City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781)-979-4130
Fax - (781) 662-2182

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable Melrose City Council
From: Anthony Chui
Re: FY 2024 Health and Human Services Department Budget
Date: June 05, 2023

As the City Council prepares for the review of the Fiscal Year 2024 Department Budgets, I will provide information that serves as context for the proposed budget of the Health and Human Services Department.

The Melrose Health and Human Services Department underwent several staffing changes during FY 2023. In January 2023, the Town of Stoneham joined the existing regional partnership between the City of Melrose and Town of Wakefield, forming a three-municipality regional health department. We have experienced turnover in existing positions including administrative assistants and health inspectors. We have completed one year of the positions added during FY 2022, including the Social Services Coordinator and the Prevention and Wellness Coordinator.

Despite the changes, we have been able to fulfill our mission; to provide the residents of the City of Melrose services through our evidence-based food and health inspectional program, substance use prevention initiatives, community wellness offerings, public health nursing, and social services resource connections. Our strong partnership with the Melrose School District has yielded positive collaboration and programming to help the youth and families in our community. We have observed the effects of the pandemic manifest in several fields including mental health and substance use challenges. Our response has centered around increasing access to programming that provides the tools for the community to identify those in need and how to best support them.

The overall change in the Health and Human Services Budget for FY 2023 is a difference of +10.1%. The change is due in most part to an increase in the Salary and Wages line of 18.5%. The increase in the Salary and Wages line is due to the total allocation of salaries for the three regional employee salaries. The total allocation of salaries for the Director, Senior Environmental Health Specialist, and Senior Public Health Nurse is approximately \$365,000. Due to our regional agreement, the City of Melrose pays for 40% (~\$146,000). The allocation is for the full amount of all three salaries, and the percentage paid by both Wakefield and Stoneham (~\$219,000) is reimbursed and returned as revenue.

Other proposed changes in the Health and Human Services budget include an increase in the Interface line (31.3%) and the Seminars and Schooling line of \$209 (+57.9%). The Seminars and Schooling line increases reflect both the increased number of staff members that will need continuing education, license maintenance, and certifications to stay up to date on best practices. The Interface line increase reflects the usage rate of the behavioral health referral line.

Our department utilizes a revolving fund to purchase and administer flu and COVID-19 vaccines each year. The fund covers the cost of purchasing vaccines, supplies, and space rentals as needed. We are reimbursed by insurance each year.