



Goodhue County
Health and Human Services

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DATE: September 15, 2022
TO: Goodhue County Personnel Committee
FROM: Nina Arneson, GCHHS Director
RE: **Replace – 1 FTE Office Support Specialist with 1 FTE Case Aide/Navigator**

BACKGROUND:

As you know, with any open position, GCHHS reviews our agency and customer needs to determine if our current needs are the same, or have they changed, and does an open position provide an opportunity for efficiencies, changes, and improvements.

After the resignation of an Office Support Specialist who primarily managed mail and front desk duties, we have an opportunity to address a need and build for the future by filling that position as a Case Aide who would function as a Navigator. We have observed that our Front Desk staff do not have the time to devote to individual client needs that go beyond a brief question. Sometimes people have more detailed questions about applications, or they need to see a mental health worker, or they are looking for resources in the community and don't know where else to go.

This Case Aide/Navigator could "triage" the needs of people who come to HHS looking for help. The Case Aide/Navigator will be oriented to address basic questions about all HHS services, and have additional training and skills to manage customer concerns. This will reduce the need for workers in every unit to respond to every call and walk-in client. The timing of this will be very helpful as the pandemic has contributed to a rise in applications for public assistance. Our Economic Assistance department is increasingly overwhelmed and that need will continue to increase as the Public Health Emergency waivers are lifted.

As Health and Human Services integrated, the ongoing goal was to streamline and simplify the customer's experience so that they can be served as efficiently as possible. Integrating the five front desks from various HHS units was a major effort toward streamlining, and a longer-term goal is to examine the feasibility of integrating intake in the various HHS units. Creating the Case Aide/Navigator position is a step in that direction.

This position will also add a layer of advancement opportunity to help address the high turnover for the Front Desk staff. Also note the starting salary of an Office Support Specialist is \$16.68/hour, which is barely considered a living wage (<https://livingwage.mit.edu/counties/27049>), and is not competitive with many other jobs in the

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community. Case Aide Merit Step 1 starts at \$22.24. The staff person who left this position was at Office Support Specialist step 5 earning \$19.89/hour

Office Support Specialist	2022	2022	Current OSS
	Single Health step 1	Family Health step 1	
Rate	\$16.68	\$16.68	\$19.89
Gross	\$34,695.00	\$34,695.00	\$41,372.00
PERA/FICA/Medicare/Life	\$5,311.00	\$5,311.00	\$6,323.00
Health Coverage/H.S.A.	\$9,039.00	\$19,600.00	
Total Cost	\$49,045.00	\$59,606.00	
Total Benefits	\$14,350.00	\$24,911.00	
Wages + Benefits less Health	\$40,006.00	\$40,006.00	\$47,695.00
Health Insurance	\$9,039.00	\$19,600.00	
Total	\$49,045.00	\$59,606.00	
	Plan 1	Plan 1	

Case Aide	2022	2022
	Single Health step 1	Family Health step 1
Rate	\$22.24	\$22.24
Gross	\$46,260.00	\$46,260.00
PERA/FICA/Medicare/Life	\$7,063.00	\$7,063.00
Health Coverage/H.S.A.	\$9,039.00	\$19,600.00
Total Cost	\$62,362.00	\$72,923.00
Total Benefits	\$16,102.00	\$26,663.00
Wages + Benefits less Health	\$53,323.00	\$53,323.00
Health Insurance	\$9,039.00	\$19,600.00
Total	\$62,362.00	\$72,923.00
	Plan 1	Plan 2

	2022	2022	Cost of Change in Classification
	Office Support Specialist step 1	Case Aide step 1	
Rate	\$16.68	\$22.24	
Gross	\$34,695.00	\$46,260.00	
PERA/FICA/Medicare/Life	\$5,311.00	\$7,063.00	
Health Coverage/H.S.A.			
Wages + Benefits less Health	\$40,006.00	\$53,323.00	\$13,317.00

The cost of change in classification is \$13,317.00. This position has been part of Economic Assistance division and is eligible for 47.05% Federal reimbursement. **So net cost of change is \$7,051 for the county share. (Cost over resigning employee current wages (\$19.89) is \$4,888 or \$2,588 county share)**

RECOMMENDATION: The HHS Department recommends approving the following:

1. Move forward immediately to post for 1 FTE Case Aide position utilizing the MN Merit system with hiring at step 1 or step 2. This posting would be for internal and external candidates. If an internal candidate is selected then move forward immediately to back fill that position until an external candidate has been hired to finish the process
2. Hire after GCHHS Board's review and approval.