

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Deborah A. Conroy, County Board Chair  
DuPage County Board Members

FROM: Adam Forker, Executive Director, DuPage County Health Department

DATE: 11/9/23

RE: Nationwide Opioid Settlement Funding Request

---

### Background:

At the October 24<sup>th</sup> Finance Committee meeting, the DuPage County Health Department presented its FY24 budget proposal. That presentation showed a funding gap of \$850,000 for the operations of the new Crisis Recovery Center. Board members asked where the additional funds to cover this gap would come from. The Health Department proposed various options to cover these expenses, including fundraising, reserves, and the possible use of National Opioid Settlement dollars. After the Health Department's presentation, both Chair Conroy and State's Attorney Bob Berlin have recommended that the National Opioid Settlement dollars would be an appropriate use of these dollars to fill the FY24 funding gap. Today, the Health Department is requesting \$850,000 of the National Opioid Settlement dollars for FY24 to fund the anticipated costs needed for hiring the personnel necessary to staff the Central Receiving Center. Below is some background information on the settlement as well as what programs this request would cover.

### National Opioid Settlement:

The nationwide settlements reached to resolve opioid litigation brought by states against pharmaceutical distributors, pharmacy chains, and manufacturers resulted in direct payments to DuPage County.

DuPage County joined the lawsuits to hold the defendants liable for causing the nation's opioid crisis by way of unfair and deceptive misconduct in marketing, commercializing, and promoting their opioid products, with the knowledge that opioids are highly addictive. Those actions created a public health crisis resulting in many needless deaths, as well as an unprecedented substance use disorder problem.

DuPage County began receiving settlement funds from various opioid lawsuits in 2022 and is expected to receive approximately \$15 million to \$20 million over the next 18 years. According to the County Finance Department, there are approximately \$2,200,000 total funds available.

The settlement agreements mandate that at least 70 percent of all settlement funds be used to support opioid remediation or abatement programs. The terms outline specific approved opioid remediation uses that can be funded with money from the settlements. Together with DuPage County State's Attorney Bob Berlin, we reviewed the provisions of the agreement and determined our proposed use of the \$850,000 are allowed by the terms of the agreement.

**Crisis Recovery Center Operations:**

The Health Department would use the \$850,000 to expand staffing in our current Crisis Services Unit to allow for strategic growth. This will include Registered Nurses to build to 24/7 nursing in Crisis Residential, and added support of Certified Medical Assistants to assist our prescribers who serve our clients in a crisis setting. The Health Department plans to hire 17 new staff members throughout the year: Two certified medical assistants, two psychiatric nurses, four emergency services counselors, five resident assistants/safety specialists, two engagement specialists, an assistant director of the center, and a supervisor. This expansion will allow for the enhancement of our current crisis services and provide necessary training to prepare for a successful opening in 2025.

Not all positions identified will be filled at the beginning of the new Fiscal Year and be hired throughout the year. The resolution before the County Board indicates that no transfer of the \$850,000 will occur, allowing the money to remain in the opioid fund and accrue interest until staff onboards.