



Lori A. Shibinette  
Commissioner

Lori A. Weaver  
Deputy Commissioner

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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October 4, 2022

The Honorable Karen Umberger, Chairman  
Fiscal Committee of the General Court and

His Excellency, Governor Christopher T. Sununu  
and the Honorable Council  
State House  
Concord, NH 03301

**REQUESTED ACTION**

Pursuant to the provisions of RSA 14:30-a, VI, authorize the Department of Health and Human Services, to accept and expend federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State Fiscal Recovery Funds (SFRF), in the amount of \$750,000 create an appeals portal for individuals and Department employees, with key functions such as making hearing requests, uploading documentation, appointment scheduling, sending notices, task management, dashboard tracking and reporting, effective upon approval by the Fiscal Committee and Governor and Council through June 30, 2023, and further authorize the allocation of these funds in the accounts below. This is an allowable use of ARPA SFRF funds under Section 602(c)(1)(A), to respond to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) or its negative economic impacts. 100% Federal Funds.

**05-95-94-940010-2465 HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES, DEPT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, HHS: NEW HAMPSHIRE HOSPITAL, ARPA DHHS FISCAL RECOVERY FUND**

<sup>1</sup> All direct program costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH9536A and all administrative and indirect costs will be accounted for using activity 00FRF602PH9536Z. Accounting classifications may be subject to technical changes at the discretion of the Department of Administrative Services' Division of Accounting Services.



<b>CLASS OBJ</b>	<b>CLASS TITLE</b>	<b>Current Modified Budget</b>	<b>Increase/ (Decrease) Amount</b>	<b>Revised Modified Budget</b>
000-400338-16	Federal Funds	\$ 69,038,168	\$ 750,000	\$ 69,788,168
	General Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 69,038,168</b>	<b>\$ 750,000</b>	<b>\$ 69,788,168</b>
010-500100	Personal Services Perm Class	\$ 122,104		\$ 122,104
020-500200	Current Expenses	\$ 250,001	\$ -	\$ 250,001
022-500255	Rents-Leases other than State	\$ 3,891,727		\$ 3,891,727
030-500301	Equipment New/Replacement	\$ 1	\$ -	\$ 1
040-500800	Indirect Costs	\$ 2,123,973		\$ 2,123,973
041-500801	Audit Fund Set Aside	\$ 62,805	\$ 750	\$ 63,555
042-500620	Additional Fringe Benefits	\$ 8,733		\$ 8,733
046-500462	Consultants	\$ 1		\$ 1
047-500240	Own Forces Maintenance (Bldg-Grnd	\$ 1		\$ 1
048-500226	Contract Repairs: Bldg, Grounds	\$ 1		\$ 1
050-500109	Personal Services Temp	\$ -		\$ -
059-500117	Temp Full Time	\$ 98,133		\$ 98,133
060-500601	Benefits	\$ 119,996		\$ 119,996
072-502683	Grants Federal	\$ 250,000		\$ 250,000
102-500731	Contracts for Program Services	\$ 50,364,360	\$ -	\$ 50,364,360
103-502507	Contracts for Operational Services	\$ 11,746,332	\$ 749,250	\$ 12,495,582
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 69,038,168</b>	<b>\$ 750,000</b>	<b>\$ 69,788,168</b>

### **EXPLANATION**

The State has experienced unprecedented pressure on its existing workforce, seeing staff shortages across agencies and increased wage competition with the private sector, as the negative effects of the COVID-19 health crisis continue to unfold. This reality has forced State agencies to attempt to operate with a high number of vacancies and find other means to adapt in order to achieve core responsibilities and required outcomes or deliverables.

This has resulted in the development of the State Workforce Efficiency Enhancement Program (SWEEP), an initiative focused on one-time investments in technology, systems, or other tools that will make it easier for State agencies to perform required functions over the long term as they adjust their roles and needs to the realities brought on by the pandemic and move toward a more sustainable staffing model that helps avoid burnout and encourages retention. This request is part of the overarching SWEEP effort.

The Department is requesting to accept and expend \$750,000 for the purpose of purchasing an appeals solution to support the end of the Federal Public Health Emergency (F-PHE) and the cessation of continuous eligibility for Medicaid beneficiaries during the F-PHE.



The DHHS Bureau of Family Assistance (BFA) staff works with individuals to prospectively mitigate appeals by either reaching a resolution or, withdrawal. Presently, the BFA process is entirely manual and managed by supervisors at an individual level. In addition, the Administrative Appeals Unit (AAU) has no visibility into the BFA activities, documents, and/or the activities supporting appeals activities they adjudicate. The anticipated increase in appeals related to the end of the F-PHE is expected to exceed existing capacity of the staff and systems. The appeals solution will extend the existing infrastructure, New HEIGHTS, to improve the appeals and fair hearing processes including client applications, workflow, task management, document capture, and sharing of relevant information with the AAU. This investment will benefit the State during the F-PHE transition and will persist creating long-term value following the end of the F-PHE.

This proposal will allow for the purchase of the New HEIGHTS enhancements described above with implementation service costs of \$750,000. Because this solution utilizes existing infrastructure, there are no additional hardware or software cost for the initial implementation or ongoing operations.

The acquisition of the appeals capabilities will support New Hampshire's COVID-19 mitigation efforts which is an allowable use of ARPA SLRF funds.

Funds are budgeted as follows:

Class 041 – RSA 124:16 requires .1% to be budgeted to pay for financial and compliance audits.

Class 103 – The funds will be used to pay for contracted services.

Source of Funds: These funds are 100% Federal Funds.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Lori Shibinette".

Lori A. Shibinette  
Commissioner