

Position Paper for Agenda Item

To: Cumberland County Board of Commissioners

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Jacqueline Sartoris, District Attorney

DATE: 3/9/2026

SUBJECT: Proposed DA Restorative Justice Contract - one year, renewable for up to 3 years

Requested Action

Approve Contract or determine other action.

Background and Purpose of Request

As presented in January, my office has worked to establish an expanded use of Restorative Justice in Cumberland County since I took office in January, 2023. To summarize, after using the former 10K/6 month renewable contracts that existed when I arrived and encountering performance concerns, I approved a new initiative with a nonprofit centered on Cumberland County community surrogates as no other RJ provider seemed to be doing work centered on accountability and community restoration in our area.

In January, we issued and publicly noticed an RFP (Attachment 1). Only one response was received in the 4 weeks open. This was the nonprofit we had begun to work with in 2025.

We reviewed the RFP and negotiated a proposed contract (Attachment 2).

This contract would enable the DA's Office to expand the use of restorative justice as has been discussed and proposed over the past 2 years.

Extensive work has gone into consideration of this proposal. Please see Attachment 3 for a fairly exhaustive presentation of that history.

Funding Amount and Source

There is no impact to any County budget. Because we have completed the trial period in 2025 to establish the appropriate fees and anticipated County contribution, we believe that the County cost of this work will be within the \$35,000 anticipated to be allocated in the next fiscal year.

However, as this will substantially increase our use of RJ, we will track expenditures and County contributions monthly, conduct a 6-month review to ensure our finances are on-goal for the year, and adjust referrals to RJ as needed. We will report back to the Commissioners at the 6 month mark. Other payments as collected from defendants and paid through the special account set up by the County Commissioners in January, 2025.

\$35,000 for restorative justice in the FY 26-27 budget, a reduction of \$5,000. Additional cases will be billed at a rate of \$150 per case or \$1,000 for serious cases. Additional cases will be paid from payments collected by defendants.

Effective Date

The contract's effective date is April 1, 2026. We anticipate making offers that include RJ starting with cases which are referred to our office following County approval. Those offers would begin to use RJ after arraignment, approximately 8 weeks later.

Attachments

- RFP;
- Proposed Contract;
- Timeline with Attachments.