

LRB – RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS SECTION

**PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
FILE #091079**

JANUARY 7, 2010

File #091079 approves an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement with the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System to conduct a one-year, two-Phase research study of suicides within the Milwaukee Police Department. This comprehensive evaluation and report will enable MPD to complete a “best practices” protocol for addressing suicides within the Milwaukee Police Department. Leah Arndt, Ph.D and Stephen Wester, Ph.D, both employees of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, shall head this study, assisted by a research team of no more than 9 members. Under terms of the Agreement, neither the University or individual researchers shall be compensated for this work unless grant funds, which may be pursued by both the University and MPD, become available.

DISCUSSION

Phase I and Phase II of the Agreement are detailed below and shall conclude 3 months and 1 year respectfully from Agreement execution.

Phase I: The University, represented by Arndt, Wester and their research team, shall review MPD records relating to a specific MPD employee, selected by MPD, who committed suicide. The MPD will facilitate the cooperation of community members, union representatives, MPD’s POST team, and the employee’s family members. At the conclusion of Phase I, the University shall provide MPD with written analysis of records and interviews, referred to as a “psychological autopsy.”

Phase II: The process delineated in Phase I shall be expanded to include suicides of all sworn and civilian MPD employees during the 10 previous years. At the conclusion of Phase II, the University shall provide MPD with a comprehensive evaluation and report, as well as recommendations sufficient to enable MPD to complete a “best practices” protocol for addressing suicides in the MPD.

Information & Confidentiality

Because Arndt, Wester and their research team will be given access to confidential records, delineated below, relating to MPD employees who committed suicide, each will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement. All personally identifiable material in these MPD records relating to individual employees shall be redacted or encoded by MPD. Only Arndt and Wester shall have access to MPD employee names and other identifying personal information. Research team members will have access to data, but not to the names and other identifying personal information of MPD members who committed suicide, or of their families, or of any other individual mentioned in the confidential records. The following constitute the confidential records specifically subject to this Agreement:

- ✓ MPD employee personnel files
- ✓ MPD employee medical records
- ✓ MPD employee employment testing records
- ✓ MPD employee internal investigation records
- ✓ MPD training records; and
- ✓ MPD member suicide investigation records.

FISCAL IMPACT

Entering into this Agreement requires no expenditure of City funds.

cc: Marianne Walsh
W. Martin Morics
Judy Pal
Barbara Butler
John Ledvina

Prepared by:
Michael Talarczyk
Legislative Fiscal Analyst
286-8661
December 17, 2009