

To: O&S Committee

Date: October 22, 2018

From: Lisa Rettig, Director of Human Resources

Reviewed by:

WC.

SUBJECT: Increased Drug Testing Rates for 2019

SUMMARY OF ISSUES:

County Connection is required by FTA to conduct random substance abuse testing of safety sensitive employees which includes Operators, Supervisors and Mechanics. Currently we are required to test 25% of our safety sensitive pool for drugs and 10% for alcohol. Recently FTA announced the rates for drug testing will increase to 50% beginning January 1, 2019. Alcohol testing rates will not change and remain at 10%.

The Department of Transportation's (DOT) rule, 49 CFR Part 40, describes the required procedures for conducting workplace drug and alcohol testing for the federally regulated transportation industry. The testing rate is tied to the annual positive tests that are reported nationwide by transit operators. Since the annual positive drug testing rates for all employers covered by FTA exceeds 1%, FTA had no choice but to raise the testing rate to 50%.

While many suspected that medical and recreational marijuana legalization would increase positive test results to over 1% this has not been the case. It was positive test results for opioids that pushed the number over 1%. For example at County Connection we currently experience 0-2 positive tests per year. For 2018 we have already had 3 positive test results and we are only a little over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way into 2018. Two of these positive tests were for opioids.

Staff currently struggles to complete the required testing at 25% and not miss service. The doubling of the number of tests that must be completed beginning in 2019 will undoubtedly cause an increase in labor costs including overtime and missed service.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The direct costs for our Substance Abuse Program are approximately \$10,500 annually. Staff estimates that this amount will increase to \$15,500 with the change in testing rates.

Staff is not able to provide an estimate for the increased labor costs at this time. Staff will track the costs for 6 months and report back to the Committee.

ACTION REQUESTED: None, Information only