

Resolution authorizing a contract extension and modification with Legal Aid Society of Southeast and Central Ohio to provide limited scope legal assistance and inclusive self-guided tools for unrepresented parties in guardianship cases before the court, increasing access to justice, not to exceed \$150,000.00. (Probate Court) (\$220,000.00)

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in all aspects of county government as codified through Resolution Number 0341-20, declaring racism a public health crisis, and Resolution Number 0793-20, enshrining racial equity as a core principle of county governance; and

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Rise Together Blueprint for Reducing Poverty outlines strategic actions to eliminate barriers to economic mobility by improving institutional transparency, increasing access to culturally responsive services, and investing in technology and language access as tools for equity; and

WHEREAS, the Rise Together Blueprint also calls for reviewing organizational systems to ensure public-facing services are accessible, inclusive, and community-informed; and

WHEREAS, the Franklin County Common Pleas Court, Probate Division seeks to align with the leadership of the Board of Commissioners and the objectives of the Rise Together Blueprint by partnering with Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio to improve access to justice through multilingual and interactive tools; and

WHEREAS, this project provides resources for residents without legal representation, enabling them to receive assistance with completing guardianship applications and annual reports, and helping older residents, individuals with developmental disabilities, and residents from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to more fully participate in legal processes; and

WHEREAS, Legal Aid of Southeast and Central Ohio will implement an accessible Guardianship Application, with written and audio explanations in six languages (Spanish, Somali, Chinese, Arabic, Nepali, and French), as well as continue to provide monthly in-person office hours throughout 2026 to assist individuals with court-related and public forms; and

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WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners recognizes that this initiative supports countywide equity efforts and represents a model for inclusive, community-based service delivery; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO:

1. That the attached contract modification and extension with Legal Aid Society of Southeast and Central Ohio (LASCO) in an amount not to exceed \$150,000.00 is hereby approved.
2. That the attached purchase order (#64714000) for all court resource center services will cover the 2026 services for LASCO.
3. That the County Administrator is hereby authorized, pursuant to Section 305.30 of the Ohio Revised Code, to take all actions, including the execution of all documents or amendments upon approval to form by the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office, necessary to enter into, implement, and administer the contracts that are not substantially inconsistent with this Resolution.

AGENCY
Common Pleas Court – Probate Division

CONTRACT AMOUNT
\$220,000.00

Prepared by: Gabrielle Wonnell, Chief Deputy Clerk