

M E M O R A N D U M

March 13, 2023

TO: Health and Human Services Committee

FROM: Tara Clemons Johnson, Legislative Analyst

SUBJECT: **Worksession:** Supplemental Appropriation #23-66 to the FY23 Operating Budget, Montgomery County Government Department of Health and Human Services - Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy (SIHIS) Eliminating Disparities in Maternal Health Initiative-Home Visiting Expansion, \$214,004 (Source of Funds: State Grant)

PURPOSE: Review and vote on the supplemental appropriation

On February 28, 2023, the Council received a recommendation from the County Executive to approve a \$214,004 supplemental appropriation to the FY23 Operating Budget. The funding will support additional personnel and operating to supplement the Babies Born Healthy program, whose goal is to help reduce infant mortality in the County. The source of funds for the appropriation is State grant funds.

The supplemental appropriation was introduced by the Council on March 14, 2023 (attached at ©3-4). The Executive's transmittal memo is attached ©1. Because action is needed in FY23 to move forward with the grant implementation, this worksession is being held before the public hearing. Public hearing and action are scheduled for March 28, 2023. The Committee may wish to state in their recommendation that should new information be provided at the public hearing, the Committee may choose to reconsider its recommendation to the Council.

Background of the Babies Born Healthy Program

Infant mortality throughout the United States and in Montgomery County is two to three times higher among Black /African American mothers than for their white counterparts. Low birth weight and prematurity are almost one- and one-half times as high for the Black/African American population, which can have long-term effects such as intellectual and developmental disabilities or problems with vital organs. To this end, the County has prioritized reducing disparities in infant mortality especially among African American women.

The Montgomery County Babies Born Healthy (BBH) is a state grant funded initiative that began in FY19, developed in response to the County's high disparities in infant mortality rates. The County's BBH provides care coordination services to help at-risk pregnant women connect with resources and to help them stay healthy through their pregnancies. Services include prenatal education, safe sleep environment, home-visiting, breastfeeding education, transportation to appointments and parenting support.

BBH is a comprehensive program that delivers targeted services to Black/African American women who are pregnant, enrolled in Medicaid, and residing in one of our Down County zip codes with higher rates of poor birth outcomes: 20902, 20903, 20904, 20905, 20906, 20912. Based on data, these zip codes have residents of the highest risk for poor birth outcomes including low birth weight, premature births, infant mortality and maternal morbidity and mortality. All pregnant women residing in these zip codes are eligible for the program, but the primary target group is African American women who are recipients of Medicaid.

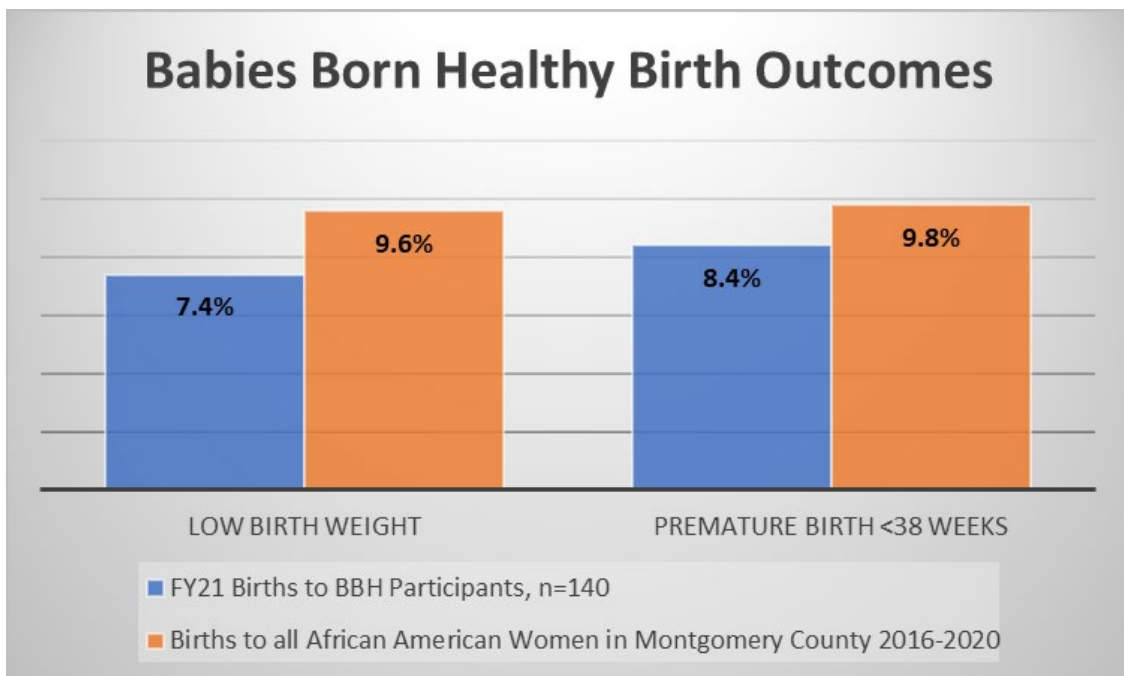
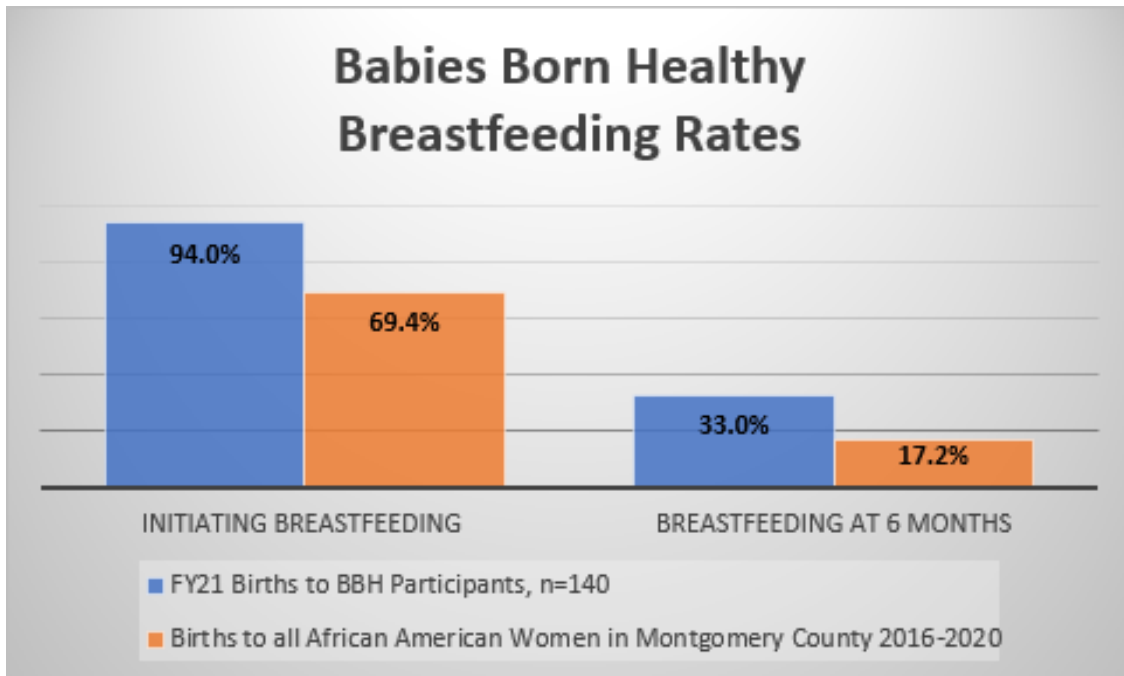
DHHS shared that currently there is a 0.5 Nurse, a 0.5 Lactation Consultant and 1.5 Community Health Workers who provide guidance, support, education and linkages to make sure the women are attending prenatal care and are practicing healthy pregnancy guidelines and are prepared for the birth of their baby. Staff also provide supportive group events (in person and virtual) on topics such as labor and delivery, breastfeeding, postpartum depression, warning signs of pregnancy and the postpartum period and infant safety.

Program Expansion

This supplemental appropriation is the result of a new grant award from the state supporting the expansion of maternal/infant home visiting (HV) services. The grant priorities include assisting high-risk families by meeting one or more of the following criteria: 1) previous history of a Severe Maternal Morbidity, 2) Pregnant individuals under 21 or greater than 40 and 3) previous poor birth outcomes including low birth weight, preterm birth (see [SIHIS Solicitation](#)).

The Montgomery County grant will be used to create one full-time term Program Specialist/Lactation Health Educator position and one half time term Community Health Nurse position. The comprehensive resourcing program will deliver targeted services to pregnant women and their families at high risk of severe maternal morbidity, racial and ethnic disparities. 70% of the funding will support personnel, and 30% will support operations. With the additional staff support, the program will be able to serve 70 additional at-risk pregnant women per year. Currently, the program is not able to accept beyond 140 patients per year because they do not have the capacity.

DHHS shared the following data on the program utilization. It is succeeding in improving birth outcomes and increasing breastfeeding rates for the participants as indicated in the charts below:



Council staff recommends approval of this supplemental appropriation of State grant funds.

Infant Mortality Program – S.M.I.L.E.

Council staff notes that DHHS, through the African American Health program, operates the Start More Infants Living Equally (S.M.I.L.E.) program focusing on preventing infant mortality

and improving the likelihood of healthy birth outcomes. The difference in the programs is the geographic service areas, BBH serves any pregnant women in the 3 highest risk zip codes in the County only (prioritizing Black/AA women) and S.M.I.L.E. serves any Black/AA women residing in the County. Services provided in both programs are similar including nurse case management, home visits, childbirth and breastfeeding classes, and more. **The S.M.I.L.E program is highlighted for the committee's awareness; the grant funding will support the BBH program only.**

This report contains:

County Executive transmittal memo
Proposed Special Appropriation Resolution

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©3-4



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

M E M O R A N D U M

February 28, 2023

TO: Evan Glass, President
Montgomery County Council

FROM: Marc Elrich, County Executive *Marc Elrich*

SUBJECT: Supplemental Appropriation # 23-66 to the FY23 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Government
Department of Health and Human Services
Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy (SIHIS) Eliminating Disparities in
Maternal Health Initiative-HomeVisiting Expansion (\$214,004)

I am recommending a supplemental appropriation to the FY23 Operating Budget, for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in the amount of \$214,004 for the SIHIS Eliminating Disparities in Maternal Health Initiative - HomeVisiting Expansion grant. This appropriation objective is to expand the existing home visiting services in Montgomery County by augmenting the Babies Born Healthy Program.

This increase is needed because DHHS received grant funds from the Maryland Department of Health, SIHIS Eliminating Disparities in Maternal Health Initiative - HomeVisiting Expansion grant. Grant funding will be used to create one full-time term Program Specialist/Lactation Health Educator position and one half-time term Community Health Nurse position. The comprehensive resourcing program will deliver targeted services to pregnant women and their families at high risk of severe maternal morbidity and racial and ethnic disparities. The source of funding is grant funds from the Maryland Department of Health, SIHIS Eliminating Disparities in Maternal Health Initiative-HomeVisiting Expansion Grant.

I recommend that the County Council approve this supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$214,004 and specify the source of funds as Maryland Department of Health, SIHIS Eliminating Disparities in Maternal Health Initiative-HomeVisiting Expansion Grant.

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February 28, 2023
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Thank you for your consideration of this action.

ME:dp

Enclosure: Supplemental Appropriation #23-66

cc: Earl Stoddard, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive
James Bridgers, Acting Director, Department of Health and Human Services
Jennifer Bryant, Director, Office of Management and Budget

Resolution No: _____
Introduced: _____
Adopted: _____

COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: Council President at the Request of the County Executive

SUBJECT: Supplemental Appropriation #23-66 to the FY23 Operating Budget
Montgomery County Government
Department of Health and Human Services
Statewide Integrated Health Improvement Strategy (SIHIS) Eliminating Disparities in
Maternal Health Initiative-HomeVisiting Expansion Grant (\$214,004)

Background

1. Section 307 of the Montgomery County Charter provides that any supplemental appropriation shall be recommended by the County Executive who shall specify the source of funds to finance it. The Council shall hold a public hearing on each proposed supplemental appropriation after at least one week's notice. A supplemental appropriation that would comply with, avail the County of, or put into effect a grant or a Federal, State or County law or regulation, or one that is approved after January 1 of any fiscal year, requires an affirmative vote of six Councilmembers. A supplemental appropriation for any other purpose that is approved before January 1 of any fiscal year requires an affirmative vote of seven Councilmembers. The Council may, in a single action, approve more than one supplemental appropriation. The Executive may disapprove or reduce a supplemental appropriation, and the Council may reapprove the appropriation, as if it were an item in the annual budget.
2. The County Executive has requested the following FY23 Operating Budget appropriation increases for the Department of Health and Human Services.

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$143,841	\$70,163	\$0.00	\$214,004	State Funds

3. This increase is needed because DHHS received grant funds from Maryland Department of Health, SIHIS Eliminating Disparities in Maternal Health Initiative - HomeVisiting Expansion grant. Grant funding will be used to create one term full time Program Specialist/Lactation Health Educator position and one half time term Community Health Nurse position. The comprehensive resourcing program will deliver targeted services to pregnant women and their families at high risk of severe maternal morbidity, racial and ethnic disparities.
4. The County Executive has requested a supplemental appropriation to the FY23 Operating Budget in the amount of \$214,004 for the SIHIS Eliminating Disparities in Maternal Health Initiative-HomeVisiting Expansion grant and specifies that the source of funds will be Maryland Department of Health, SIHIS Eliminating Disparities in Maternal Health Initiative-HomeVisiting Expansion Grant.
5. The public was notified by a news release.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following actions:

1. A supplemental appropriation to the FY23 Operating Budget of the Department of Health and Human Services is approved as follows:

<u>Personnel Services</u>	<u>Operating Expenses</u>	<u>Capital Outlay</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Source of Funds</u>
\$143,841	\$70,163	\$0.00	\$214,004	State Funds

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Judy Rupp
Clerk of the Council