

**EXECUTIVE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING DATE :** 11/20/2025

**SUBJECT:** REQUEST FOR RECOMMENDATION OF PROCUREMENT APPROVAL – 2026  
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

**PREPARED BY:** BRIAN BRAUN, CFO

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**Proposed Action:**

Seeking the recommendation from the Executive and Finance Committee for Board approval to contract with The Guardian to provide employer sponsored employee benefits for an estimated amount of \$480,000 for plan year 2026. The actual cost is subject to variations in employee counts.

**Summary:**

With the assistance of our employee benefit broker (USI), the employee sponsored benefit package provided by Guardian includes:

- Dental
- Vision
- Long-term and short-term disability
- Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D)
- Paid Family and Medical Leave

Upon review, analysis and consultation with our USI, we determined renewing with The Guardian offered the best package of benefits at a competitive price and the least amount of staff impact.

The Guardian is not providing medical benefits. C4HCO utilizes an Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Account (ICHRA) to provide medical benefits for our staff. Through the ICHRA model staff select plans offered through the individual health insurance market, providing staff choice among multiple issuers and plan metal levels. Unlike a traditional group plan, the policy is issued in each employees name.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff recommends the approval to renew with The Guardian for non-medical employee benefits for plan year 2026.

**Procurement Compliance:**

*Procurement Exceeds \$250,000 threshold:* Yes, the total estimated expense is \$480,000.

*Procurement/Business Initiative is necessary or advisable:* Yes – these are benefits C4HCO has committed (and in some cases required) to provide for staff. Due to the need to proceed with employee benefit selections for 2026 this approval is being sought simultaneously with our 2026 benefit enrollment process.

*Type of procurement vehicle:* These services will be contracted via an application/contract with The Guardian.

*Need for RFP,RFI,RFS or similar:* Our benefits broker (USI) conducted a proposal process in seeking competitive bids for these services for 2025 and conducted a market survey of benefit providers for the 2026 renewal.

**Funding Source:**

Funding will be provided directly by Connect for Health Colorado and was included in the approved budget for fiscal year 2026. The plan year for these benefits will cross into our next fiscal year and these contracted costs will also be included in our next fiscal year budget.