



Fund State Mandated Services

Washington County requests full funding of state mandated services to protect against the shift of state costs to the county property taxpayers.



Issue At-A-Glance

- County governments are tasked by both the state and federal governments to carry out mandated programs on their behalf, which totaled more than \$200 million in 2021.
- Inadequate state resources threaten the ability of Washington County to continue providing core functions of county government at reasonable cost to taxpayers.
- The demand for many human service and health care services are likely to continue to increase in 2023, and county funds will need to be re-purposed to meet that demand.

Unfunded State Mandates

Washington County has identified more than \$11 million in state mandates that could be reformed, repealed, or funded by the state. Some examples include:

Court Administration Costs	\$2.24M/year	The county has been made responsible for several state court costs, including court security and representation for low-income persons.
Mentally Ill and Dangerous (MI&D) Programs	\$0-\$600K/year	County is required to cover 100% of select MI&D “hold” forensic costs and 100% of non-medical necessity state hospital costs. These are by nature unpredictable and burdensome costs that are difficult for counties to budget.
Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Reform	\$120K in 2021	Counties are required to pay up to 22.5% of publicly funded SUD treatment but no longer have decision making authority since the state’s 2017 SUD Reform. Costs are expected to increase significantly once COVID waivers discontinue.

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Nearly three-quarters of the county property tax levy is needed to pay for these and other state mandated service costs.

Support

Support will come from other counties and other local governments that seek mandate relief.

Previous Consideration

The county has advocated this position for many years.

No Action

Counties will continue to be responsible for new, unfunded mandates that will likely result in increasing pressure on local property taxpayers.

Financial Implications

County levy increases are likely to be larger than otherwise necessary if the state and federal governments fail to fully fund the costs of mandated services.



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