



City of Richmond

900 East Broad Street
2nd Floor of City Hall
Richmond, VA 23219
www.rva.gov

Legislation Text

File #: ORD. 2023-372, **Version:** 1

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, to execute a Nurture grant contract between the City of Richmond and The OmMama Resource Center, Inc., doing business as Nurture, for the purpose of developing and promoting a web-based directory containing a searchable database of local pregnancy, birth, and early parenting resources.

THE CITY OF RICHMOND HEREBY ORDAINS:

§ 1. That the Chief Administrative Officer, for and on behalf of the City of Richmond, be and is hereby authorized to execute a Nurture grant contract between the City of Richmond and The OmMama Resource Center, Inc., doing business as Nurture, for the purpose of developing and promoting a web-based directory containing a searchable database of local pregnancy, birth, and early parenting resources. The Nurture grant contract shall be approved as to form by the City Attorney and shall be substantially in the form of the document attached to this ordinance.

§ 2. This ordinance shall be in force and effect upon adoption.

City of Richmond

Intracity Correspondence

O&R Transmittal

DATE: October 6, 2023

TO: The Honorable Members of City Council

THROUGH: The Honorable Levar M. Stoney, Mayor

THROUGH: J.E. Lincoln Saunders, Chief Administrative Officer

THROUGH: Sabrina Joy-Hogg, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Finance and Administration

THROUGH: Sheila White, Director of Finance

THROUGH: Jason May, Director of Budget and Strategic Planning

THROUGH: Traci Deshazor, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Human Services

FROM: Eva Colen, Office of Children and Families

RE: ARPA Grant Contract with Nurture (The OmMama Resource Center, Inc.)

ORD. OR RES. No.

PURPOSE:

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute an American Rescue Plan Act grant contract between the City of Richmond and The OmMama Resource Center, Inc., doing business as Nurture., for the purpose of developing a web-based directory that contains a searchable database of local pregnancy, birth and early parenting resources and promoting this new resource among Richmond residents.

BACKGROUND:

Nurture, the fictitious name of The OmMama Resource Center, Inc., is a nonprofit organization founded in 2013 that supports the health and wellbeing of Richmond’s childbearing families through fitness, education, social support and community engagement.

Pregnancy, birth and early parenting comprise a critical life transition that has profound and long-lasting effects on the health and well-being of babies, mothers, families and society. Approximately 15,000 people give birth in the Richmond Metropolitan Area each year. Nurture is creating a web-based directory that contains a searchable database of local pregnancy, birth and early parenting resources.

No such resource currently exists, and families often rely on word-of-mouth to identify much-needed services, programs and resources. From 2012 through 2018, Nurture conducted annual surveys of child-bearing families and service providers across the Richmond region. Identified as top priorities were “one common place where every provider could post information and increased awareness/access for low-income at-risk families to the assets available in the region”. More recently, ongoing stakeholder engagement among healthcare systems, philanthropy, and state and local public health agencies has affirmed the need for a directory.

The Birth & Early Parenting Resource Directory will serve as a central gateway to facilitate access to community resources for both child-bearing families and professionals that serve child-bearing families that will:

1. Create a better-connected pregnancy and early parenting community by providing a hub that connects providers to pregnant and early parenting people and by maintaining a program inventory that shines a light on resource and equity gaps;
2. Reduce health disparities by highlighting income-based and pro bono services, provider demographics, service provider location, public transportation access and other information that will provide more equitable access to resources;
3. Provide immediate information access for urgent situations; and
4. Be scalable, with the potential to expand regionally or statewide.

As of October 2023, Nurture is testing the proof-of-concept platform that could be built upon to develop a full, robust platform in coming years. Nurture’s executive director, Leslie Lytle, is working with a developer for a similar virtual lactation support directory to serve Los Angeles County (population 10 million).

The Robins Foundation, Virginia Commonwealth University, and the Nunnally Foundation have provided financial support for this project.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

From 2012 through 2018, Nurture conducted annual surveys of child-bearing families and service providers across the Richmond region. Identified as top priorities were “one common place where every provider could post information and increased awareness/access for low-income at-risk families to the assets available in the region”. More recently, ongoing stakeholder engagement among healthcare systems, philanthropy, and state and local public health agencies has affirmed the need for a directory.

Moreover, in early 2023, the City’s Office of Children and Families partnered with the Robins Foundation and the Community Foundation to invest in a landscape analysis of the perinatal and early parenting sector in Richmond, conducted by The Spark Mill. The Spark Mill interviewed 28 pregnant and postpartum individuals as well as those parenting children under age 2 and 33 service providers over the course of their community engagement process. The #1 finding was that system navigation is the primary issue in a landscape where there are many service providers, programs and other resources. Pregnant and parenting people reported difficulty understanding where to find each of resources they need and how to access them; service providers do not consistently communicate and collaborate, exacerbating the complexity of an already complicated system; and there is ultimately underutilization of services due to system navigation issues.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL: This investment aligns with the intent of the Child Care and Parenting Supports ARPA project category as the City seeks to support pandemic recovery among child care and other service providers for families with infants and toddlers. Additionally, this investment is aligned with the Equity Agenda, specifically support for expanded doula access.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

DESIRED EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

REQUESTED INTRODUCTION DATE: December 11, 2023

CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING DATE: January 8, 2024

REQUESTED AGENDA: Consent

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL COMMITTEE: Education and Human Services

AFFECTED AGENCIES: Human Services

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING ORD. OR RES.: Ord. No. 2021-291

ATTACHMENTS: Pregnancy and Early Parenting - Final Report; Grant Contract approved as to form

STAFF: Eva Colen