

**PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE TO ITEM 18-1749
(Asset Management Committee 5/15/2018)**

Sponsored by: Richard Boykin, Cook County Board of Commissioners

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES WITH ILLINOIS BLIND VENDORS

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Department of Labor blind persons suffer a 70% rate of unemployment; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress enacted the Randolph-Sheppard Act in 1937 giving blind persons the right to employment on Federal property; and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama on January 20, 2012 declared his full support of the Randolph-Sheppard act by requiring full federal compliance with the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program; and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Legislature enacted “The Blind Vendors’ Act” on January 1, 2010 affirming and expanding the rights of blind persons licensed under the Randolph-Sheppard Act the right to operate vending facilities on state property, and

WHEREAS, the Illinois Business Enterprise Program for the Blind authorized under the Blind Vendors Act with the guidance and oversight of the Illinois Committee of Blind Vendors was created for the purposes of providing visually impaired persons with remunerative employment and enlarging the economic opportunities for the visually impaired; and

WHEREAS, through a Memorandum of Understanding, Cook County currently partners with the Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Business Enterprise Program (DHS/DRS/BEPB) for the Blind, to provide economic opportunities for visually impaired individuals; and

WHEREAS, the current Memorandum of Understanding which expires on December 31, 2019 allows for blind vendors licensed by DHS/DRS/BEPB to provide vending opportunities at various County facilities operated and/or controlled by the County; and

WHEREAS, the current Memorandum of Understanding provides is narrow in scope of the type of vending facility/vending machine available in County facilities and provides for a rental/commission fee to the County; and

WHEREAS, continued partnering with blind vendors and DHS/DRS/BEPB to provide vending opportunities at various County facilities operated and/or controlled by the County will secure future economic opportunities for visually impaired persons; and

WHEREAS, Cook County should look at opportunities to expand vending opportunities for blind vendors to operate vending facilities on County owned property in a new or renegotiated Memorandum of Understanding; and

WHEREAS, Cook County shall evaluate innovative contracting opportunities for blind vendors.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Cook County Board of Commissioners, that the Bureau of Asset Management's Real Estate Management Division shall evaluate opportunities to expand vending facility opportunities in County facilities operated and/or controlled by the County for blind vendors licensed under DHS/DRS/BEPB which could be incorporated into a new or renegotiated Memorandum of Understanding including opportunities for storage related to vending facilities operated by blind vendors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Real Estate Management Division shall expand the definition of vending facility prior to or at the termination of the current Memorandum of Understanding to mean automatic vending machines, snack bars, cart service, counters, office coffee service, and such other appropriate auxiliary equipment that may be operated by blind vendors and that is necessary for the sale of newspapers, periodicals, confections, foods, beverages, and items dispensed automatically or manually and prepared on or off the premises in accordance with all applicable health laws; vending facility does not include cafeterias, and restaurants, nor does it include coffee stands, gift shops or snack bars on the John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County campus, nor does it include non-vending commissaries at the Cook County Department of Corrections or Juvenile Temporary Detention Centers serving the detainee or youth resident population; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Real Estate Management Director shall:

- (1) Establish, continue, maintain, and promote opportunities for vending facilities in conjunction with Business Enterprise Program for the Blind in County facilities operated and/or controlled by the County.
- (2) Facilitate transitions from outside companies contracted to provide vending machines or vending facilities in County facilities operated and/or controlled by the County at the termination of said contracts to Blind Vendors licensed by DHS/DRS/BEPB where feasible and in the best interest of the County.
- (3) Work with the Chief Financial Officer to determine feasibility of providing rent and/or commission free space for such vending facilities for the FY 2019 Budget.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that beginning June 1, 2018, the Real Estate Management Director shall undertake a review of County vending agreements, licenses or contracts on County property to determine future opportunities for blind vendors and begin the process to transition said contracts, agreements or licenses to blind vendors upon the expiration of said agreements, contracts or licenses where feasible and in the best interest of the County. Blind Vendors licensed by DHS/DRS/BEPB shall be given right of first refusal when the County has identified a vending facility contract, agreement or license that can be transitioned to Blind Vendors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that beginning September 1, 2018, the Real Estate Management Director shall undertake a review of all County facilities operated and/or controlled by the County to determine additional vending facility opportunities for Blind Vendors licensed by DHS/DRS/BEPB; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Real Estate Management Director shall seek to timely amend the current Memorandum of Understanding or enter into a new agreement with DHS/DRS/BEPB at the expiration of the current term to account for the Director's findings and promote additional opportunities for Blind Vendors licensed by DHS/DRS/BEPB as provided in this Resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chief Procurement Officer shall direct Blind Vendors licensed by DHS/DRS/BEPB to resources and information on Cook County procurement opportunities.

