

# #1

## COMPLETE

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
**Started:** Friday, September 17, 2021 2:30:56 PM  
**Last Modified:** Friday, September 17, 2021 2:33:18 PM  
**Time Spent:** 00:02:21  
**IP Address:** 73.176.27.43

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## Q1

Please provide some basic information

Witness Name: **Carolina Gaete**  
Organization (if any): **Blocks Together**  
City/Town: **Chicago**  
State: **IL**  
ZIP: **60624**

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## Q2

Tell us which meeting you wish to be recorded as a witness. If you don't know the meeting or date, we can help at 312.603.6398 or cookcounty.board@cookcountyl.gov. You can also look up using the County Calendar or the Forest Preserve Calendar. Please fill out a separate form for each meeting at which you wish to speak.

**County Health and Hospitals Committee Public Hearing 9/20/2021 230p**

## Q3

Tell us the File ID number (example 17-0000) of the item on which you are registering your position. If you don't know the number, we can help at 312.603.6398 or cookcounty.board@cookcountyl.gov. You can also look up using the County Calendar or the Forest Preserve Calendar

**Respondent skipped this question**

## Q4

What do you want to do?

**PROVIDE WRITTEN COMMENT FOR INFORMATION ONLY (You may add written comments below)**

**Q5**

Written Statement? You can type or copy/paste any written statement you want included in the meeting record here. If this is not enough space, or you have other attachments for distribution, please email them to cookcounty.board@cookcountyl.gov

None

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**Q6**

Please Indicate if you are only submitting written testimony or if you wish to address the Committee live (virtually) at the meeting.

**Requesting to address the Committee live (virtually) at the meeting**

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**Q7**

If requesting to address the Committee live (virtually), please provide an email address and phone number (This is required to receive and an invitation to the virtual meeting).

Email Address

**carolina.gaete@blockstogetherchi.org**

Phone Number

**7739402319**

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#2

**COMPLETE**

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
**Started:** Friday, September 17, 2021 8:54:31 PM  
**Last Modified:** Friday, September 17, 2021 9:12:16 PM  
**Time Spent:** 00:17:45  
**IP Address:** 172.58.141.114

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Page 1

**Q1**

Please provide some basic information

Witness Name: **Milton Johnson**  
Organization (if any): **Bobby E Wright**  
City/Town: **Chicago**  
State: **IL**  
ZIP: **60644**

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**Q2**

Tell us which meeting you wish to be recorded as a witness. If you don't know the meeting or date, we can help at 312.603.6398 or cookcounty.board@cookcountyil.gov. You can also look up using the County Calendar or the Forest Preserve Calendar. Please fill out a separate form for each meeting at which you wish to speak.

**County Health and Hospitals Committee Public Hearing 9/20/2021 230p**

**Q3**

Tell us the File ID number (example 17-0000) of the item on which you are registering your position. If you don't know the number, we can help at 312.603.6398 or cookcounty.board@cookcountyil.gov. You can also look it up using the County Calendar or the Forest Preserve Calendar

22-1189

**Q4**

What do you want to do?

**REGISTER IN FAVOR of a specific item (You may add written comments below)**

**Q5**

Written Statement? You can type or copy/paste any written statement you want included in the meeting record here. If this is not enough space, or you have other attachments for distribution, please email them to cookcounty.board@cookcountyil.gov

I want to give professional and personal testimony also drawing from my experience of growing up and residing in communities that suffer from unacknowledged, undiagnosed mental illnesses. I'm in favor of more funding for mental health services, education and research.

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**Q6**

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**Requesting to address the Committee live (virtually) at the meeting**

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**Q7**

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Email Address

**mjohnson@bewcbhc.org**

Phone Number

**7734079970**

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## #3

### COMPLETE

**Collector:** Web Link 1 (Web Link)  
**Started:** Sunday, September 19, 2021 11:53:00 AM  
**Last Modified:** Sunday, September 19, 2021 12:15:36 PM  
**Time Spent:** 00:22:36  
**IP Address:** 108.90.244.145

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Page 1

### Q1

Please provide some basic information

Witness Name: **Eddy Borrayo**  
Organization (if any): **Rincon Family Services**  
City/Town: **Chicago**  
State: **IL**  
ZIP: **60647**

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### Q2

Tell us which meeting you wish to be recorded as a witness. If you don't know the meeting or date, we can help at 312.603.6398 or cookcounty.board@cookcountyl.gov. You can also look up using the County Calendar or the Forest Preserve Calendar. Please fill out a separate form for each meeting at which you wish to speak.

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**County Health and Hospitals Committee Public Hearing 9/20/2021 230p**

### Q3

Tell us the File ID number (example 17-0000) of the item on which you are registering your position. If you don't know the number, we can help at 312.603.6398 or cookcounty.board@cookcountyl.gov. You can also look it up using the County Calendar or the Forest Preserve Calendar

21-4066

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### Q4

What do you want to do?

**REGISTER IN FAVOR of a specific item (You may add written comments below)**

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## Q5

Written Statement? You can type or copy/paste any written statement you want included in the meeting record here. If this is not enough space, or you have other attachments for distribution, please email them to cookcounty.board@cookcountyl.gov

Rincon Family Services (RFS) was created in 1972 by Latino civic leaders to establish a safe haven for Chicago community members struggling with substance use. The clinic soon became an oasis for men and women of all ethnic and racial backgrounds who sought individualized, culturally informed care. Today, RFS remains a community-driven organization with a mission to promote quality of life by serving as a catalyst to advocate, educate and empower individuals and their families.

RFS primarily serves 12 high-risk community areas (Austin, Avondale, Belmont-Cragin, East Garfield Park, Hermosa, Humboldt Park, Irving Park, Logan Square, North Center, North Lawndale, West Garfield Park, and West Town). The City of Chicago has named ten community areas that have been prioritized to address the high levels of violence, victimization, and related traumas. RFS provides services to the four greatest impacted areas; Austin, East Garfield Park, Humboldt Park, and North Lawndale.

Individuals struggling with trauma need massive and meaningful wrap-around supports, not just mental health and primary care. More immediately, individuals experiencing trauma need comprehensive access to social supports, most ideally from someone who looks, talks and has had experiences just like them, in a safe and welcoming environment. In addition, peer-led programs with opportunities for leadership development and the offering of activities provide individuals an opportunity to share their successes with others and allow them to focus and think about something positive and productive.

RFS is committed to providing comprehensive care. We have successfully expanded programming from substance use to behavioral health, and further to include prevention, education and targeted outreach. Though we strive to provide a full spectrum of support, as a community-based organization, we know successful recovery is only possible in partnership.

Rincon Family Services is currently in a unique situation with the very strong community collaboratives in place. These collaboratives have consistently been working to address the trauma epidemic in the county with a diverse mixture of communities. Rincon Family Services has made a comprehensive effort to understand the unique needs of the diverse communities throughout the neighboring communities, and in order to adequately address them in a culturally competent way we need to have a more accurate and efficient trauma care response system.

Currently, RFS employs over 170 staff, serving nearly 1,000 unduplicated clients annually. We believe trauma treatment is only possible through a continuum of care that reaches across a family's life spectrum. In addition to our long history of expertise in Medication Assisted Treatment, we expanded to offer behavioral health services from age 3 and older. We believe in the power of effective prevention education, which is why we are committed to community-based outreach, working with youth, parents, schools, at risk, justice involved, incarcerated and former offenders. We not only believe in second chances, but we stand behind this as a proud employer of people in recovery, on probation, and/or with criminal records

RFS and other mental health and substance abuse community service providers are being overly taxed by the violence epidemic. There is still a major gap in the needed substance use and mental health services within Cook County and additional services need to be in place to prevent more trauma. The westside of Chicago, in comparison to the rest of the State of Illinois, has significantly more violent crimes, emergency room visits for mental health and substance use related issues, and the large financial and emotional burden on the well-being of the residents of these high-risk community areas.

This means that many of the most vulnerable members of our communities are left without needed options due to overburdened

behavioral health service providers with long waitlists. Trauma informed, culturally competent resources are critical not only to meet the mental health needs of our communities, but also to create a future in which families can thrive in neighborhoods with less violence.

In addition, Latino and African American communities were severely impacted by the decimation and attack on the social safety net during the Rauner administration. When the pandemic hit our communities, mental health and primary care medical services were again negatively impacted and highlighted the inequities in our health care system. As is clear to all now, our communities of color experienced the highest rates of Covid infection in the state resulting in hospitalization and death rates far outpacing individuals in White communities

Our communities need additional support to provide culturally relevant and competent care so to increase and improve access to mental health services. Rincon recognizes the importance of addressing the public health crisis caused by violence

Thoroughly and comprehensively solving the problem of violence in our communities requires a public health system that acknowledges violence as a public health problem, resources for trauma services and counseling, and access to quality care for all in need in our communities.

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## Q6

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## Q7

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Email Address

**eborrayo@rinconfamilyservices.org**

Phone Number

**312-420-8054**

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