



RESOLUTION 2026-17

**A RESOLUTION OF THE ESCAMBIA CHILDREN'S TRUST
AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXTEND THE
FUNDING AGREEMENT WITH LEGAL SERVICES OF NORTH
FLORIDA FOR TWO MONTHS THROUGH JUNE 30, 2026.**

WHEREAS, the Escambia Children's Trust (the "Trust"), was created pursuant to Sec. 125.901, Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the Trust has within its power and functions to provide such services for all children as the Trust determines are needed for the general welfare of the county; and

WHEREAS, Legal Services of North Florida ("LSNF") received a funding agreement from the Trust beginning on May 1, 2023, though April 30, 2024, which was eligible for an annual renewal for a maximum of three years; and

WHEREAS, LSNF was renewed for its third and final contract year beginning on May 1, 2025, and extending through April 30, 2026; and

WHEREAS, on April 10, 2026, the Trust received correspondence from LSNF requesting an extension of its existing sole-source contract for two months, through June 30, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the additional time will allow LSNF to provide services throughout the school year and complete representation of children currently represented by LSNF in the ECT-funded program, which would fulfill its professional responsibilities under the Florida Bar; and

WHEREAS, the request for an extension was made based on the Trust feedback that the Trust is anticipating a reduction in available funds and, therefore, not having sufficient funds to support the project in its current form moving forward; and

WHEREAS, LSNF has informed the judiciary that they can no longer accept court appointments in the cases it has handled with this project; and

WHEREAS, LSNF has sufficient funds to engage in the work during the requested extension period; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors met at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting on April 14, 2026; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors voted to permit the extension of LSNF's funding

Agreement for two months, through June 30, 2026.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ESCAMBIA
CHILDREN'S TRUST OF ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA:**

The Board of Directors of the Trust does hereby ratify its authorization for the Executive Director to extend the funding agreement between the Trust and Legal Services of North Florida for two months, or through June 30, 2026. No additional funds are being awarded for this extension.

DONE AND ENACTED this _____ day of _____, 2026.

By: _____
Dr. Rex Northup, Chairman

ATTEST:
By: _____
Lindsey Cannon



April 10, 2026

Dr. Rex Northup, Chair
Escambia County Children's Trust
1000 College Blvd., Bldg. 26, 2nd Floor
Pensacola, Florida 32504

RE: Withdrawal of Sole Source Application

Dear Dr. Northup:

This letter serves to withdraw the sole source application made by Legal Services of North Florida for the Expanded Representation of Children in Need project submitted on March 17, 2026.

We do not take the withdrawal of this application lightly as we know that many children will not receive critical legal representation that supports their education and family stability. We also understand the challenges facing the Escambia Children's Trust and uncertainty related to future funds available due to potential changes in the law. As such, we have made the difficult decision, based on the feedback from the Board during the Programs Committee meeting and from staff, to withdraw the application. By separate letter, we are requesting a two-month extension of our current contract that will allow us to continue serving children through the end of the school year, wind down the project, fulfill our professional responsibilities as attorneys, and reduce harm to the children we already represent.

As is reflected in our reports, this project has positively impacted many youth in our community who face some of the most challenging barriers to success. ERCN serves children in dependency, delinquency and truancy who, without legal help, may never break the cycle of poverty, violence, and insecurity. We will remain engaged with the Escambia Children's Trust team to support its work as we can. We hope to return as future opportunities become available to pursue this same work, either in whole or in part, and other identified needs where legal assistance would most matter.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continuing in our joint missions to serve children in Escambia County.

Sincerely,

Leslie N. Powell-Boudreaux
Executive Director

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April 10, 2026

Dr. Rex Northup, Chair
Escambia County Children's Trust
1000 College Blvd., Bldg. 26, 2nd Floor
Pensacola, Florida 32504

RE: Request for Extension

Dear Dr. Northup:

Legal Services of North Florida (LSNF) requests approval from the Escambia Children's Trust Board of Directors to allow an extension of our existing sole-source contract, Expanded Representation to Children in Need. Specifically, LSNF requests a two-month extension through June 30, 2026. The additional time will allow us to provide services throughout the school year and complete representation of children we currently represent in the ECT-funded project, fulfilling our professional responsibilities under the Florida Bar.

We make this request based on feedback from the Board and ECT staff that the Trust is anticipating a reduction in available funds and, therefore, not having sufficient funds to support the project in its current form. We are submitting a separate letter to withdraw our current sole-source application and will re-evaluate to determine if and how we can submit a more limited proposal that meets gaps identified in the ECT Needs Assessment. We believe in the ECT mission and hope to continue our partnership in support of children in Escambia County.

We have informed the judiciary that we can no longer accept court appointments in the cases we have handled with this project. We have sufficient funds to engage in this work during the requested extension period.

We thank you for your history of support of this evidence-based and impactful project. Your kind words, and those of your fellow board members, have been appreciated, even in this time of dwindling resources and difficult decisions. Please let me know if any additional information would be helpful as you consider this request.

Sincerely,

Leslie N. Powell-Boudreaux
Executive Director

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