



Board Agenda Item 61

DATE: February 25, 2020

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBMITTED BY: Delfino E. Neira, Director, Department of Social Services

SUBJECT: Proposition 63 grant submission with the California Department of Veterans Affairs for Mental Health Outreach Activities

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):

Retroactively authorize the Department of Social Services' prior submittal of a grant application in the amount of \$100,000 to the California Department of Veterans Affairs for the 2020/2021/2022 Proposition 63 Funding Mental Health Outreach and Services Grant.

Approval of the recommended action will authorize the retroactive submission of a Proposition (Prop) 63 grant funding application for the Fresno County Veterans Services Office (VSO), with no Net County cost. To meet the grant proposal deadline of February 14, 2020, the Department submitted the grant application contingent upon your Board's approval. If awarded funding by the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet), the approved Agreement will be submitted for your Boards approval. This item is countywide.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION(S):

Your Board can instruct the Department to withdraw their application for Prop 63 grant funding. The County will not receive the funding to expand mental health outreach and referral services for Fresno County veterans.

RETROACTIVE AGREEMENT:

The VSO received notification on December 17, 2019 that applications for the Prop 63 grant funding were being accepted. Due to the short notification for submission, the Department submitted the application and is requesting retroactive approval.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no increase in Net County Cost associated with the recommended action. Approval of the recommended action will allow the Department's request for Prop 63 grant funding to be accepted and evaluated by CalVet.

DISCUSSION:

In 2008, the California Department of Mental Health awarded the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA) Prop 63 funding to enhance the effectiveness of referrals to County Veterans Services Offices for veterans who present with mental health issues. CDVA began working with the VSO, providing instructions and resources to provide veterans direct and local access to staff that could assist them through the process of claiming Veterans Affairs (VA) mental health benefits.

Since FY 2009-10, the Fresno County VSO has been one of several counties in the State that has been allocated Prop 63 funding. The County has received funds for mental health outreach activities with an emphasis on the incarcerated veteran population, which includes veterans being identified prior to court hearings and sentencing, incarcerated veterans, and parolee veterans, newly discharged soldiers, National Guard, and Reserve soldiers who have been deployed. The purpose of the service is to connect veterans with the appropriate mental health and substance abuse services in order to help mitigate the harmful effects of combat, sexual assault, in-service injury and readjustment/assimilation to civilian life by providing education, networking, prevention, intervention and improved access to support services.

The goal for FY 2020-21 is to provide support to over 900 unduplicated veterans in the Central Valley and to assist the judicial system in identifying veterans who may benefit from outreach services rather than incarceration, as well as supporting incarcerated veterans with new claims, ongoing case management and assistance upon exiting incarceration. The VSO ensures that veterans are educated about the various VA mental health services available to them, including services dealing with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Military Sexual Trauma (MST) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). The VSO also provides information to veterans on how to assist their dependents to access education benefits.

In 2019, the Fresno County VSO was notified that the County is eligible to receive up to \$100,000 in Prop 63 funding for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022. Approval of the recommended action is required for CalVet to review and evaluate the grant application and allow for the continuation of mental health outreach activities in Fresno County.

ATTACHMENTS INCLUDED AND/OR ON FILE:

On file with Clerk - FY 20-21-22 Prop 63 RFA

CAO ANALYST:

Ronald Alexander