

September 5, 2024

BCC Agenda Date/Item: _____

Board of County Commissioners
Clackamas County

Approval to apply to the Veterans Health Administration Innovation Ecosystem Suicide Prevention Grant to develop and implement new strategies in reducing Oregon’s Veteran suicide rate. Anticipated value is \$750,000 over 2 years. Funding is through the US Department of Veterans Affairs. No County General Funds are involved.

Previous Board Action/Review	Briefed at issues September 4, 2024		
Performance Clackamas	Ensure safe, healthy, and secure communities.		
Counsel Review	No	Procurement Review	No
Contact Person	Philip Mason-Joyner	Contact Phone	503-742-5956

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The Clackamas County Public Health Division (CCPHD) of the Health, Housing & Human Services Department requests approval to apply for the Veterans Health Administration Innovation Ecosystem (VHAIE), Suicide Prevention Grant with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to develop and implement new strategies in reducing Oregon’s Veteran suicide rate.

According to the Clackamas County Suicide Fatality Review annual report and data from the Medical Examiner, over 60% of all fatal suicides in Clackamas County involve firearms, significantly above the national average. This issue is particularly severe among veterans, whose suicide rates in Oregon are notably higher than the national average. Addressing veteran suicide requires a comprehensive response that involves community engagement, targeted outreach, and strategic planning.

The purpose of this project is to strengthen partnerships between the Clackamas County Public Health Division, Clackamas County’s Suicide Prevention Coalition, and local community partners to jointly improve suicide prevention planning, decision-making, and resource allocation, specifically targeting Veteran suicide prevention. This work will bolster community partnerships and collaborations by implementing strategies and resources that address the unique needs of Veterans within the county.

This funding will be allocated to initiatives focused on developing secure firearm storage solutions for Veterans, enhancing in-home and out-of-home storage practices, and addressing the specific challenges related to self-defense firearm storage. By fostering a network of trusted community partners, including gun shops and Veteran organizations, we aim to create a safer and healthier Clackamas County. The Clackamas County Suicide Prevention Coalition is committed to the implementation of a Veteran-specific suicide prevention strategy, identifying recommendations, priorities, and action steps toward the goal of zero suicides in Clackamas County, Oregon.

The SafeGuard Project aims to reduce the incidence of firearm-related suicides among veterans in Clackamas County through a three-tiered approach to secure firearm storage:

1. Out-of-Home Storage

- Develop partnerships with gun shops to establish secure storage options and promote conversations around the importance of secure firearm storage.
- Create a network of trusted locations where veterans can temporarily store their firearms safely, especially during times of crisis or when away from home.

2. In-Home Secure Storage

- Distribute “SafeGuard Boxes,” inspired by Finland’s successful “baby box” program, to enhance in-home secure storage practices.
- These boxes will include various firearm secure storage items, behavioral health resources, and connections to veteran support services.

3. Secure Storage for Self-Defense Firearms

- Address veterans’ reluctance to securely store self-defense firearms by identifying quick-access secure storage solutions through focus groups.
- Distribute appropriate secure storage items based on the findings to promote the secure storage of all firearms.

RECOMMENDATION: The staff respectfully requests that the Board of County Commissioners approve applying to grant and authorize Chair Smith to sign on behalf of Clackamas County.

Respectfully submitted,

Rodney A. Cook

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Director of Health, Housing & Human Services

Financial Assistance Application Lifecycle Form

Use this form to track your potential award from conception to submission.

Sections of this form are designed to be completed in collaboration between department program and fiscal staff.

If renewal, complete sections 1, 2 & 4 only. If direct appropriation, complete page 1 and Dept/Finance signatures only.

If Disaster or Emergency Relief Funding, EOC will need to approve prior to being sent to the BCC

****CONCEPTION****

Section I: Funding Opportunity Information - To Be Completed by Requester

Award type: Direct Appropriation (no application)
 Subrecipient Award Direct Award

Award Renewal? Yes No

Lead Fund # and Department:	Health, Housing, and Human Services
Name of Funding Opportunity:	Veterans Health Administration Suicide Prevention Grant

Funding Source: Federal – Direct Federal – Pass through State Local

Requestor Information: (Name of staff initiating form)	Galli Murray
Requestor Contact Information:	Gallimur@clackamas.us
Department Fiscal Representative:	Sherry Olson
Program Name & Prior Project #: (please specify)	Veterans Health Administration Suicide Prevention Grant

Brief Description of Project:

The Clackamas County Public Health Division seeks funding from the Department of Veterans Affairs to promote secure firearm storage options and reduce veteran suicides in Oregon. This initiative aims to strengthen partnerships with local organizations to improve suicide prevention planning and resource allocation. The project will focus on secure firearm storage solutions, both in-home and out-of-home, and address self-defense firearm storage challenges. By fostering a network of trusted community partners, including gun shops and veteran organizations, the goal is to create a safer Clackamas County and reduce firearm-related suicides among veterans.

Name of Funding Agency: Department of Veterans Affairs

Notification of Funding Opportunity Web Address: <https://sam.gov/opp/569c06a65d3742bb9b57d754d63d8e99/view>

OR

Application Packet Attached: Yes No

Completed By:

Date:

**** NOW READY FOR SUBMISSION TO DEPARTMENT FISCAL REPRESENTATIVE ****

Section II: Funding Opportunity Information - To Be Completed by Department Fiscal Rep

Competitive Application Non-Competing Application Other

Assistance Listing Number (ALN), if applicable:	Per VA - no funding specifically reserved for announcement	Funding Agency Award Notification Date:	
Announcement Date:	June 5, 2024	Announcement/Opportunity #:	Solicitation #:36C10X24R0053
Grant Category/Title	Veterans Health Administration Suicide Prevention Grant	Funding Amount Requested:	750,000
Allows Indirect/Rate:	Yes	Match Requirement:	NA
Application Deadline:	Sept 20, 2024 (30 days after letter of intent approved)	Total Project Cost:	750,000
Award Start Date:	Upon execution award agreement	Other Deadlines and Description:	Letter of intent: 08/15/24
Award End Date	06/30/26		
Completed By:	Sherry L. Olson	Program Income Requirements:	NA
Pre-Application Meeting Schedule:	07/23/24, Galli Murry, Sherry Olson, Bella Wiener, & Jeanne Weber		

Additional funding sources available to fund this program? Please describe:
NA

How much General Fund will be used to cover costs in this program, including indirect expenses?
unallowable allocated costs will be covered by county general funds

NOTE: We will not need additional county general funds to cover unallowable costs. We will re-distribute our current budgeted general fund for personnel costs that will be covered by the grant, to cover unallowable allocated costs.

How much Fund Balance will be used to cover costs in this program, including indirect expenses?
NA

In the next section, limit answers to space available.

Section III: Funding Opportunity Information - To Be Completed at Pre-Application Meeting by Dept Program and Fiscal Staff

Mission/Purpose:

1. How does the grant/funding opportunity support the Department and/or Division's Mission/Purpose/Goals?

This funding opportunity supports the Clackamas County Public Health Division's mission by funding the SafeGuard Project, which aims to reduce the high suicide rates among veterans in Oregon through innovative secure firearm storage solutions. This aligns with the Division's goals of improving community health, preventing suicide, and fostering partnerships to address public health challenges.

2. Who, if any, are the community partners who might be better suited to perform this work?

Community partners well-suited to perform this work include the Oregon Firearm Safety Coalition, local gun shops, the Portland VA, and Veterans Service Organizations. These partners have the expertise, community trust, and existing networks necessary to effectively implement and promote secure firearm storage initiatives among veterans.

3. What are the objectives of this funding opportunity? How will we meet these objectives?

The objectives are to develop and field-test secure firearm storage solutions for veterans to reduce firearm-related suicides. We will meet these objectives by creating partnerships for out-of-home storage, distributing SafeGuard Boxes for in-home storage, addressing self-defense firearm storage challenges through focus groups, and leveraging innovative distribution channels like community paramedics.

4. Does the grant/financial assistance fund an existing program? If yes, which program? If no, what is the purpose of the program?

The grant funds a new program, the SafeGuard Project. The purpose is to reduce veteran suicides by promoting secure firearm storage both in-home and out-of-home, particularly focusing on self-defense firearms, through community engagement, education, and strategic partnerships.

Organizational Capacity:

1. Does the organization have adequate and qualified staff? If no, can staff be hired within the grant/financial assistance funding opportunity timeframe?

Clackamas County's Suicide Prevention work has a core team, led by Galli Murray, with extensive expertise in suicide prevention and community engagement. However, additional staff, such as a full-time project manager and part-time community paramedic, will need to be hired. These positions can be filled within the grant's funding time frame, ensuring the project's staffing needs are met.

2. Are there partnership efforts required? If yes, who are we partnering with and what are their roles and responsibilities?

Yes, partnerships are essential. Key partners include the Oregon Firearm Safety Coalition, local gun shops, the Portland VA, and Veterans Service Organizations. These partners will help develop out-of-home storage options, distribute SafeGuard Boxes, and provide training and resources. Their roles involve community engagement, trust-building, and logistical support for secure storage solutions.

3. If this is a pilot project, what is the plan for sun setting the project and/or staff if it does not continue (e.g. making staff positions temporary or limited duration, etc.)?

If the project does not continue, staff positions will be made temporary or limited duration, with clear communication about the project's timeline. Contingency plans will include seeking additional funding sources or integrating successful elements into existing programs to sustain the project's impact.

4. If funded, would this grant/financial assistance create a new program, does the department intend for the program to continue after initial funding is exhausted? If yes, how will the department ensure funding (e.g. request new funding during the budget process, supplanted by a different program, etc.)?

It will not create a new program.

Collaboration

1. List County departments that will collaborate on this award, if any.

H3S only

Reporting Requirements

1. What are the program reporting requirements for this grant/funding opportunity?

The program requires regular progress reports detailing activities, outcomes, and challenges. Reports will include data on the development and distribution of SafeGuard Boxes, partnership activities, training sessions, and community engagement efforts. Evaluation metrics and feedback from focus groups will also be included.

2. How will performance be evaluated? Are we using existing data sources? If yes, what are they and where are they housed? If not, is it feasible to develop a data source within the grant timeframe?

Performance will be evaluated using both existing and newly developed data sources. Existing data from the Clackamas County Suicide Fatality Review and Medical Examiner's reports will be utilized. Additionally, new data sources, such as surveys and focus group feedback, will be developed within the grant timeframe. Evaluation partners from the University of Oregon and Portland State University will assist in creating and analyzing these tools.

3. What are the fiscal reporting requirements for this funding?

Fiscal reporting will include detailed budgets, expenditures, and financial statements. Regular financial reports will be submitted to track spending against the allocated budget, ensuring transparency and accountability. These reports will outline costs associated with staffing, resource procurement, and program activities, providing a comprehensive overview of the project's financial management.

Fiscal

1. Are there other revenue sources required, available, or will be used to fund the program? Have they already been secured? Please list all funding sources and amounts.

No

2. For applications with a match requirement, how much is required (in dollars) and what type of funding will be used to meet it (CGF, In-kind, local grant, etc.)?

No

3. Does this grant/financial assistance cover indirect costs? If yes, is there a rate cap? If no, can additional funds be obtained to support indirect expenses and what are those sources?

Yes. The indirect rate and allocated costs are allowable but the announcement does not give specific guidance on rate/amount

Other information necessary to understand this award, if any.

Program Approval:

Galli Murray

07/23/24

Name (Typed/Printed)

Date

Signature

**** NOW READY FOR PROGRAM MANAGER SUBMISSION TO DIVISION DIRECTOR****

****ATTACH ANY CERTIFICATIONS REQUIRED BY THE FUNDING AGENCY. COUNTY FINANCE OR ADMIN WILL SIGN****

Section IV: Approvals

DIVISION DIRECTOR (or designee, if applicable)

Philip Mason-Joyner 7/23/2024

Philip Mason-Joyner

Name (Typed/Printed)

Date

Signature

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR (or designee, if applicable)

Adam Brown 7/31/2024

Adam Brown
Adam Brown (Jul 31, 2024 10:28 PDT)

Name (Typed/Printed)

Date

Signature

FINANCE ADMINISTRATION

Elizabeth Comfort Jul 31, 2024

Elizabeth Comfort

Name (Typed/Printed)

Date

Signature

EOC COMMAND APPROVAL **WHEN NEEDED FOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY RELIEF APPLICATIONS ONLY**

Name (Typed/Printed)

Date

Signature

Section V: Board of County Commissioners/County Administration

(Required for all grant applications. If your grant is awarded, all grant awards must be approved by the Board on their weekly consent agenda regardless of amount per local budget law 294.338.)

For applications less than \$150,000:

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR	Approved: <input type="checkbox"/>	Denied: <input type="checkbox"/>
Name (Typed/Printed)	Date	Signature

For applications under \$150,000 email form to Christina Fadenrecht at CFadenrecht@clackamas.us for Gary Schmidt's approval.

For applications \$150,000 and above, email form with Staff Report to the Clerk to the Board at ClerktotheBoard@clackamas.us to be brought to the consent agenda.

BCC Agenda item #: Date:

OR

Policy Session Date:

County Administration Attestation

County Administration: re-route to department at

and

Grants Manager at financegrants@clackamas.us

when fully approved.

Department: keep original with your grant file.