



COUNTY OF NEVADA HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: November 9, 2021

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: **Rachel Roos**

SUBJECT: Resolution accepting funding award from the California Department of Social Services, Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (“HDAP”) in the amount of \$393,011 for Fiscal Year 21/22 to be used for the Nevada County SOAR Works Program, upon acceptance, and available through June 30, 2022.

RECOMMENDATION: Approve the attached Resolution.

FUNDING: The HDAP is funded with monies appropriated through the State of California 2021 Budget Act. The County’s renewal allocation is \$393,011 (All County Welfare Directors Letter 21-22 dated September 13, 2021) and the monies are available through June 30, 2022, for use by the Department of Social Services SOAR Works Program in the Eligibility Administration budget. A budget amendment is not needed at this time and there is no impact to the General Fund.

BACKGROUND: The Department of Social Services has received a renewal allocation of funding through the California Department of Social Services (“CDSS”) to support the SOAR Works Program, the local HDAP initiative operating since 2018 through a contract with FREED Center for Independent Living. SOAR stands for SSI/SSDI Outreach, and Recovery. The program is designed to increase access to SSI/SSDI for eligible adults who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder. The program provides specialized case management and advocacy to individuals experiencing homelessness who may be eligible for social security or disability benefits but who do not currently receive such funds. FREED utilizes SOAR-trained case managers to gain SSI/SSDI benefits for homeless individuals. FREED SOAR staff work closely with County and Nonprofit service providers to assist shared clients in acquiring income, housing and post-housing supportive services. A renewal contract with FREED is also on this agenda for Board Approval.

The funds will be used to continue program oversight and coordination, expand SOAR trained case management as a means to increase the capacity to initiate applications for SSI/SSDI benefits and assist participants through the entire application process including potential appeals. Additionally, funding will be provided to place participants into temporary or permanent housing while they await award determination.

In addition to the allocated funds, CDSS has made available an additional \$150,000 if contiguous communities decide to join together to form regional HDAP programs. The process of establishing a regional HDAP requires engaging with state CDSS staff. Nevada and Yuba County share a contracted HDAP provider (i.e. FREED). Local DSS staff are working with the state and the provider to explore the efficacy of forming such a program. There are also new funds set aside for “targeted strategic investments.” These funds are applied for separately. DSS staff are evaluating a number of concepts and will be working to submit a proposal to the state to access this funding. If approved a resolution will be brought to the Board to accept the funds.

The allocated funds will support a program that addresses housing and resource needs for eligible individuals who are homeless. This program was designed to leverage increased County-wide coordination of services, the coordinated entry system, and housing first strategies, all part of the the overall Nevada County Strategic Plan to address Homelessness.

Item Initiated by: Brendan Phillips, Health and Human Services Agency Program Manager

Approved by: Rachel Roos, LCSW, Director of Social Services