



Office of Community Involvement



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## Non-Departmental (Non-D) CBAC

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TO: Chair Deborah Kafoury and Board of County Commissioners 4 pages

FROM: Non-Departmental (Non-D) CBAC

DATE: April 28th, 2020

SUBJECT: Non-Departmental Community Budget Advisory Committee Report & Recommendations

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Our role as a committee is to review Non-Departmental program offers and provide community input to influence budgetary decisions according to our values. We envision a county that is accountable, collaborates with other jurisdictions, protects our environment, provides for the safety of the public and advances equity.**

Between August 2019 and April 2020, the Non-D CBAC met with Chair Kafoury, County Commissioners and their staff, and staff from the Offices of Emergency Management, Diversity & Equity, the Joint Office of Homeless Services and the County Auditor. After numerous hours of discussion between the members of our Committee, we are pleased to communicate our:

- **Program recommendations** - FY21 priority funding requests for Non-D offices
- **General recommendations** - How to improve MultCo's operations and its impact on the County's residents

In order to evaluate the program offers and prevailing policy of each Non-D office, our CBAC established the following **priorities for FY21**:

- Advance equity
- Address homelessness and the housing crisis
- Promote emergency preparedness
- Serve mental health and addiction needs
- Reduce contribution to climate change and build climate resilience

Our **program implementation** priorities are first, ensuring accountability (monitoring program efficacy, efficiency, and inclusivity), and second, promoting collaboration across jurisdictions and with external County service partners.

Following our thematic priorities, our **top three Program Offers** are:

1. 10052H - JOHS - Safety off the Streets - Domestic Violence Emergency Motel Voucher

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## Restoration

2. 10053K - JOHS - Family System Rent Assistance Restoration
3. 10053M - JOHS - Adult System Rent Assistance Restoration

## **PROCESS**

To better educate and prepare ourselves, the Non-Department CBAC has meetings scheduled for the entire year. We met eight times (8/5, 9/9, 11/4, 12/2, 1/6, 2/3, 3/16 and 4/13) to hear presentations from the Chair, Commissioners, and Non-D offices to discuss office priorities for the FY21 budget. We reviewed 14 program offers and met with:

- Chair Kafoury and staff
- County Commissioners and their staff:
  - Sharon Meieran, D1
  - Susheela Jayapal, D2
- Jennifer McGuirk, Auditor
- Ben Duncan, Office of Diversity and Equity
- Chris Voss, Emergency Management
- Marc Jolin, Joint Office of Homeless Services

## **EMERGING ISSUES & CHANGES -**

The most critical emerging and challenging issues continue to relate to homelessness and housing security. The priorities of the county have been drastically altered by the pandemic of COVID-19 and we acknowledge that the budget will need to reflect this. The challenges of the homeless are only escalated in these times.

This year multiple offices (in particular the Auditor office and ODE) requested funding in order to engage in more community outreach; we wanted to point this out as there may be an opportunity for coordination across these offices as well as with the Office of Community Involvement. Offices have a tendency to silo, which can be costly and limit knowledge sharing.

## **COVID-19 RESPONSE & RECOVERY**

1. *Does your CBAC have any input for the Board of Commissioners on the core values that Chair Kafoury outlined in her communication to CBAC members? Would you add any core values and/or are any values of highest priority to your CBAC?*

We urge the County to continue to focus on supporting the most vulnerable communities impacted by the health and economic crisis by identifying and providing culturally-specific programming and services.

We are concerned about the surge in domestic violence and gun violence cases, and urge the County to continue to provide critical resources to threatened individuals and families.

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**Members:** *Raphaella Haessler: Chair, Judy Hadley: CCBAC Rep., Xavier Tissier, Demian Lucas, Reginal Cole, Lisa Reynolds, Zackariah Sloane*

**Staff:** *Olivia Kilgore*

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We see a need for clear, concise and culturally-specific communication (for example information in multiple languages) in these uncertain times. We suggest continuing to leverage outreach through local nonprofits.

2. *For your department or offices, which communities and/or constituencies does your CBAC expect to experience the most significant impacts due to COVID-19?*

We are already seeing that the pandemic is disproportionately affecting communities of color, both in terms of health outcomes and economic effects.

People in nursing homes, with disabilities, and with underlying health conditions are also expected to experience significant impacts.

3. *What programs and services would your CBAC recommend that the Board of Commissioners hold harmless from any potential cuts required due to the impacts of COVID-19?*

Within the Non-Departmental Offices, the Joint Office of Homeless Services and the Office of Emergency Management are integral to the COVID-19 response. In particular, JOHS' programs focusing on housing retention and domestic violence response and prevention are critical services at this time. We recommend maintaining at least a baseline of services in the Office of Diversity and Equity.

While we are less familiar with the offices outside of Non-D, as community members we find the following offices and departments particularly significant to the COVID-19 recovery:

- Health Department, particularly mental health services
- Circuit Court, particularly family court services
- Election Division
- Public Safety
- Community Justice
- Human Services

4. *What additional programs and services does your CBAC see as most critical in COVID-19 recovery?*

We were unsure where else to note these specific services, but we believe that the following will be critical to the community's COVID-19 recovery:

- protecting safe working conditions for essential employees
- protective equipment available to all

## **FY21 TOP THREE PROGRAM OFFERS**

Our top three program recommendations all offer support for the restoration of critical existing, but out-of-target programs:

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**1. 10052H - JOHS - Domestic Violence Emergency Motel Voucher Restoration \$71,100**

This program fills an urgent safety need in our community by providing emergency vouchers for individuals and families facing homelessness due to domestic violence.

**2. 10053K - JOHS - Family System Rent Assistance Restoration \$181,600**

This offer provides housing placement, ongoing support and rental assistance to homeless families. Eligibility is based on immediate safety and overall vulnerability. We recommend this program because it uses culturally specific providers, includes ongoing support to keep families housed and help them avoid the trauma of homelessness.

**3. 10053M - JOHS - Adult System Rent Assistance Restoration \$129,950**

This offer provides housing placement, ongoing support and rental assistance to homeless adults.

In addition to these three program offers, we also want to show our strong support for the Office of Emergency Management and the critical role it plays in our community. In the event of a major emergency in Multnomah County, an area with an elevated risk for a number of natural and man-made disasters, it will be crucial that response plans have been outlined, practiced and communicated to County partners and the public. The current COVID-19 pandemic underscores the importance of preventive planning and a well-coordinated response.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Committee would like to give special thanks to each of the dedicated Commissioners and County employees who presented to us, making time at the end of a busy work day and taking time away from their families. We also offer thanks for the invaluable services of OCI Community Involvement Coordinator Olivia Kilgore in keeping us organized, providing guidance and coordinating our many meetings.