

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

June 25, 2024

FROM

RACHEL HAY, Acting Director, Veterans Affairs

SUBJECT

Grant Award Agreement with the California Department of Veterans Affairs to Support Mental Health Outreach and Services for Veterans

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Accept and approve grant award **Agreement No. 24-571** (State Agreement No. 24XS0014) with the California Department of Veterans Affairs to support mental health outreach and services for veterans, in the amount of \$80,000, for the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026.
2. Authorize the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Chief Executive Officer, or Assistant Executive Officer to execute any non-substantive amendments in relation to the California Department of Veterans Affairs grant award agreement (State Agreement No. 24XS0014) on behalf of the County, subject to review by County Counsel.
3. Direct the Assistant Executive Officer to transmit any non-substantive amendments in relation to the California Department of Veterans Affairs grant award agreement (State Agreement No. 24XS0014) to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors within 30 days of execution.

(Presenter: Rachel Hay, Acting Director, 382-3290)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

Pursue County Goals and Objectives by Working with Other Agencies and Stakeholders.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This item does not impact Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). The grant award in the amount of \$80,000 from the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) provided under the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), does not require a local match. Adequate appropriation and revenue have been included in the Veterans Affairs' (VA) 2024-25 budget and will be included in the 2025-26 recommended budget.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The VA Department provides claims assistance, information, referral, and advocacy and outreach to state residents, primarily from San Bernardino County. It assists veterans with applying for benefits including medical care, life insurance, home loans, pension benefits, disability compensation, education, and vocational rehabilitation; and provides referral assistance to veterans in need of legal services.

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CalVet provides MHSA funding, also known as Proposition 63, to support San Bernardino County (County) mental health programs. As the County's Veterans Service Officer, the VA works closely with CalVet, the State's leading veterans advocate and resource. This grant funding allows for special projects that enhance mental health services, such as providing free legal clinics to veterans to remove legal barriers preventing access to or maintenance of mental health care. The VA will use the CalVet grant award to continue the partnership with Veterans Legal Institute (VLI), a nonprofit organization, in providing free legal clinics for transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.

The current contract with VLI was executed on May 29, 2024, within the Purchasing Agent's authority, in the amount of \$80,000 for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026. These CalVet MHSA grant funds are used to contract with VLI for provision of legal services to qualified transitioning service members, veterans, and their families.

Since 2019, the VA has utilized MHSA funding for the veterans' free legal clinics, provided by VLI, targeting homeless and/or low-income veterans in need of mental health treatment who require direct legal aid, which they could otherwise not afford. The goal of the free legal clinics is to increase the number of homeless, low-income, disabled, and/or at-risk clients who can access or maintain mental health care. The VA and VLI will host a monthly, three-hour free legal aid clinic for a total of 24 clinics over the two-year grant period. The free legal clinics and pro bono legal services are expected to serve 160 clients at an average cost of \$500 per client. While receiving these services, the clients will also receive mental health resource brochures. Additionally, data regarding client services received will be collected via intake forms to be used for management reporting.

On December 15, 2023, the County Administrative Office authorized the submission of the grant application to CalVet for MHSA funds to support veterans' mental health outreach and services, in the amount of \$85,000, for the period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026.

On May 2, 2024, VA received the grant award agreement (State Agreement No. 22XS0014) from CalVet for MHSA funds to support veterans' mental health outreach and services, in the amount of \$80,000, for the two-year period of July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026. CalVet allocated \$270,000 in statewide funding for this grant opportunity; the County was awarded approximately 30% of the total funding available. The award was lower than the amount requested due to CalVet's prioritization of funding for behavioral healthcare for veterans attending a California community college ahead of funding for legal assistance.

Per the terms of the grant, funds will be disbursed quarterly on a reimbursement basis. VA will utilize the funds evenly over the life of the grant, receiving \$10,000 (25% of one year's allocation) per quarter over the two-year grant period. Thus, quarterly funding will only be disbursed after quarterly status reports (including documentation of expenditures) are approved by CalVet.

PROCUREMENT

N/A

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Affairs to Support Mental Health Outreach and Services for Veterans
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REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Adam Ebright, Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on May 21, 2024; Finance (Paul Garcia, Administrative Analyst, 386-8392) on June 4, 2024; and County Finance and Administration (Cheryl Adams, Deputy Executive Officer, 388-0238) on June 6, 2024.

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Record of Action of the Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County

APPROVED (CONSENT CALENDAR)

Moved: Curt Hagman Seconded: Joe Baca, Jr.
Ayes: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.), Jesse Armendarez, Dawn Rowe, Curt Hagman, Joe Baca, Jr.

Lynna Monell, CLERK OF THE BOARD

BY  _____
DATED: June 25, 2024



cc: VA - Abadilla w/ agrees for sign
 Contractor c/o VA w/ agree
 File w/ agree
JLL 07/9/2024