



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: June 29, 2022

SUBJECT: Consideration of Board approval of document #2022-574, an Oregon Health Authority grant.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Move approval of document #2022-574, an Oregon Health Authority grant.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

The Oregon Legislature and Oregon Health Authority have identified that Oregon is in a behavioral health (BH) care workforce crisis. Challenges in delivering services in the high-risk COVID environment and the increasing need for behavioral health care have discouraged qualified individuals from seeking employment with providers serving Oregon's community members who are most vulnerable and impacted by health inequities and injustices. Workforce shortages directly impact the ability of behavioral health care providers to maintain full capacity which, in turn, reduces provider revenues and ability to meet payroll obligations.

Given the urgency of the crisis, House Bill 4004 authorized the Oregon Health Authority to distribute grant funds to behavioral health care providers to increase compensation to the providers' staff and pay hiring and retention bonuses if necessary, to recruit new staff or retain the providers' staff. Applicants must use at least 75% of the grant for direct compensation to staff in the form of wages, benefits, and bonuses, with the remainder (if any) spent on non-compensatory means to increase workforce retention or recruitment. To facilitate administration of the HB 4004 grant program, including the OHA reporting requirements described in this application, applicants will be required to expend all grant funds for authorized purposes by not later than December 1, 2023.

Under the bill, recruitment and retention incentives can apply to the following Behavioral Health positions and support positions:

- Executive Leadership
- Physician/Psychiatrist

- Management (program managers, supervisors, leads)
- Clinical/Medical staff
- Non-clinical staff

Total funds available under this workforce grant are \$3,466,092, with up to 25% (\$866,512) eligible for non-compensatory retention strategies.

Signing and Retention Compensation: (appx. \$2.6 million)

BH and BH support positions are eligible for signing and retention bonuses. Acceptance of any signing or retention bonus shall be voluntary and shall require a stay commitment to be memorialized by a written agreement obligating the employee to work directly for or in support of DCBH.

2 Year Stay Agreement Bonus compensation to be offered as follows:

1. Medical Director and Health Officer - \$20,000 signing bonus with two-year stay agreement;
2. Psychiatrists and Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners, Public Health Nurse IIs (BH programs only) and Behavioral Health Supervisors – signing/retention bonus for \$15,000 with two-year stay agreement;
3. Behavioral Health IIs Licensed and Unlicensed and Data Analysts – signing/retention bonus for \$10,000 with two-year stay agreement;
4. All other eligible BH and BH support staff – signing/retention bonus for \$5,000 with two-year stay agreement, signing bonuses will not be offered;
5. Additional differential for all Crisis Program positions – signing bonus for \$2,000 for two-year stay agreements.

BH Workforce Incentive Program Fund: (\$866,500)

HB 4004 permits up to 25% of total resources to be expended on “non-compensatory means to increase workforce retention or recruitment” strategies. DCHS intends to grant the amount above to a fiscal agent to establish a fund out of which to expend dollars for the following strategies:

- **Tuition Reimbursement:** Tuition reimbursement shall require a minimum two (2) year written agreement obligating the employee to work directly for the Behavioral Health Program and to provide clinical services or be required to pay back a prorated portion of their tuition reimbursement received. Employees are not eligible for tuition reimbursement during the first six (6) months of their probationary period, as defined in Article 5 of the AFSCME Contract. Tuition reimbursement under this fund differs from current county policy in that it provides 100% reimbursement of tuition costs and requires post completion stay agreement with the 100% reimbursement level.
- **Staff Satisfaction and Development:** Funds may be used to cover contract expenditures for on-site wellness activities, and staff development efforts such as Trauma Informed

Care and DEI Training.

- Additional Recruitment Incentives: If adequate resources remain, funds may be used to reimburse further recruitment incentives beyond the December deadline.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

\$3,466,092, with up to 25% (\$866,512) eligible for non-compensatory retention strategies.

ATTENDANCE:

Janice Garceau, Director, Behavioral Health Division

Cheryl Smallman, Health Services Business Officer