



Legislation Text

File #: 24-1995, Version: 1

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 16, 2024

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER /s/

FROM: KATE GARVEY, DIRECTOR,
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND HUMAN SERVICES

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Grant Application to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration for the Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act Grant.

ISSUE: City Council's authorization of an application and acceptance of funds, if awarded, to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) grant award for the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA), housed within Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS). The proposed grant activities will serve to expand and strengthen efforts to prevent and reduce alcohol use among youth and young adults ages 12 to 20. DCHS would be the fiscal agent for this grant.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council:

1. Authorize the application and potential acceptance of the grant award for funding to DCHS in the amount of \$240,000 for the duration of four years to implement underage alcohol-use prevention programming in the City of Alexandria. There is no match required for this grant;
2. Approve the addition of one part-time (0.5 FTE) Management Analyst II to manage the implementation of the grant project that will be fully supported by grant revenues if the competitive request is successful; and
3. Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required.

BACKGROUND: The funding notice for this grant opportunity was issued by SAMHSA on March 4, 2024. SAPCA learned of this opportunity on March 6, 2024, with the application due date of May 4, 2024. The grant

funding supports projects that prevent and reduce alcohol use among youth and young adults ages 12 to 20 by expanding and strengthening community capacity to develop and deliver community-based substance misuse prevention services. DCHS received a Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act Grant award from SAMHSA in the amount of \$200,000, for four years in April 2020. The acceptance of this grant would enable SAPCA to continue and enhance related work carried out during the 2020 to 2024 funding period.

DISCUSSION: SAPCA expects to submit the grant application requesting the maximum four-year award amount of \$240,000. The proposal included prevention strategies based on current youth substance misuse prevention research.

Primary prevention is a set of approaches that can be employed before the onset of youth substance use to prevent adverse health, legal, and social consequences to children, youth, and families. Primary prevention includes building an environment that encourages well-being and healthy choices.

Communities that implement substance use prevention strategies through a primary prevention approach can help reduce the onset of youth substance use and its lasting, harmful effects; prevent the onset of diagnosable mental health disorders; promote protective factors and healthy behaviors that support children, youth, and families to be physically safe and healthy, academically successful, and career ready; and reduce risk factors that can lead to negative outcomes for children, youth, and families. Strategies included in the grant to prevent youth alcohol use include:

- *Performing targeted outreach and education in the City of Alexandria through the development of printed materials and educational presentations using data to identify sectors in the community who are most at risk.*
- *Promoting social norms that protect against youth substance use, including highlighting local data that shows most youth in Alexandria choose to be alcohol-free.*
- *Reducing youth access to alcohol through media campaigns and service-learning projects for youth.*
- *Coordinating with school and community partners to distribute resources to parents to provide tips for fostering open parent-child communication and discussing difficult topics.*
- *Providing opportunities to empower and support underserved youth through positive alternative activities and leadership opportunities for middle and high school students.*

The overall program goal is to implement primary prevention strategies that increase protective factors and decrease risk factors among youth, resulting in the ability to reduce risky behaviors and impulsive decision-making.

Consistent with one of the grant conditions, SAPCA will continue existing community-based partnerships to provide evidence-based prevention programs.

The partners are:

- *Alexandria City Public Schools*
- *Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Activities*

- *Alexandria Police Department*
- *Alexandria Sheriff's Office*

This grant application is consistent with the City Council Strategic Plan (Support Youth and Families) and the Alexandria Children and Youth Community Plan 2025 (Goals One, Two, and Three) and in alignment with advancing Youth Safety and Resiliency efforts.

FISCAL IMPACT: The budget for this grant is \$240,000 for the entirety of the grant. The grant period is September 30, 2024, to September 29, 2028, with no required matching funds. The city is responsible for the normal administrative costs associated with this grant. These costs include financial and reporting oversight provided by DCHS, the administering agency. Existing administrative staff will provide these functions.

Grant funding will be used for personnel, program facilitation, grant-required training, and supplies/materials. The individual who fills the grant-funded position will be notified that the position may terminate if grant funds become unavailable in the future.

ATTACHMENTS: None.

STAFF:

Alethea Predeoux, Deputy City Manager
Federico Gutierrez, Deputy Director, DCHS
Barbara Paulson, Director, Center for Children and Families, DCHS
Raphael Obenwa, Fiscal Officer III, DCHS
Nancy Sarpong, Fiscal Officer II, DCHS
Noraine Buttar, Division Chief, Youth Development Team, DCHS
Emma Beall, Management Analyst III, DCHS