
**SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

SUBJECT: Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Grant Program

DEPARTMENT: Community Services

DIVISION: Administration - Community Services

AUTHORIZED BY: Joe Forte

CONTACT: Michele Saunders

EXT: 2301

MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Approve to partner with Seminole Behavioral Healthcare to submit a grant application to the US Department of Justice for their Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Grant Program; and authorize the Chairman to execute supporting documents.

County-wide

Michele Saunders

BACKGROUND:

The US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance provides matching grants to communities to develop and implement jail diversion initiatives for people with serious mental illnesses and/or those with co-occurring substance abuse and mental illness. This grant supports a variety of law enforcement and criminal justice initiatives, including the establishment of Mental Health Courts. The grant requires a partnership among the county government, a mental health provider, in this case Seminole Behavioral Healthcare, and other community stakeholders including criminal justice leaders, providers of services and families and consumers of services, which are represented by the Seminole County Mental Health Task Force. These partners will hereinafter be referred to as "the Collaboration".

The Collaboration, through its meetings and strategic planning process intend to develop a Mental Health Court for Seminole County. This Mental Health Court will compliment the other diversion initiatives currently in place including the Crisis Intervention Team, post booking diversion and discharge planning from the jail.

The Collaboration proposes to apply for a Planning and Implementation grant to help them get the process underway. This grant would fund the development of a formal Strategic Plan for the development of the Mental Health Court (six months at \$50,000), and the initial implementation of the Court (two years at up to \$100,000 per year) which will provide 2 FTE's that will coordinate and oversee services.

Suggested goals of the Mental Health Court may include:

1. Increase Public Safety – Reduced criminal activity by persons with mental illnesses means fewer crime victims in the community.
2. Increase Treatment Engagement – Persons with mental illnesses often find themselves under arrest because they are not receiving treatment for their illness.
3. Improve Quality of Life – Persons with mental illnesses who receive treatment can and do achieve recovery, including stable housing, relationships, and employment.

The Collaboration will use these suggested Goals as a starting point for the development of Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes specific to Seminole County's Mental Health Court, as part of the Strategic Planning process.

This grant requires a 20% match from the participating stakeholders for the first two years and a 40% match for the third year. Matching funds can be in-kind. Seminole Behavioral Healthcare along with the collaborating partners will provide the matching funds through in-kind resources.

Sustainability for the Mental Health Court beyond the grant period will be a major focus of the Strategic Planning process. For the Collaboration to obtain funding from other State and/or Federal sources, it will be essential to demonstrate the Court's efficiency and effectiveness in very concrete and measurable terms. These data will serve as justification for other funding and grant applications. Grants and Medicaid reimbursements will be explored to sustain this effort.

Should the grant be awarded, Seminole County would enter into an agreement with Seminole Behavioral Healthcare to define the responsibilities of each agency.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Approve to partner with Seminole Behavioral Healthcare to submit a grant application to the US Department of Justice for their Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Grant Program; and authorize the Chairman to execute supporting documents.

Additionally Reviewed By:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant Review (Jennifer Bero, Lisa Spriggs)