



# Oregon

Governor Kate Brown

## Housing and Community Services

North Mall Office Building  
725 Summer St NE, Suite B  
Salem, OR 97301-1266  
PHONE: (503) 986-2000  
FAX: (503) 986-2020  
TTY: (503) 986-2100  
[www.ohcs.oregon.gov](http://www.ohcs.oregon.gov)

January 12, 2018

The Honorable Senator Peter Courtney, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Representative Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair  
Interim Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
900 Court Street NE  
H-178 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

### **Nature of the Request**

Housing and Community Services Department (OHCS) and Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) are requesting permission to present a joint proposal for investment of \$1.5 million in Lottery Funds that will result in long-term housing stability for veterans.

### **Agency Action**

A budget note was approved in the budgets of both OHCS and ODVA directing the agencies to work together to develop a plan to advise the Legislature on strategic investments of federal, state (including Measure 96 Lottery dollars), and local funds to address homelessness and housing issues for veterans.

Over the past nine months, OHCS and ODVA have worked in partnership to research best practices, engage with local, state, and federal leaders, and develop an interactive map of current veteran resources. The two agencies also jointly hosted the Oregon Homeless Veteran Providers & Partners Convening in December 2017, which brought together more than 80 leaders from across Oregon.

The result of this work is a proposal that includes investment in technical assistance and outreach, which are critical to supporting local efforts and building lasting infrastructure, while also contributing to critical homeless services and permanent housing opportunities. OHCS and ODVA are developing an action plan that is based on U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) criteria.

The plan has four main investment components, including establishing a Veterans' Homelessness Integrator position, increased funding through community action agencies, community technical assistance and consultation, and creating permanent housing for homeless veterans. A summary of the four components is included below.



I. The limited duration Integrator position will provide leadership for Oregon's Initiative to End Veterans Homelessness and assist local communities through key stakeholder engagement. The position will be needed for 24 months and continue into the 2019-21 biennium, for an investment of \$240,000. Research from USICH shows that jurisdictions that have ended homelessness for veterans have designated staff whose sole responsibility is to lead the initiative by working with the multiple systems to ensure coordinated and streamlined service access and delivery.

II. OHCS received \$350,000 at the close of the 2017 Legislative Session as an initial investment to provide immediate services to veterans at risk of or experiencing to homelessness. These funds were distributed to the statewide network of community action agencies and have the same service components and requirements as the Emergency Housing Assistance (EHA) program. Awards to current grantees allowed for quick distribution and enhanced local efforts to reduce veteran homelessness.

III. The proposal also dedicates \$150,000 to deliver targeted technical assistance. OHCS will engage a consultant with experience in assisting states and communities to develop data on homelessness, optimize local housing resources, track progress, and accelerate the utilization of proven strategies. Regional and local communities are in different stages of readiness to end veteran homelessness as defined by USICH. In order to meet USICH national benchmarks, communities require increased knowledge and capacity to deliver necessary assistance, engage key stakeholders, and collect and analyze data necessary to direct investments and monitor progress.

IV. Finally, with the remaining \$760,000, OHCS will create additional permanent housing for veterans who are homeless and/or at risk of homelessness. As communities throughout Oregon are facing severe housing shortages, the creation of new homes is a critical component of the work to place veterans in permanent housing. The Legislature communicated a strong interest for a portion of the funds to be allocated to permanent housing, which is a strategy successfully deployed in other states and jurisdictions to end veteran homelessness. These funds will be added to an OHCS Multifamily Housing Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), to be released in early 2018.

#### **Action Requested**

OHCS requests to make a joint presentation with ODVA to the Committee with more details on each component of the proposal, the work performed by the two agencies, and the timelines for the next steps in the process.

#### **Legislation Affected**

OHCS will require \$1,150,000 in Lottery Funds limitation and amendment to ORS Chapter 570, 2017 laws.

We look forward to presenting to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means at such time as is appropriate. We are happy in the meantime to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'MS', is written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Margaret Solle Salazar, Director

cc: Ken Rocco, Legislative Fiscal Office  
Michelle Deister, Legislative Fiscal Office  
James LaBar, Office of Governor Brown  
George Naughton, Department of Administrative Services  
Catherine Connolly, Department of Administrative Services