



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

AGENDA ITEM

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

GREG COX
First District

DIANNE JACOB
Second District

KRISTIN GASPAR
Third District

NATHAN FLETCHER
Fourth District

JIM DESMOND
Fifth District

DATE: October 15, 2019

03

TO: Board of Supervisors

SUBJECT:

APPROVAL OF THE COMMUNITY CARE COORDINATION FOR VETERANS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR SUCCESSFUL REENTRY (DISTRICTS: ALL)

OVERVIEW

San Diego County is home to the largest concentration of active duty military service members and veterans in the world, with over 241,000 veterans residing in the region in 2018. While most veterans are thriving members of our community, at any given time there are hundreds of veterans in local jails due to complex issues who may need additional support and resources to reintegrate into the community and find long-term stability. The Board of Supervisors (Board) is committed to providing enhanced resources and supportive services to local veterans. In 2013, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and community providers implemented the Veterans Moving Forward (VMF) program. The VMF program assists incarcerated veterans by providing necessary in-custody treatment, services, and community linkages to reduce the cycle of incarceration. The program was developed with the goal of structuring an environment for veterans to draw upon the positive aspects of their shared military culture, create a safe place for healing and rehabilitation, and foster positive peer connections.

In March 2019, after a review of the VMF program, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) released *Veterans Moving Forward: Process and Impact Evaluation Results of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department VMF Program Summary Overview*. While the report found that the program demonstrated a successful collaborative approach between the Sheriff's Department, the VA, and community providers, the evaluation identified some areas that could be strengthened to give veterans transitioning out of custody additional support to increase their success in the community. These included meeting basic needs, housing, and employment, among others.

On June 4, 2019 (01), in an action led by Supervisors Kristin Gaspar and Jim Desmond, the Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer to address these gaps by enhancing the VMF program. Specifically, they identified the Community Care Coordination (C3) program as a framework to be used to address the barriers of housing, connections to services, and financial stability for VMF participants. The C3 framework, adopted by the Board on September 11, 2018 (06), addresses the unmet needs of individuals that are homeless, have a serious mental illness, and are involved in

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the justice system. In addition, the Board also directed the development of enhanced vocational opportunities for participants exiting the VMF program to help establish pathways for job opportunities for veterans returning to the community.

If approved, today's requested action would accept a proposed *C3 for Veterans* Implementation Plan which will enhance the VMF program using a peer support team to increase connections to services and reduce recidivism through housing assistance, care coordination, and increased opportunities for vocational training for local veterans. In addition, today's recommendation requests authority to carry out the Implementation Plan through a competitively procured contract. This item supports the *Live Well San Diego* vision of healthy, safe, and thriving communities by improving the lives of veterans to help increase self-sufficiency and reduce recidivism through comprehensive care coordination and access to safe and affordable housing.

**RECOMMENDATION(S)
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER**

1. Accept the *C3 for Veterans* Implementation Plan.
2. In accordance with Board Policy A-87, Competitive Procurement, approve and authorize the Director, Department of Purchasing and Contracting, to issue a Request for Proposals and subject to successful negotiations and a determination of a fair and reasonable price, award a contract(s) for Community Care Coordination program services for veterans exiting the Veterans Moving Forward program at Vista Detention Facility, for an initial term of up to one year with up to four one-year option periods and up to six month option to extend, and to amend the contract(s) as needed to reflect changes to service levels and funding, subject to the approval of the Agency Director, Health and Human Services Agency.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funds for this request are not included in the Fiscal Year 2019-21 Operational Plan in the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA). If approved, this request will result in no change in costs and revenue in Fiscal Year 2019-20 and costs of approximately \$1,200,000 in Fiscal Year 2020-21. Funds for subsequent years of approximately \$1,200,000 in Fiscal Year 2020-21 and \$2,200,000 annually in Fiscal Year 2021-22 through Fiscal Year 2024-25 will be incorporated into the Fiscal Year 2020-22 CAO Recommended Operational Plan and future operational plans. The funding source is Realignment. There will be no change in net General Fund cost and no additional staff years.

BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

ADVISORY BOARD STATEMENT

This will be presented as an informational item at the Military and Veterans Advisory Committee meeting on October 12, 2019.

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BACKGROUND

San Diego is home to the largest concentration of active duty military service members and veterans in the world, with over 241,000 veterans residing in the region in 2018. While most veterans are thriving members of our community, at any given time there are hundreds of veterans in local jails due to complex issues who need additional support and resources to reintegrate into the community and find long-term stability. Over the past three years, there has been an increase in the number of veterans booked into the County's detention facilities. In 2018, there were 637 veterans booked into local custody with an average of three bookings per veteran; the vast majority of which are men. Difficulties in reintegration following military service can negatively impact the lives of veterans in multiple ways, contributing to unemployment, relationship issues, substance use, mental illness, and unstable housing. A combination of these variables, along with the lack of adequate support, can contribute to veterans entering and cycling through the criminal justice system.

The Board of Supervisors (Board) is committed to providing enhanced resources and supportive services to local veterans. In 2013, the San Diego County Sheriff's Department, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and community providers implemented the Veterans Moving Forward (VMF) program. The VMF program is a veteran-only, incentive-based housing unit for male inmates who served in the United States military and are held at the Vista Detention Facility. The VMF program is viewed as a form of incentive-based housing in which a living environment of responsibility and accountability is promoted, and positive participation and behavior is rewarded through quality of life privileges and responsibilities. The program provides a structured environment for veterans to draw upon the positive aspects of their shared military culture, creates a safe place for healing and rehabilitation, and fosters positive peer connections. The VMF program served 258 veterans in 2018 with an average length of stay in the program of 119 days. While in the program, the veterans participate in mandatory rehabilitative programming focusing on criminogenic risks and needs, as well as programs to increase quality of life, such as yoga, meditation, and art. All veterans in the program have access to a VMF Sheriff's Counselor who provides one-on-one services, as well as access to VA and Office Military and Veteran's Affairs staff to assist with applications and linkages to benefits and other resources based on eligibility.

In March 2019, after a review of the VMF program, the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) released *Veterans Moving Forward: Process and Impact Evaluation Results of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department VMF Program Summary Overview*. The evaluation found that the VMF program was dedicated to assisting incarcerated male veterans by providing in-custody treatment, services, and community linkages to reduce their chance of incarceration. While the evaluation highlighted positive aspects of the program, the SANDAG report also outlined areas for improvement. At the six-month follow-up, 23% of participants reported they were living in their own residence; 24% with family, a friend, or significant other; 44% in some type of group situation; and 8% reported they were living on the street. Of the veterans who said they were homeless at intake, nearly one in four still described their predominant housing status as homeless at follow-up. Based on this and other data, the report indicated some areas for improvement including meeting basic needs, housing, and employment.

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On June 4, 2019 (01), in an action led by Supervisors Kristin Gaspar and Jim Desmond, the Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer develop a plan to enhance the VMF program. Specifically, they identified the Community Care Coordination (C3) program as a framework to be used to address the barriers of housing, connections to services, and financial stability for VMF participants as well as directed enhanced vocational opportunities for participants exiting the VMF program to help establish pathways for job opportunities for veterans returning to the community.

The C3 framework was adopted by the Board on September 11, 2018 (06), to address the unmet needs of individuals that are homeless, have a serious mental illness, and are involved in the justice system. The C3 model includes intensive peer-led supportive services to provide comprehensive care coordination, system navigation, and access to housing. Participants are assisted with basic needs, like transportation, assistance accessing benefits, and healthcare. Services address both immediate housing needs and navigation to permanent housing opportunities. Barriers to employment are addressed through system navigation to link participants to mental health treatment, substance use treatment, vocational services, education, and job placement. The goal of C3 is to improve the client's quality of life, reduce the risk of recidivating, and diminish the impact of unstable housing, untreated mental health, substance use, and physical health issues.

The proposed *C3 for Veterans* Implementation Plan was developed with a multi-sectoral group of stakeholders including Sheriff's Department, a successful former VMF participant, the VA, the Probation Department, and the Health and Human Services Agency's Division of Integrative Services and Office of Military and Veteran Affairs. The Implementation Plan details the following components:

- In-reach and Engagement: C3 Teams begin building rapport and building trusting relationships with participants prior to release from jail.
- Peer-led Care Coordination and System Navigation: Pre-release plans are created prior to the participant's release from custody to address immediate housing needs and linkages to community support.
- Housing Assistance and Placement: C3 Teams identify both short- and long-term housing resources with the goal of assisting participants with securing a permanent housing solution to prevent them from returning to the streets.
- Financial Stability: C3 Teams help participants with enrolling in educational programs, job training, and apprenticeship opportunities to support obtaining and maintaining employment.
- Outcome Measures: Measurement through multiple data points are collected to provide both short- and long-term feedback on the participants and on the community.

The *C3 for Veterans* program uses a peer model that includes teams comprised of a Case Manager and Peer Support Specialists. The C3 Teams will serve veterans exiting the VMF program and reintegrating back into their communities of origin throughout the region. The C3 Teams will provide 24-hour peer support; access to immediate housing for veterans identified as homeless or at-risk of homelessness; connections to services, such as substance use and mental health

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treatment; as well as ensuring basic needs are met. The budget for this pilot is built off the existing C3 model and SANDAG's data that 21% of VMF participants were homeless at time of arrest. The *C3 for Veterans* program detailed in the Implementation Plan will serve a minimum 50 veterans in the first implementation year, with an anticipated program expansion in the second and subsequent years of the program to serve a minimum of 125 veterans per year. This number is based on the Sheriff's Department identifying between 10 and 15 veterans exiting the VMF module each month.

To address the Supervisors' direction related to expanding vocational opportunities for participants in the VMF program and establish new pathways for job opportunities for veterans returning to the community, Sheriff's staff consulted with Palomar College and reviewed community workforce needs to develop new vocational programming. As part of the program design for new vocational training, the Sheriff's Department also reviewed the June 4, 2019 (01), Board direction to identify and provide additional vocational training space for the VMF program at the Vista Detention Facility but determined it would be more feasible and effective to implement the new programming in existing space in the VMF unit. Through a new agreement, Palomar College will provide instruction in pre-apprentice courses to VMF program participants in-custody. Participants can then continue the pre-apprentice program at Palomar College or other community colleges, preparing for paid apprenticeships and careers as electricians, sheet metal workers and carpenters. This component is included in the Financial Stability component of the *C3 for Veterans* Implementation Plan.

Today's recommendation would accept the *C3 for Veterans* Implementation Plan and reinforce our Board's commitment to support our local veterans. The proposed Implementation Plan addresses the identified gaps in the VMF program and strengthens the community support system provided to veterans as they reintegrate into the community, ultimately reducing recidivism. In addition, today's recommendation requests authority to carry out the Implementation Plan through a competitively procured contract.

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LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO STRATEGIC PLAN

Today's item supports the Building Better Health and Living Safely Initiatives of the County of San Diego's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan by promoting the health and well-being of veterans who have been involved in the justice system by providing intensive care coordination services that are peer-led and person-centered, to connect them to housing, supportive services, and vocational training.

Respectfully submitted,



HELEN N. ROBBINS-MEYER
Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment A - C3 for Veterans Implementation Plan

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AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET

REQUIRES FOUR VOTES: Yes No

WRITTEN DISCLOSURE PER COUNTY CHARTER SECTION 1000.1 REQUIRED

Yes No

PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOARD ACTIONS:

June 4, 2019 (1) Board direction to establish implementation plan for Community Care Coordination Services for participants of the Veterans Moving Forward program and September 11, 2018 (06), the Board authorized the competitive solicitation for Community Care Coordination services

BOARD POLICIES APPLICABLE:

A-87 Competitive Procurement

BOARD POLICY STATEMENTS:

N/A

MANDATORY COMPLIANCE:

N/A

ORACLE AWARD NUMBER(S) AND CONTRACT AND/OR REQUISITION NUMBER(S):

N/A

ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT: Health and Human Services Agency

OTHER CONCURRENCE(S): Public Safety Group
Department of Purchasing and Contracting

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