



# Pinellas County

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 16-1569A, **Version:** 1

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### **Subject:**

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant award to expand and enhance Veterans Treatment Court.

### **Recommended Action:**

Approve a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) three-year grant award for the Pinellas County Veterans Treatment Court and the corresponding Statement of Assurance.

The grant amount is \$975,000 (\$325,000 per year), and no match is required.

### **Strategic Plan:**

Ensure Public Health, Safety and Welfare

2.2 Be a facilitator, convener, and purchaser of services for those in need

2.3 Provide comprehensive services to connect our veterans and dependents to the benefits they have earned

### **Summary:**

This is a three-year grant award to expand and enhance the Pinellas Veterans Treatment Court (VTC). The population to be served by the VTC is adult veterans (males and females) of all ages, races and ethnicities, who are diagnosed with substance use disorder as their primary condition. The expansion and enhancement of the VTC will allow for an increased number of individuals to be served, decreased recidivism rates, decreased criminal justice involvement, and improved individual and family functioning among participants.

As part of the acceptance of this Award, the County must submit a Statement of Assurance regarding Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) by October 31, 2016.

### **Background Information:**

Pinellas County continues to see significant levels of addiction and substance abuse requiring treatment resources. In 2015, the Medical Examiner reported 179 accidental deaths attributed to drug-related causes. Of these deaths, 98 were attributed to prescription drugs, 28 to illicit drugs, 41 to prescription and illicit drugs combined, 10 to acute alcohol, and 2 to inhalants. While this is down from a peak of 280 deaths in 2010, this is a slight increase from the 166 deaths reported in 2014.

With the ongoing demand for treatment exceeding available resources, seeking additional grant funding helps to alleviate increased pressures on local funding. Through a cooperative partnership between the Sixth Judicial Circuit Court, Pinellas County, and local providers, this new VTC grant helps to bridge the demand and provides critical services for veterans.

In 2013, the County was originally awarded a SAMHSA VTC grant, which has been extended through October 31, 2016. As of July 2016, the project has admitted 102 clients in the grant-funded portion of the VTC, attaining 94.5% of its total enrollment goal of 110 during the three-year funding period. This

new, three-year award will help to expand on local efforts to stabilize and serve our veteran population.

The Department of Veterans Affairs reports that Pinellas County is home to approximately 92,584 veterans. Additionally, from January 2015 through October 2015 alone, Pinellas County found 1,315 veterans enter the jail. Since post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, military sexual trauma, depression and anxiety are prevalent among those who have served in the Armed Forces, an emphasis will be placed on veterans with co-occurring disorders (e.g. substance use and mental health disorders) who are currently experiencing or have experienced trauma.

Up to 120 U.S. Military Veterans will be served over the life of the grant (40 annually), representing a 40% increase in the number of veterans that the Pinellas VTC is able to serve with state funding alone. The County is partnering with the Sixth Judicial Circuit Court and will contract with WestCare and Solutions Behavioral Healthcare for evaluation, treatment, mentoring and family counseling services; and with Pinellas Ex-Offender Re-Entry Coalition for a Veterans Employment Specialist.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The award amount is \$975,000.00 (\$325,000.00 per year for three years), which includes indirect costs to the County in the amount of \$11,747.00 per year, to offset administrative costs. There is no cash match required under the grant.

A budget resolution will transfer the Pinellas Veterans Treatment Court Grant revenue into the budget of Human Services, Justice Coordination.

**Staff Member Responsible:**

Lourdes Benedict, Director, Human Services

**Partners:**

Sixth Judicial Circuit Court of Florida

WestCare Gulfcoast-Florida, Inc.

Wayne A. Grosnick & Associates, Inc. d/b/a Solutions Behavioral Healthcare Consultants

Pinellas Ex-Offender Re-Entry Coalition, Inc.

**Attachments:**

Notice of Award of August 30, 2016

Statement of Assurance