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Dane County Creates \$5 Million Covid-19 Relief Grant Program for Local Non-Profits Aiding Underserved Communities

Today, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi announced that Dane County is creating a \$5 million Covid-19 Relief Grant Program to help local organizations recover from the pandemic. The program will provide relief to local, human service focused non-profit organizations to bolster their service delivery efforts to the Dane County community.

“Local non-profits have worked hard over the past 16 months of the Covid-19 pandemic to serve our community and meet Dane County residents’ needs,” Dane County Executive Joe Parisi said. “Through this grant program, we hope to help them recover from the impacts of the last year and bolster their ability to support underserved communities in Dane County.”

The program will allocate one-time grants to Dane County non-profit agencies to bolster their efforts to meet client service and community needs impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Only Dane County non-profit agencies providing service to underserved communities are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity. The intent of this initiative is to support emerging organizations doing community-based work during the pandemic that has been unreimbursed by existing state and local funding to this point. The proposed grant design reflects the need to institute supports quickly and includes flexibility to address the needs of individual non-profit agencies.

This \$5 million initiative intends to assist non-profit efforts to deliver direct service to clients and consumers. Allowable grant activities include the following:

- Expansion of, or needed adaptation to, any current operating expenses in order meet emerging client service needs or opportunities in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. Expansion of staffing or supports with grant funds would end following the grant period.
- Permanent housing costs not covered by Emergency Rental Assistance funds such as move-in costs and meeting household needs, including purchase of furniture.
- Resource linkage or navigation—activities designed to connect individuals and families to services and/or resources.
- Food security activities—activities designed to address food insecurity and support food pantries and other local food resources in low-income areas.
- Direct service materials and supplies—purchase of agency supplies to meet direct service needs.
- Basic needs allocations for clients to help promote safety and wellbeing.

To be eligible for the funding, an agency must be a registered 501c3 or be applying through a fiscal agent that is a registered 501c3, and have a main office based in Dane County. Funding allocation will be through a grant application administered by the Dane County Department of Human Services. The goal is to fund all grant applications meeting the stated criteria. Minimum grant awards will be \$50,000 with no maximum. If grant requests exceed available revenue, priority will be given to agencies with 2019 operating budgets under \$250,000 and to agencies serving low-income clients and neighborhoods.

The resolution to create Dane County's Non-Profit Covid-19 Relief Grant Program for human service focused non-profits is expected to be approved by the Dane County Board in July. Following approval, grant applications will be posted online and due by August 13. Awardees will be announced by August 31, with recipients able to use the funds through December 2022.

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