

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Set Free Alaska****Federal Tax ID: 26-4350361****Project Title:****Project Type: New Construction and Land Acquisition**

Set Free Alaska - Alaska Recidivism Reduction and Recovery Project

Project Sponsor(s):**House District: 7 / D****FY2021 State Funding Request: \$14,994,570**

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

The Alaska Recidivism Reduction and Recovery Project is a comprehensive intervention addressing the primary risk factors of ongoing criminal activity and substance abuse within an innovative therapeutic campus model and a mobile health platform.

Funding Plan:

Total Project Cost:	\$16,494,570
Funding Already Secured:	(\$1,500,000)
FY2021 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$14,994,570)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$0

Funding Details:

2020 Mat-Su Health Foundation transferred property deed to Set Free Alaska. Property purchased for \$1,500,000.

An additional \$1,200,000 was secured for existing building improvements in 2018 and 2019 from Rasmuson Foundation, Murdock Charitable Trust, Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority, and the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

Detailed Project Description and Justification:**Problem Statement**

In Alaska, thousands of formerly incarcerated individuals struggling with addiction continue to commit crimes and abuse drugs and alcohol. Throughout the development of Senate Bill 91 and the subsequent passing of House Bill 49, the need to address ongoing criminal activity and substance abuse in Alaska was widely recognized. However, the state continues to significantly lack the community-based infrastructure and service capacity to effectively meet the needs of individuals with addiction disorders at risk of ongoing criminal activity.

The relationship between substance abuse and incarceration in Alaska is clear: 80% of all individuals in the state's correctional system have a substance abuse disorder [1]. Upon exiting the institution, these individuals are often given the same soiled clothes they wore upon admission and are asked to redefine their entire lives while somehow maintaining their sobriety. As most formerly incarcerated individuals are unable to effectively access appropriate substance abuse treatment, secure safe and sober housing, achieve economic viability, and connect with supportive peer networks [2], a return to

criminal activity and substance abuse is highly probable.

Within the first two weeks after release, formerly incarcerated individuals with addiction disorders are 129 times more likely to die of a drug overdose [3]. Should they survive this period, 61% of these individuals in Alaska will be reincarcerated within the next three years [4]. Beyond three years, the Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that 83% of these individuals will likely be rearrested with an average of five arrests per person [5]. This data suggests that both the acute period (0-3 years) and the prolonged period (4-9 years) are critical need areas.

The economic cost and social impact of crime attributed to drug and alcohol misuse in Alaska is substantial. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority [6] recently reported that 25,450 Alaskans were victims of crimes directly attributed to drug and alcohol misuse in 2017. The total cost of these crimes to the victims and to Alaska's criminal justice system was over \$2.3 billion dollars with the average total cost per crime of \$90,923.

Unfortunately, 92% of all individuals returning to incarceration in Alaska still require substance abuse treatment [4]. This statistic is the highest in the United States and further highlights the significant lack of community-based services for a population at high risk of ongoing criminal activity and substance abuse. Until community-based service capacity is increased, these Alaskans will continue to be trapped in a vicious and costly cycle of criminal activity and substance abuse resulting in more victims, longer prison sentences, and even death.

Project Description

The Alaska Recidivism Reduction and Recovery Project is a comprehensive intervention addressing the primary risk factors of ongoing criminal activity and substance abuse within an innovative therapeutic campus model and a mobile health platform.

The mission of the project is to facilitate individual and family restoration, improve public safety, and decrease crime related to substance abuse in Alaska.

The vision of the project is that Alaskans with addiction disorders experience the truth of their self-worth, thrive to the fullest of their potential, and become powerful forces for good in their families and in their communities.

Strategy

Serving adults with addiction disorders at risk of ongoing criminal activity, Set Free Alaska will provide a comprehensive treatment model that includes:

1. Certified Peer Support -- Direct connection with an individual with lived experience and peer groups who have successfully overcome addiction and criminal behaviors.
2. Co-Occurring Substance Abuse Treatment -- Rapid access to therapeutic, individualized, and trauma-informed addiction treatment.
3. Supportive Housing Environment -- Access to living in a safe, stable, and supportive recovery residence.
4. Economic Viability -- Access to individualized education, training, and career placement opportunities.

5. Intensive Case Management -- Assistance in accessing services such as medical care, pain management, dental care, public assistance, and other necessary supports.

6. Positive Community Connection -- Assistance in overcoming existing social stigmas and barriers to developing meaningful community relationships apart from treatment.

7. Emerging Technology Support -- Real-time access to critical ongoing supports through a mobile health platform and unified resource database.

Set Free Alaska's trained peer support workers will assist individuals as they transition into treatment and living on the therapeutic campus. While living on campus, individuals will receive personalized addiction treatment; have the opportunity to participate in education, training, and career placement; and will be assisted in accessing other needed services.

Participants will live on the therapeutic campus and engage in services for an average of 6-12 months, longer if needed. All services will be individualized through a highly effective and tested, person-centered model and a trauma informed, mind-body-spirit approach to recovery.

In addition to individual wellness and economic viability, a strong focus will be placed on community and relational reintegration. Peer support workers will serve as strategic relational bridges to positive community support networks apart from the treatment environment. The therapeutic campus will also routinely host community events to facilitate connection and reintegration opportunities.

An innovative mobile health platform will be utilized to bolster the therapeutic process throughout the participants' experience on the Set Free Alaska campus. The mobile platform will also be used to provide critical access to ongoing supports and resources during the community reintegration process and long after program completion.

What happens next? A high priority will be dedicated to creating a robust long-term restoration strategy and community safety net to ensure participants are able to maintain their success and progress far beyond their time on the therapeutic campus. Long-term participant success, and the ability to track and assess it, is a substantial dynamic of the project's evaluation component and logic model.

Structure

The project will utilize an innovative therapeutic campus model to be located on Set Free Alaska's 11 acre property in the Mat-Su Borough. The property currently holds Set Free Alaska's outpatient treatment headquarters and the Valley Oaks Residential Treatment Center for Women.

The capital project request includes the development of two 14-plex recovery residence facilities; a level 3.1 low-intensity residential treatment home; an education, training, and community facility; and additional outpatient treatment offices on the same location.

The request also includes information technology infrastructure and the creation of a mobile health platform developed in partnership with Oracle Global Public Sector, Apex IT, and the 61Sixty Social Impact Lab. In addition to providing real-time access to cutting-edge wrap-around support, the mobile health platform also enables the ability to develop long-term data

analytics and ongoing outcome metric assessments.

Given Alaska's great geographic barriers for accessing treatment and the rapid expansion of cellular technology in remote areas, the mobile health platform may also provide an effective pathway for providing therapeutic and confidential substance abuse treatment in rural and remote areas of the state.

Results

The increased infrastructure will enable Set Free Alaska to provide peer support, substance abuse treatment, stable housing, career development, community reintegration, and ongoing support to approximately 200-250 Alaskans per year.

A high priority will be placed on establishing and utilizing a long-range outcomes-based metrics and evaluation system in order to effectively track participant progress over a substantial period of time and provide clear, ongoing performance feedback to key stakeholders and funders. Comprehensive evaluation will occur with input from subject matter experts at the University of Southern California, the University of Virginia - School of Medicine, the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, and Amplify Civic Advisors.

Project Justification

Set Free Alaska is a highly trusted nonprofit and a leading addiction treatment provider in the state of Alaska. Governor Dunleavy recently declared Set Free Alaska as a gold standard for effectiveness in substance abuse treatment. The agency was also esteemed with a 2018 Legislative Citation for its noteworthy success and outstanding community impact. This year, Set Free Alaska will serve nearly 1,000 Alaskans within its various State certified programs. Many of these individuals will find freedom from addiction for the first time.

Potential Financial Benefits

Cost of Crime and Incarceration: The U.S. Council of Economic Advisors [7] reports that community-based substance abuse treatment programs can reduce the cost of incarceration and the cost of crime simultaneously. The reduction of incarceration costs by community-based substance abuse treatment programs constitutes a value of \$5.27 for every taxpayer dollar spent.

For every 200 individuals the project prevents from committing a new crime attributed to drugs and alcohol (\$90,923 per crime) [6], an estimated \$18.1 million in savings may be achieved.

Net Economic Benefit: The reported average net economic benefit generated from substance abuse treatment is \$160,000 per person [8]. For every 200 successful participants, the project may generate an additional \$32 million in estimated economic impact.

The Value of Community-Based Infrastructure

In their renowned report on mass incarceration in the United States, Sawyer and Wagner [9], conclude that bold strategies such as heavy investment in social services and community-based alternatives to incarceration benefit not only people at risk of incarceration, but the community as a whole.

The Alaska Recidivism Reduction and Recovery Project is intended to strategically mitigate the significant lack of community-based treatment capacity for serving individuals with addiction disorders at risk of ongoing criminal behaviors. The project is not intended to replace valuable services occurring within correctional facilities or supersede important reentry coordination services. In fact, a rigorous study in Colorado found that inmates who progress from a prison-based therapeutic community to a community-based therapeutic environment are the least likely to be rearrested and/or relapse. Of the inmates who had treatment in both prison-based and community-based environments continuously, only 8% were rearrested after one year [10].

Increasing community-based treatment capacity designed to strategically mitigate ongoing criminal activity and substance abuse will have a profoundly beneficial impact on public safety, public health, and community wellness.

Strategic Leadership

Across the nation, states and municipalities are currently struggling to effectively overcome the challenges related to ongoing criminal activity and substance abuse. The innovative model and strategic partnerships involved in the Alaska Recidivism Reduction and Recovery Project present a significant opportunity to address this complex social challenge within the state as well as project Alaska's creative solutions and leadership across the nation.

* Citation references available upon request

Project Timeline:

7/1/2020 - 4/1/2021 \$7,794,570

- * Project Planning/Development/Evaluation
- * Site Improvement and Preparation
- * Construction of Recovery Residence 1 Facility
- * Construction of Education/Training/Community Facility
- * IT Infrastructure and Mobile Health Platform

4/1/2021 - 10/1/2021 \$5,000,000

- * Construction of Recovery Residence 2 Facility
- * IT Infrastructure and Mobile Health Platform

7/1/2021 - 4/1/2022 \$2,200,000

- * Construction of 3.1 Level Residential Treatment Home

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Set Free Alaska

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Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☐ Yes ☒ No