



## Ohio Mental Health, Addiction Agency Announces Nearly \$14M in Relief Funds to Aid Behavioral Health Providers Struggling with COVID-19 Related Expenses

(COLUMBUS – Dec. 23, 2020) The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services today announced funding awards totaling just under \$13.8 million to help mental health and addiction prevention and recovery support providers struggling with pandemic-related expenses and losses. Nearly 500 certified prevention providers, adult care facilities, peer-run organizations and recovery housing operators throughout Ohio will receive a portion of the state’s CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funding Continuum of Care Relief Payments.

“Our community partners continue to put forth a tremendous effort to care for some of our state’s most vulnerable citizens,” said OhioMHAS Director Lori Criss. “We are pleased to announce this funding as part of our ongoing efforts to ensure these organizations have the tools and resources needed to continue providing essential mental health and addiction care in these unprecedented times.”

The funds, which are part of the federal government’s \$175 billion Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, can be used to cover a variety of unexpected expenses incurred between March 1-Dec. 30, 2020, as a direct result of the coronavirus pandemic. Funds must be directly related to the current public health emergency and may not be used to cover expenses covered by insurance or reimbursed through other state or federal aid or programs. Costs that would have been incurred in the absence of COVID-19 are also not reimbursable.

Qualified uses include, but are not limited to, the purchase of personal protective equipment, cleaning and sanitation supplies, and measures that promote social distancing to mitigate spread. Specific examples include:

- signage to enforce public health orders or precautions;
- disinfection of public areas, surfaces;
- touchless precautions such as automatic/motion sensor doors, faucets, soap dispensers, hand dryers, and water fountains;
- masks and hand sanitizer; sanitizing stations;
- installation of plexiglass and barriers to create social distancing.

The funds may also be used to reimburse the costs of business interruption caused by required closures. “This could take the form of a prevention provider not being able to provide school-based prevention or having new technology expenses to connect with students, an adult care facility or a recovery residence not being able to fill all available capacity due to social distancing requirements, or a peer run organization limiting facility capacity or limiting overall programming in order to maintain compliance with public health recommendations,” Director Criss explained.

The funds were approved by the Ohio Controlling Board on Nov. 9. The state began sending payments this week, with all funds expected to be distributed by the end of the year. Click [HERE](#) for a complete list of awardees.

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