



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

DOUGLAS S. KRESS
DIRECTOR



MEMO

November 17, 2021

TO: Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone
FROM: Doug Kress, Director of Health & Human Services
SUBJECT: Department Head Communications – Registered Medical Marijuana Dispensary Host Community Agreement Funding Recommendations

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) continues work on the development of recommendations for the distribution of funds from the City of Somerville's Host Community Agreement with registered medical marijuana dispensaries (RMDs). Per the RMD Host Community Agreement, RMDs shall contribute 3% of gross sales to the City to "support education, prevention, and treatment for substance abuse through the City of Somerville." The funds are to be administered by HHS and may be expended by HHS or distributed to other City departments, schools, or nonprofit organizations. The current balance in the stabilization fund is \$1,413,384.75. The working group recommends an allocation of \$591,442.00 to implement the identified priorities.

We propose the following recommendations and allocation of funds for FY22/23. A detailed explanation of each recommendation and justification of funding is provided below:

1. Substance Misuse Prevention Coordinator for youth
2. Youth Social Media Prevention Ambassadors Project
3. Adult-Use Marijuana Community Education
4. Overdose Prevention Trainings and Naloxone Distribution
5. Efforts to support the installation of three (3) Portland Loo facilities in Somerville

Recommendation #1: Substance Misuse Prevention Counselor for Youth

Somerville Prevention recommends sustaining the full-time position (1 FTE) for a Massachusetts Licensed Certified Social Worker (LCSW) with strong clinical skills and several years of experience working in the substance misuse prevention field. The previous staff left in June 2021 and we hired a new staff in October 2021. Since hire, the new staff conducted two individual student assessments in one month; connected with key stakeholders to continue and/or reestablish partnerships; is brainstorming with school partners to offer on-going drop-in hours for students in school; is actively coordinating with school partners to facilitate support groups for students and caregivers as well as professional development for school staff; and will offer on-going guidance, training, and substance misuse prevention education to students, staff, caregivers, community members, and other City departments. In addition, staff is responsible for co-coordinating the new MassCALL3 grant that Somerville Prevention was awarded from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (MA-DPH BSAS). This multi-year regional grant, in partnership with the cities/towns of Arlington, Everett, and Lexington, will be led by Somerville and includes completion of a needs assessment and development of intervening variables to prevent the first misuse of substances amongst youth. As part of these efforts, staff also will provide enhanced expertise with the Prevention team's social media presence, to bolster both our Instagram account (@somervilleprevention) and YouTube channel (<http://bit.ly/SomervillePrevention>).

Benchmarks for success may include:

- # of referrals for substance misuse assessments with the Somerville Public Schools
- Successful co-coordinating of MassCALL3 grant efforts including needs assessment completion, strategic planning development, implementation, and overall grant management.
- Assess and implement substance misuse prevention-based support groups, psychoeducational opportunities, etc. for youth including but not limited to establishment of open educational hours within Somerville High School (in partnership with Teen Clinic and Redirect Program) and enhance SPF & Teen Empowerment programming
- Provide continuing education opportunities for adult community members, caregivers, and City/school staff
- Successful management of social media platforms including youth engagement, community engagement, and supervision of social media student interns

Allocation: \$ 128,792.00 for 1 FTE (including benefits) through FY23:

Annual Salary: \$94,700.00 (through FY23)

Annual Benefits: \$34,092.00

Recommendation #2: Youth Social Media Prevention Ambassadors Project

Somerville Prevention Services would like to build upon and sustain the successful piloting of the Youth Social Media Prevention Ambassadors program that ran this past summer 2021 on Instagram. Somerville Prevention recruited six youth to create and post substance misuse prevention-based content on @somervilleprevention's Instagram as well as on their own individual pages. This proved to be wildly successful, engaging far more youth and adult followers, reaching more individuals with substance misuse prevention messaging/education, and providing opportunities for youth to continue to work on substance misuse prevention efforts as a summer job.

Instagram insights for the duration of the Ambassadors pilot (August 2021) include:

- @somervilleprevention Followers – 690 (up from 622 previous month, currently 757 followers as of Nov. 2021)
- Accounts Reached – 6, 328 (up for 365 previous month)
- Impressions (# of times posts were on any account's screen) – 22,492 (up from 3,102 from previous month)
- Profile Visits – 520 (up from 266 from previous month)
- Content Interactions – 521 (up from 484 from previous month)
- Likes – 491 (up from 418 from previous month)

Benchmarks for success may include:

- Recruit, train, and coordinate as many if not more youth ambassadors for Summer 2022
- Youth ambassadors each creating a week's worth of substance misuse prevention content to post on @somervilleprevention and personal accounts
- Increase in followers, account reached, impressions, etc. with substance misuse prevention messaging for all community members
- Increase in knowledge of substance misuse prevention education, resources, and campaign outreach strategies

Summer Youth Social Media Prevention Ambassadors

- \$1,500.00 to hire ten students (8th-12th grade) to create/post substance use prevention messaging on their social media platforms
- \$500.00 for post advertising (\$50.00 per student)
- \$650.00 Supplies/training for youth

Allocation: \$2,650.00 for program supplies and stipends

Recommendation #3: Adult-Use Marijuana Community Education

HHS aims to be proactive in providing additional education and community engagement opportunities to support community prevention efforts. HHS will develop and disseminate educational materials on the updated regulations for adult-use marijuana. Partners on this effort could include Tufts University, the Somerville Board of Health, the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC), health care providers, youth programs, the Somerville Police Department (SPD), and substance misuse prevention providers.

Previously, this funding supported the creation of two marijuana PSAs, one for adult community members and one for youth community members. These PSAs were featured on the @somervilleprevention Instagram page as well as the Somerville Prevention YouTube page.

Allocation: \$10,000.00

Recommendation #4: Overdose Prevention Training & Naloxone Distribution

Through the Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) grant, Somerville Prevention and the Cambridge Public Health Department partnered with the Somerville Homeless Coalition and Fenway Health to provide enhanced trainings on overdose prevention and naloxone (Narcan) use for individuals experiencing homelessness and housing instability. Somerville Prevention also continues to facilitate community trainings open to all community members on overdose prevention. Additional resources are needed to purchase supplies, make these resources available to more community members (e.g. individuals, businesses, etc.), and eliminate barriers to access.

Accomplishments:

Trainings:

- FY20 (July 2019-June 2020) – 151 total trained
- FY21 (July 2020-June 2021) – 148 total trained
- FY22 (July 2021-Present) – 40 total trained (as of Nov. 2021)

Doses of Narcan Distributed:

- FY19 & FY20 – 180 doses total
- FY21 (July 2020-June 2021) – 172 doses total
- FY22 (July 2021-Present) – 64 doses total (as of Nov. 2021)

FY22/23 benchmarks for success:

- Continued distribution of naloxone (Narcan) without barriers

- Increased community engagement around substance misuse prevention by # of training participants, followers on social media, etc.
- Continued trainings on use of naloxone to community members, businesses and non-profit agencies

Allocation: \$15,000.00 to purchase naloxone (Narcan) and CPR mask (barrier to avoid virus transmission)

Recommendation #5: Effort to support the installation of three (3) Portland Loo facilities in Somerville.

Public restrooms access: Single occupancy, public toilet with a unique design. This priority has been identified by multiple community populations including families, visitors, homeless, and businesses.

Estimated cost per unit: \$145,000.00

Unit cost: \$90,000.00 plus cost of any options.

Shipping: \$5,000.00

Cost to install include:

Utility work (water, sewer, electric) \$25,000.00

Foundation work runs \$ \$9,000.00

Installation costs (crane, labor, hookup) \$4,000.00

Maintenance is typically \$12,000.00 per year.

Allocation: \$435,000.00

Funding Source

Per the RMD Host Community Agreement, RMD facilities agree to make payments as frequently as every six months. Payments are due 30 days after the end of a six-month period. The first payment will, therefore, be due seven (7) months after the opening date of the RMD, and a payment will be due every six months thereafter.

As of 11/18/21, there is a balance of \$1,413,384.75 in the stabilization fund. The working group recommends an allocation of \$591,442.00 to implement the identified priorities. As new regulations and funding is available, the Working Group will begin to meet quarterly to review priorities, evaluate funding allocations and make recommendations to the administration.

Proposed Budget

Recommendation	Use	Proposed Annual Expense
1. Substance Use Prevention Counselor for Youth	Salary + fringe	\$128,792.00
2. Youth Social Media Prevention Ambassadors	Youth stipends/training	\$2,650.00
3. Adult-Use Marijuana Community Education	Community Education programs/materials	\$10,000.00
4. Overdose Prevention & Naloxone Distribution	Purchase/ distribute Naloxone	\$15,000.00

5. Portland Loo Installation	Installation of Public restrooms	\$435,000
TOTAL		\$591,422.00