

HHC health disparities language for FY21 budget

Sec. X. COVID-19-RELATED HEALTH DISPARITIES; DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH

(a) The sum of \$1,000,000.00 is appropriated from the Coronavirus Relief Fund to the Department of Health in fiscal year 2021 as a supplement to the monies appropriated in 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 136, Sec. 8(a)(2). The Department shall use the funds for grants to community organizations selected pursuant to subsection (b) of this section to conduct outreach to isolated individuals at high risk of adverse outcomes from the COVID-19 pandemic based on factors such as race or ethnicity, Native American heritage or tribal affiliation, nationality or immigrant status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, and geographic location. The grantees shall assess and identify the needs of these individuals during the COVID-19 public health emergency, and shall identify and address their difficulties in accessing COVID-19 testing and in safely meeting essential needs, including food, shelter, health care, and emotional support, during the public health emergency, in order to help them protect themselves and others from the disease and to prevent deaths by suicide and other negative effects of social isolation.

(b)(1) The Department shall determine the community organizations best suited to carry out the duties set forth in subsection (a) of this section by soliciting from the entities described in subdivisions (A)–(S) of this subdivision (1) recommendations of organizations that have members who are part of an affected population group, have prior demonstrated work with an affected population group, and have the ability to rapidly

implement programming in response to unmet needs resulting from the COVID-19 public health emergency:

(A) Racial Justice Alliance;

(B) NAACP;

(C) Migrant Justice;

(D) Outright Vermont;

(E) Pride Center of Vermont;

(F) Vermont Center for Independent Living;

(G) Vermont Psychiatric Survivors;

(H) NAMI-VT;

(I) Green Mountain Self-Advocates;

(J) Vermont Family Network;

(K) AARP;

(L) Community of Vermont Elders (COVE);

(M) Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs;

(N) Elnu Abenaki tribe;

(O) Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk Abenaki Nation;

(P) Koasek Abenaki of the Koas;

(Q) Missisquoi, St. Francis-Sokoki Band;

(R) Vermont Council on Rural Development; and

(S) other advocacy- and service-related entities assisting or comprising

individuals at high risk of adverse outcomes from the COVID-19 pandemic based on factors such as race or ethnicity, Native American heritage or tribal affiliation, nationality

or immigrant status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, and geographic location.

(2) The Department, in consultation with the entities listed in subdivision (1) of this subsection, shall identify population groups and geographic regions of the State that were not served by prior federal funding opportunities administered by the Agency of Human Services or its departments for COVID-19 response-related purposes, such as LGBTQ youth, or that were only partially served and are still in need of assistance.

(3) The Department shall award grants to the community organizations it finds, upon recommendation of the entities listed in subdivision (1) of this subsection, as those best suited to provide outreach and assistance to the population groups most in need and to ensure that the services are available to affected populations in all regions of the State.