

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rogers County awarded opioid abatement grant

Rogers County, OK - Rogers County has been awarded approximately \$506K in grant funding to address the opioid crisis throughout the county during an Oklahoma Opioid Abatement board meeting Tuesday, June 4.

This comes after the Rogers County Board of County Commissioners submitted a joint application in March with the City of Claremore for \$506,158 to the Oklahoma Attorney General for the Oklahoma Opioid Grant Award after months of working towards this.

District 3 Commissioner Ron Burrows, who serves on the Rogers County Opioid Abatement Committee, said, "We are grateful to be awarded this grant to address the opioid crisis in our county. This funding will allow us to put professionals in place to implement a plan focused on prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery."

By pursuing these funds together, the City-County must follow the Oklahoma Attorney General's strategies and guidelines to support individuals struggling with addiction, while also focusing on prevention and community education efforts.

Claremore City Manager John Feary said, "The City of Claremore - in partnership with Rogers County - is incredibly pleased to learn that our joint application for opioid abatement monies from the State Attorney General was awarded. We look forward to working hand in hand with Rogers County to help address the opioid pandemic in and around Claremore to ensure we end the cycle of drug abuse that plagues children and families."

This city-county collaboration brings an opportunity for continued funding over the next 15 years.

The funding will employ personnel who will enact a comprehensive multi-level approach to prevent opioid misuse, enhance early intervention programs, expand access to treatment services, and support individuals in long-term recovery.

Mimi Tarrasch, Chief Program Officer for Women's Justice Programs, Family & Children's Services said, "With additional resources provided by Opioid Abatement Settlement funds, Family & Children's Services can expand substance use and mental health treatment and jail-based services within the county."

Describing the impact to public safety, Sheriff Scott Walton stated, "Big Pharmaceutical has devastated individuals, families, and communities chasing the dollar. Law Enforcement is not equipped to provide the kind of resources that are needed in order to begin rebuilding and strengthening our communities. My hope is that this grant will be the first step of many to take back what has been stolen from so many."

This comprehensive project, according to Tarrasch, is built on a decade-long collaboration with community partners, will address prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support, enhancing local efforts to combat the opioid crisis and support justice-involved individuals.

A Project Manager will be appointed, which is a crucial step towards effectively utilizing the grant and ensuring that the initiatives are conducted with the utmost professionalism, efficiency, and expertise of the support services.

The support services include a court liaison, GED instructor, parenting educator and personnel supporting women in recovery.

Overall, the project aims to establish a well-connected network of resources and referrals to provide a coordinated response to those in need of support.

There will be intense collaboration among key community stakeholders, including law enforcement, district attorney's office/criminal justice partners, youth-serving organizations, mental health and substance abuse agencies, and community organizations.

Commissioner Steve Hendrix of District 2 previously stated that this partnership is “a great example of forward and progressive thinking of the leadership across the board in the city and county right now.”

Upon learning about the award Tuesday morning, Commissioner Chair Dan DeLozier said, “This is just a start to being able to address a big problem. We have shown that when we get together for a common purpose, we can get things done.”