



For Immediate Release

Thursday, January 11, 2018

Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion Grant Award

The City of Alamosa, Alamosa County, Center for Restorative Programs, and the District Attorney's Office are excited to announce the award of a grant through the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) and their Office of Behavioral Health (OBH) to implement a Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program within the City and County of Alamosa.

Last summer Alamosa City Council members attended the Colorado Municipal League conference and learned about the LEAD program in Seattle, Washington during a break-out session. Upon returning home from the conference, the counselor's presented the material to staff to see if the program would work within our region. Once the funding was announced through CDHS, staff from the City of Alamosa, Alamosa County, the 12th Judicial District Attorney's Office and the Center for Restorative Programs collaborated, creating the grant proposal.

The funding for the LEAD program will provide these partners with additional tools to de-escalate situations that involve mental health or substance use disorders, get people the services they need and reduce the cycle of recidivism.

OBH received \$5.2 million this fiscal year from the General Assembly to fund two different initiatives, one of which being the LEAD program. Communities across the state applied for the awards and were chosen by a committee convened by CDHS "Empowering communities to address mental health care and substance use disorders through stronger partnerships and increased understanding is an ongoing priority," said Robert Werthwein, director of CDHS' Office of Behavioral Health. "By diverting individuals with low-level offenses from the criminal justice system, more Coloradans can receive the holistic treatment they need that can make a difference in reducing crime in our communities."

LEAD is a pre-booking diversion program new to Colorado that aims to equip officers with the tools to route individuals with low-level drug and prostitution offenses to case managers and services instead of the criminal justice system. The case managers will connect these individuals to resources and services like housing, substance use treatment or vocational training. The City of Alamosa and its partners were one of four pilot programs that received funding up to 575,000 per year, funded through the Long Bill from the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund, to operate LEAD as a pilot program for a three-year term. The other organizations that received funding through this process were Denver County, City of Longmont, and Pueblo County.

Communities selected to launch these new behavioral health initiatives will work closely with CDHS to develop contracts and finalize award amounts, with implementation beginning in 2018.

Not only are the regional partners excited about this award and the opportunities it presents, but they also anticipate reaching out to other valley communities to include in the second phase of the project with available grant funds.