CCAO Webinar

How Counties Are Using CARES ACT Dollars: Examples

August 21, 2020
Purpose:

A high-level overview of the use of Coronavirus Relief Fund payments made available by Ohio House Bill 481
HB 481

• Appreciative to our federal & state partners

• Ready to use remaining CARES Act funds for appropriate expenditures in support of local communities in their efforts to respond to the pandemic

THANK YOU
Overarching Lessons

• All levels of government need one another to best serve the public

• The pandemic highlights some things that work well and some things that need improvement

• Teleworking works – meeting increased workload

• Improvements
Overarching Lessons

• Some change was in progress but was furthered by the pandemic
• There is a need for leadership and encouragement
• Guidance changes – and that is okay; we need to stay as flexible as possible
• Defensible, thoughtful approach
• Transparency is key
• Stakeholder engagement is important
The aim is progress not perfection...
Vital County Services
Vital County Services
Public Well-Being
“People-Centered Services”

• Connect residents to services
• Secure partnerships
• Keep our community healthy, safe, & vibrant
timeline of documentation
June forward

• June 4 – Prosecutor’s Opinion on use of CARES Act funds for antibody testing

• June 9, 16 – Required resolution & fund structure

• June 26 – Prosecutor’s Opinion about Public Safety Payroll Support
timeline of documentation

July 2 – Sheriff’s justification
• substantially dedicated
• substantially different
• by position (with names)
• with narrative
• payroll records
timeline of documentation

• July 7 – appropriated funds and provided details from March forward

• July 14, 21 – expanded upon July 7th’s resolution
Public Safety Employees – Substantial Dedication

Fairfield County is utilizing the public safety presumption that all payroll expenses are presumed to be related to mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic.
Justification

• US Treasury Guidance
• Consistent with State guidance
• Consistent with the opinion of the County Prosecutor
Additional Evidence

Multiple entities are using this view of substantial dedication.
Examples

- Michigan
- Las Vegas
- Colorado Springs
- South Dakota
- Policy thought leaders
Public Safety
Substantially Different Work

Documentation

• Letter from the Sheriff
• Identified specific positions
• Described duties, protocols, procedures
• Public safety (no administrative support positions)
• Payroll records – base pay
• None charged if reimbursed otherwise
Approach for Public Safety

• 100% of specific employees’ base pay identified as eligible
• Did not charge sick leave, vacation, or compensated absences (were not working to mitigate the effects of the pandemic)
• Charged variable fringe benefits, such as OPERS and Medicare, as a function of base pay
Approach could also be used for public health or human services

- Finite resources
- Staying in touch with community partners
- Will adjust as needed
- Coordinating with other resources
Substantially Different

• Non-Public Safety
• Unbudgeted overtime for Facilities and Maintenance for extra sanitation services
• Preparing safeguarding measures, such as creation of plexiglass barriers
Administrative Leave

- Unbudgeted
- Unable to telework
- During a stay at home order or during incidence of COVID-19 @ work
- Relatively limited (for us)
- Have *not* yet charged
- Will track
Public Health

- Parks District hand sanitation stations
- Electrostatic sprayers
- Disinfectant supplies
- PPE – for multiple groups
- Masks
- Thermometers
- Supplies for multiple entities
- Materials for plexiglass barriers
- Signage

(coordination with Stafford Act – about $200K est.)
Reasonably Necessary to Improve Capabilities of Public Employees

• Computer equipment for virtual court hearings
• Teleworking improvements
• IT infrastructure
• Multiple departments
  (grants of $100K+ for Courts for technology & antibody testing)
Initial Distribution Documented Fully by July 24

- $1.6 M Public Safety Payroll Support
- $50K for Teleworking Improvements
- $24K for Public Health Expenses

All spent or encumbered by July 24
Ongoing Tracking

• Additional Public Safety Support
• PPE (Coordinating with Stafford Act)
• Digitizing services for Probate Court (obtaining quotes)
• Additional teleworking equipment
• Meals on Wheels (MOU)
Ongoing Review

• **HVAC** improvements for sanitation at jail and other buildings (issued RFP)
• **PRC** type program (using TANF now)
• **Small business support**
  • potential to use general fund (flexibility)
  • supplement existing local grant program for businesses
  • one-page application for a specific mission related purpose - simple rubric (like Land Bank)
  • coordinate with CDBG funds & new revolving loan fund grant for interest free loans
Reporting/Tracking/Documenting

• First report due October 6
• Expenditures of March 1 – September 30
• 25% of unspent amounts – October 22nd
• Funds not yet released - being prepared
• Ongoing connections about needs in the community (abide by CARES Act)
• Weekly public discussion – resolutions & minutes
Observations

- Complex & changing environment
- Uncertainty
- Comply with the law
- Document the approach
- Evaluate and discuss publicly
- Seek out ideas, feedback, & input
- Approval by the Board of Commissioners
- Support community
- Adjust as necessary
Resources

- US Treasury Guidance
- OBM
- State Auditor
- CCAO
- County Prosecutor
Contact Information

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