



## **WA Receives Federal Grant Funds to Address Opioid Epidemic**

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As the country continues to fight the opioid epidemic, various states are trying different methods to control the situation. In line with this, Washington received federal grant funds to address the opioid addiction crisis, among other key issues such as homelessness and unemployment.

Federal officials awarded the state roughly \$887,000 in new federal funds to focus on these key issues, particularly to help homeless Washingtonians affected by opioid use disorder.

This latest National Health Emergency (NHE) Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant would serve up to 80 at-risk homeless individuals in the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Area (PacMtn), which covers Thurston, Mason, Grays Harbor, Lewis, and Pacific counties.

"Washington's opioid crisis has played a significant role in increasing the number of our homeless families in our state," said Gov. Jay Inslee. "This latest infusion of federal funds is a recognition of the work already underway throughout our state, and a vote of confidence for our work moving forward. This work is possible because of the strong partnership among the Employment Security Department, PacMtn and local leaders

across the region.?

The funds will supplement a nearly \$million NHE Opioid Dislocated Worker Demonstration grant announced in July 2018 to support work in the same five-county region as well as Snohomish County. It will also allow regional partners to focus on the acute reason for homelessness across the region.

?This initiative goes well beyond the grant we received earlier this year as it allows community partners to focus on a group of individuals and families hit disproportionately hard by the opioid epidemic?the homeless population in Thurston County and beyond,? said Suzi LeVine, Commissioner of the Employment Security Department.

?These dollars give us the ability to serve those hardest hit by the devastation of opioid use disorder,? said PacMtn Chief Executive Officer Cheryl Fambles. ?These are our friends, neighbors, and families?many on the verge of homelessness. They need to get back to work. When they can work for families and our local economy get stronger.?

The Employment Security Department, WorkSource Thurston, the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council, and other partners will use the funds to hire four peer recovery counselors who will serve homeless at-risk individuals. It will also help identify and refer up to 80 homeless at-risk individuals to designated peer counselors in the region to receive assistance.

The fund is also intended to help with the re-employment of people who were affected by the opioid crisis. One of its goals is to tackle unemployment rates in relation to the opioid epidemic. The fund will achieve this goal by focusing on individualized career, training, and supportive services. This includes a connection to rapid re-housing and other resources. It is going to help recovering patients get back on their feet after struggling with addiction. Click the link to see Baltimore's top rehab placement programs.

The fund will also train staff on trauma-informed care, as well as harm reduction. Training staff for emergency medical interventions can also potentially save thousands of lives. Thousands of people in the US are dying each year because of an opioid-related overdose. Having more medical personnel who are trained in handling these emergencies can certainly go a long way.

If someone in the family is struggling with opioid addiction, it is important to seek help. A combination of medical detox and behavioral therapy can go a long way in the fight against drug abuse. But because every individual is affected by addiction differently, a comprehensive program tailored to their specific needs is necessary. Look for a nearby addiction treatment facility today and find out how drug treatment programs work.

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