



June 12, 2020

To: Vocational Rehabilitation Stakeholders
From: Keith Ozols, Director, VR

A new grant opportunity is available for community-based organizations related to COVID-19. *The first information session is Monday.* We encourage our stakeholder organizations to review the information from the Oregon Health Authority and consider applying.

On another COVID-19 topic, with phase 2 re-opening in the works throughout much of Oregon, it's time for a VR update.

COVID-19 funding opportunity for community-based organizations

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) has opened funding opportunities to community-based organizations (CBOs) throughout the State of Oregon. The first information session is on June 15.

From the Oregon Health Authority:

CBOs are central to the success of the work to integrate methods, tactics and strategies that are most responsive to the needs of people of color, people with disabilities, immigrant and refugee communities, Tribes, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers and LGBTQIA+ communities.

The Oregon Health Authority is committed to engaging with Community Based Organizations and the communities you serve to ensure all members of our community receive information, services and resources in the most responsible way. We know of the current fear and misinformation about the coronavirus within the community.

We'd like the opportunity to work alongside you to provide the public facts and support, so that they feel prepared to handle the coronavirus.

CBOs have the opportunity to support three areas of work as part of our COVID-19 response.

1. Community engagement, education and outreach
2. Contact tracing
3. Social services and wraparound supports

If this request sounds your organization, we encourage you to apply.

<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ERD/Pages/COVID-19-Funding-Opportunity.aspx>.

VR during phase 2 re-opening

We moved to virtual offices in March, because as an organization that both hires and supports people with disabilities, it was important we took action. We made that commitment to do our part to slow the spread of Coronavirus through the use of physical distancing.

As I shared in May, VR offices will continue to operate virtually through at least Phase 2 of COVID-19 re-opening. Our decision on when to physically re-open VR offices to the public will be based on the needs of our clients and staff. Service delivery throughout Oregon Department of Human Services programs may look different depending on the program's needs. Please use our [online office list](#) to contact an us instead of visiting an office at this time.

Our VR counselors began conducting virtual intakes in May and continue to do vocational counseling virtually. We've provided training to staff on how to effectively work remotely. We appreciate the flexibility of our staff, clients and partners as we work in new ways.

You can learn more about the [Governor's three-phase process](#) for reopening Oregon.

Physical distancing remains our best tool for fighting COVID-19. Every community is vulnerable to the virus, so our personal and agency actions will either stop or spread it. We encourage and appreciate your continued vigilance in fighting the virus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Keith Ozols', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Keith Ozols
Director
Vocational Rehabilitation

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. Contact Oregon Vocational Rehabilitation at 503-945-5880 or by email at VR.DirectorsOffice@dhsosha.state.or.us. We accept calls from all forms of relay service for people who are Deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing or have a speech disability. For more information about relay service providers visit www.oregonrelay.com or www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/trs-providers.